

THE EPOCH TIMES

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Never Too Young to

Learn Responsibility

Where along did Americans start coddling their children, even into adulthood?

Instead of fretting, we can look for ways to help children expand their horizons.

ANNIE HOLMQUIST

If we're serious about re-turning common sense to America, then we must move beyond these busybodies (and our own fears) and start encouraging a society in which children are given more responsibility and independence at younger ages. How young is too young for a child to be running errands? That question is prompted in large part by the Netflix show "Old Enough!" which

features Japanese preschoolers running errands for their parents. The show appears to be raising American interest judging from the many articles written about it. Two of these articles, both from NPR, caught my eye. The first was written by a mother who started sending her 4-year-old on errands in hopes that the added responsibility would put a stop to the mischief her daughter was getting into. (It worked.) The second article featured reader responses to the first article, running the gamut from parents who

had succeeded in similar ventures to those who couldn't imagine leaving their kids alone. Both articles feature a disclaimer from NPR, warning that in some localities, allowing children to "run errands or go places without adult supervision may violate local laws." That disclaimer likely applies to most of America; many of us would be aghast at the idea of letting a 10-year-old—much less a 3-year-old—run an errand or do a job for us. Continued on Page 3



Educator John Taylor Gatto found that prior to 1900, children's books positively featured youth at work—but never again after 1916.

RETROCLIPART/SHUTTERSTOCK



The Forgotten Virtue: Modesty and Its Gifts

JEFF MINICK

Recently, I went to the pharmacy at our local grocery store, Martin's, and found my prescription wouldn't be ready for pick-up for another 30 minutes. I snagged a small cart and got some chicken that was on sale and some bananas, but otherwise roamed around the store looking at my fellow shoppers. Usually, I'm too focused on buying groceries to pay much attention to the people around me, but there I was with some time on my hands. In the produce section, I passed an elderly man with gray-golden hair to his shoulders and a long drooping mustache, who appeared dressed for an '80s rock concert in which he was a member of the band: a loose-flowing, wildly colored shirt and a pair of tight orange pants. Were he to appear at dawn every day on my front porch, I might cut my wake-up consumption of coffee by half. Lingering in the meat department were four young people, one female wearing a uniform that vaguely resembled that of a police officer, the other three dressed in jeans and T-shirts. Within the 10 seconds it took me to walk out of hearing range, one of the young men casually launched three F-bombs into the conversation. As for the rest of the patrons, nearly all of them looked as if they'd rolled out of bed—and this was at 5 p.m.—thrown on some clothes they'd dug from the laundry hamper, and headed out of the house. A good number of them displayed tattoos, including one young man whose arms were colored more blue than white. Here's the sad part: I was wearing khaki pants and a pull-over shirt, and was one of the best-dressed people in the store. Had Cary Grant walked through the door in one of his favorite suits, he would have left everyone there gobsmacked with amazement. Anyone looking for modesty in this place would have better luck finding hamburger at 99 cents a pound. A Mistaken Impression Mention that word modesty, and most of us, I suspect, think first of women and girls, and then of their attire. Modesty might call to mind some great-aunt, now long dead, who only appeared in public wearing an ankle-length dress and a blouse buttoned to the throat. But is that really the meaning of modesty? No. Continued on Page 2



BIBA KAJEVIC

The Forgotten Virtue: Modesty and Its Gifts

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My dictionary offers these two definitions of the word: “The quality or state of being unassuming or moderate in the estimation of one’s abilities;” and “behavior, manner, or appearance intended to avoid impropriety or indecency.”

Let’s tackle the second definition first.

Appearance

None of the shoppers at that store could possibly be accused of indecency in their dress.

Impropriety, however, is another matter altogether.

If we jump back to the dictionary, we find impropriety defined as “a failure to observe standards or show due honesty or modesty; improper language, behavior, or character.” We should note that this definition makes no reference to gender. We can therefore conclude that modesty applies both to males and females.

Most of us recognize the meaning of modest dress in women. In the article “How to Dress Modestly (And Why It Really Matters),” the writer gives readers a good number of pragmatic tips, along with some accompanying lovely photos, on modest attire. Key to her essay is this thought: “When you dress modestly, the focus of your outfit becomes you as a whole instead of one individual part.”

In other words, modesty is a barricade against the objectification of women. But what about men?

Dr. Jared Staudt’s “Modesty Is for Men Too” offers some great tips. These include “Don’t dress like a bum,” “Don’t go to the opposite extreme and be vain,” and “Stop wearing super tight pants!” This last injunction brought a smile, as my trousers tend to be baggy—and therefore as comfortable as possible.

Behavior and Demeanor

Here modesty becomes intertwined with good manners and consideration for others, particularly in the language we use.

Which of us has not walked down a sidewalk only to hear someone on a phone or in conversation loudly mouthing obscenities? Which of us has not pulled up to a traffic light beside another vehicle where the driver is playing offensive rap music? Even our celebrities, media personalities, and some of our politicians throw out F-bombs and other such words with abandon.

Modesty precludes swearing in public. It’s as simple as that.

It’s All About Me

If we turn to the first definition above, we open the door to another and deeper meaning of modesty.

As many commentators have pointed out, ours is the age of narcissism. Often these pundits aim their remarks at selfishness or self-centeredness, and certainly we can see an obsession with the self these days in all facets of life. Many among us have apparently adopted the attitude of

“I’m getting mine, and the devil take the hindmost!” A touch of modesty might ameliorate some of that hubris.

Bedrock Modesty

In her YouTube video “Modesty in the Real World,” Jackie Angel offers this thought: “A lot of times we’re presented with modesty as a bunch of rules, but the truth is it starts with the heart. It’s a disposition of the heart.”

Modesty begins on the inside. And it’s not false humility nor is it the opposite of pride. Overall, it simply means avoiding ostentation, whether in our dress or our behavior. Modest people are secure in their appearance, their actions, and their accomplishments without the need for affectation or to call attention to themselves.

And as it turns out, modesty comes with a great, hidden reward, an unexpected gift. As renowned French fashion designer Coco Chanel once remarked, “Modesty is the highest elegance.”

That elegance can be ours if we want it.

Jeff Minick has four children and a growing platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminars of homeschooling students in Asheville, N.C. 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.

Guilt-Free Relaxation

Give yourself the time and space to unwind, without feeling you should be doing something else

BARBARA DANZA

It can be challenging for some to truly relax without feeling guilty about it. While in their comfortable recliner on a rainy Sunday afternoon, with a cup of tea and a good book, they’re thinking about that phone call they’ve been meaning to make.

Or, on vacation, they’re lounging on a beach dotted with palm trees, looking out at crystal blue waters, and they feel compelled to check their phone to ensure they’re not missing anything important.

If you feel afflicted with such a condition as the inability to relax without guilt, there are a few steps you can take.

Relaxation Is Productivity

First, you need a mindset shift. Allowing your mind and body time to unwind, decompress, rest, and relax is an effective strategy that will make you more productive and effective in the long run. Relaxing refills your tank and rejuvenates your energy. It allows for inspiration to reveal itself and new perspectives to become obvious. It adds variety and color to your life and increases your motivation.

Making relaxation your reward for accomplishment may allow you to be able to relax without guilt.

Schedule Relaxation

Much of the guilt you might encounter while trying to relax stems from a belief that you should be doing something else. One way to combat this notion is to schedule relaxation. Simple as it may sound, taking a predetermined break at, say, 2:30 p.m. every afternoon may allow your mind to let go of the sense that you should be doing something else. After all, according to your calendar, you’re doing exactly what you should be.

Make Relaxation a Reward

Being the productive person you are, you’ll likely achieve some goals and check off some boxes as you go about your day. Making relaxation your reward for accomplishment may allow you to be able to relax without guilt. You’ve already “paid for” the privilege by accomplishing what you set out to do.

If you find relaxing to be a valuable reward, you may even find yourself more motivated to do what you set out to do, doubling the benefit of the relaxation itself.

Dissect Your Guilt

Take time to understand what lies underneath your feeling of guilt for relaxing. Have you been consistently letting yourself down in some way? Are you not living up to your own expectations in one regard or another?

Understanding what lies beneath a consistent sense of guilt may point you toward areas of your life that you can take steps to improve. Your guilt may be telling you something helpful. If you begin to make small, incremental improvements in those areas, perhaps you’ll find your guilt diminishing, and relaxation an enjoyable pastime once again.



With chores and errands, young children take their first steps toward independence and start to appreciate doing something for someone else.



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Never Too Young to Learn Responsibility

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But given that other nations seem to allow their children to navigate responsibility at a very young age, one has to wonder what our hesitancy is. Where along the way did Americans lose their independent spirit and start to coddle their young even into adulthood, denying them the opportunity to grow and work and be responsible? One answer to that question lies in the progressivist mentality that has permeated our education system, particularly through children’s books.

Children’s book content changed dramatically in the early part of the 20th century, author John Taylor Gatto noted in his book “The Underground History of American Education.” One of these changes was in how the concept of work was presented. Instead of portraying it as a good thing that children should be encouraged to enter wholeheartedly and through which they gain independence, the opposite happened:

“School credentials replace experience as the goal book characters work toward, and child labor becomes a label of condemnation in spite of its ancient function as the quickest, most reliable way to human independence—the way taken in fact by Carnegie, Rockefeller, and many others who were now apparently quite anxious to put a stop to it.”

In these books, “children are encouraged to not work at all until their late teen years, sometimes not until their thirties,” Gatto wrote. “A case for the general superiority of youth working instead of idly sitting around in school confinement is often made prior to 1900, but never heard again in children’s books after 1916.”

A century after that first change, we seem to have taken this mentality to a whole new lev-



NETFLIX

In the Japanese reality TV show “Old Enough!” toddlers go on errands on their own. In Japan, the show has been running for 30 years.

el, for now, many adults not only discourage teens from working—telling them to focus on schooling instead—we also discourage younger kids from being independent and preparing to work in preparation for their launch into the world. We do this not only by denying them the responsibility and experience of running errands for adults, but also by not letting them be outside alone to play on their bikes or in the yard.

Some courageous parents, however, do give their children opportunities to be independent, gradually preparing them for adulthood. The only trouble is, there are busybodies who panic and call child protective services when they see those children out and about, practicing independence.

If we’re serious about returning common sense to America, then we must move beyond these busybodies (and our own fears) and start encouraging a society in which children are given more responsibility and independence at younger ages. Instead of fretting, we can look for ways to help children expand their horizons. We can encourage other parents to hover less and to let go. We can strike up conversations with our neighbors, telling them how good it is for children to learn independence and asking them to aid us in

keeping an eye on our kids from a distance as we teach them to spread their wings.

Benjamin Franklin famously said that “those who would give up essential Liberty, to purchase a little temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety.” The same holds true regarding our children. If we as adults refuse to let them gradually learn independence and responsibility when they’re young because we fear that doing so would put them in unsafe situations—at least in the eyes of our bubble-wrapped society—then we are simply preparing those children for a lack of both liberty and safety when they get older.

Giving your children more responsibility can be a big step for many parents, so if you’re not comfortable with sending your children out of the house on their own, then start training them inside the house. If children as young as 2, 3, or 4 can run errands in Japan, then why can’t American children these same ages make beds, sweep floors, unload the dishwasher, and fold clothes? As they take these responsibilities on—and as you train yourself to let them do so—give your children more freedom in other areas of daily life so that they can experience the reward of responsible, independent living.

Your fellow citizens will thank you for it one day when your children are some of the few adults who still have the courageous, independent, American spirit that will be needed to help pull our country out of the pit it is currently hurling itself into.

This article was originally published on Intellectual Takeout.

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Mentoring Kids Through Basketball

A coach who once fell into a life of crime now keeps youth out of trouble

A typical day at the Ball Academy in Sacramento, Calif.



SETH SANDRONSKY

His early life was no crystal staircase. Mister Harriel grew up in a single-family, low-income home in a South Sacramento neighborhood. Drug dealing and gang violence were commonplace. That and his father's absence became an on-ramp to a street life of drug dealing and property crime. Meanwhile, Harriel played high school basketball mainly to calm himself down. Yet, a void gnawed at him. "Nobody pushed me to go beyond my circumstances," Harriel said. "I did not know anything about the outside world." In short time, a criminal conviction landed him into state prison coming out of high school.

After serving prison time, determination and inspiration gained ground with him. Harriel became a standout basketball guard at a junior college in rural northern California. He scored 50 points in one game. Division I four-year colleges such as Oregon State University recruited him. However, California's prison parole policies barred him from receiving an athletic scholarship. Instead of wallowing in acrimony, he became a positive change-maker, playing pro basketball overseas, then becoming a businessperson and a father. He also helps two nonprofits that focus on improving the chances for disadvantaged youth.

Harriel credits Melissa, his wife, for turning his life around.

"You're at a fork in the road and must decide which way to go," she told him. Today, Harriel is co-owner of The Ball Academy, in Elk Grove, a bustling city of 171,000 in Sacramento County. The Ball Academy is a daily hotbed of basketball for adults and youth, from skills camps to pickup games, team practices, and AAU tournaments. One recent day found Harriel training a young man in the finer points of ball handling and body positioning—foundational skill sets to the game, which has grown in global popularity with today's digital connectivity. "Mister is the best trainer in the Sacramento region," said Leon Stancil, a coach and friend whose AAU team, the Red



(Above and above R) Mister Harriel coaches a basketball game. At The Ball Academy, which he co-owns, life revolves around basketball, from pickup games to tournaments. Through his work, he strives to draw kids away from "the worst elements in their neighborhoods" and help them lead positive lives.



Mambas, practices and plays games at The Ball Academy. "He has accomplished so much coming from a disadvantaged background," he said, adding that "Mister downplays what he has achieved."

Many superlatives describe Harriel. Boastful is not one. "It's just life," Harriel said. "Very interesting life, but at the end of the day it's just life."

His involvement with his youth advocacy nonprofits is a labor of community love. "I try to help kids from my early circumstances to avoid the criminal justice system," he said.

To this end, Harriel's nonprofit groups cooperate with other such advocacy groups for the betterment—educational, occupational, mental, and physical—of the at-risk youth they serve, collectively.

"We try to keep track of each kid we serve," he said, "given their family backgrounds of negativity and tendency to gravitate to the worst elements in their neighborhoods." Harriel knows how imitative some young people can be in ways that lessen their life chances to develop into well-adjusted adults.

Sports are central to Harriel and Melissa's family experience. Their commitment of effort and time for their kids has borne fruit over the years. Consider the athletic achievements of two of their kids, now adults. They compete in high-level competitive sports, one as an amateur, the

"We try to keep track of each kid we serve, given their family backgrounds of negativity and tendency to gravitate to the worst elements in their neighborhoods."

Mister Harriel

other as a professional.

Harriel and Melissa's son, Mister, Jr., found his sports calling on the gridiron, though he also played basketball and ran track in high school. After a football career as a student-athlete for the Sacramento State Hornets, he played free safety for the British Columbia Lions of the Canadian Football League. As a positive role model to his namesake son, Harriel did not stop there, inspired to bring his daughter along to an elite level of athletic achievement.

Jzaniya is Harriel and Melissa's second-oldest daughter. Currently, she attends Stanford University on a basketball scholarship after being the top high school girls' player in the Sacramento region. Regular father-daughter training sessions helped Jzaniya hone her game to an elite level. No shortcuts to athletic success here. Persistence matters. Just ask Harriel.

"I will sacrifice everything for my wife and kids to ensure that they do not travel the path that I did," Harriel said. The proof of that devotion is in plain sight. Going to Stanford was Jzaniya's goal since the fourth grade. Melissa and Harriel supported her every step of the way. Their daughter's success warms the heart.

"The day that she signed a letter of intent for Stanford was the best feeling in the world," Harriel said. "We all felt it, my wife and our kids. Teamwork makes a dream work."

US Army Replaces Stolen Birthday Cake, 77 Years Later

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF LAURA KREIDER/U.S. ARMY GARRISON ITALY



Mion smiles after the ceremony held at Giardini Salvi city park on April 28, 2022.

LOUISE CHAMBERS

An Italian woman whose 13th birthday cake was stolen from her mother's windowsill by American soldiers in 1945 has received a replacement cake, 77 years later.

On April 28, 2022, the eve of her 90th birthday, Meri Mion of Vicenza, Italy, was gifted a birthday cake by soldiers from U.S. Army Garrison Italy in a public ceremony at Giardini Salvi city park. Mion was moved to tears as the gathered crowd wished her many happy returns in both Italian and English.

"Tomorrow, we will eat that dessert with all my family remembering this wonderful day that I will never forget," said Mion, according to a U.S. Army news release. Photos of the nonagenarian show her clutching small American flags and

smiling broadly for the camera.

Presenting the cake were Sergeant Peter Wallis of the military police and Colonel Matthew Gomlak, commander of U.S. Army Garrison Italy. A crowd of hundreds of people consisted of Italian soldiers, carabinieri, U.S. and Italian veterans, and Vicenza locals.

On the eve of her 13th birthday in 1945, Mion was living in the village of San Pietro in Gù, Padua, when conflict broke out nearby. Retreating Germans fired shots near her house, and she hid overnight with her mother in the attic of their farm. The next morning, Americans were nearby. Her mother baked her a birthday cake and left it on the windowsill to cool.

"Her happiness turned into disappointment later when the resourceful American soldiers made off with her birthday cake," Gomlak told the crowd at Mion's gathering on April 28, 77 years later.

Members of the U.S. Army's 88th Infantry Division had lost tanks after battling German defenders, and at least 19 U.S. soldiers were killed or wounded.

Meanwhile, soldiers from the U.S. Army's 91st Infantry Division drove north into Vicenza from the Riviera Berica and received offerings of bread and wine from the locals.

"That warm welcome by the people of Vicenza continues to this day," according to Gomlak.

Ahead of Mion's 90th birthday, garrison staff unearthed footage from the U.S. National Archives to present at her Giardini Salvi city park ceremony, showing both scenes of combat and the seeds of friendship that sprouted between Italian locals and U.S. soldiers in the aftermath.

Wallis said, "It was a little awkward, but it makes me feel great to give her the cake."



Soldiers from U.S. Army Garrison Italy returned a birthday cake to Meri Mion on April 28, 2022.

Insta-Famous

91-year-old husband fills his Instagram with charming posts of his wife of 71 years

MICHAEL WING

Geoffrey Walker of Leicestershire, England, adores his lovely wife of 71 years—so much so that the 91-year-old former servicemember and construction worker started an Instagram page in her honor, which he charmingly fills with adorable posts about her.

That lucky lady, Pauline, 87, can be seen in pictures amid beautiful rustic gardens, sipping tea, or by her husband's side sight-seeing near local lakes in front of handsome castles littering the English landscape.

Geoffrey never expected that the posts devoted to his wife would go viral.

The couple, Geoffrey told The Epoch Times, have two sons and a daughter and more than a dozen grand- and great-grandchildren. "but they don't all live near. We started to put little things that we were doing [on Instagram] so they could all see. You know, keeping in touch."

"In hardly any time at all, it had gone viral," he said. "From a few hundred followers, it got 80,000!"

That number only swelled from there as more viral posts drew fans in. With the loneliness of the COVID-19 pandemic came people locked in their homes seeking comfort through their computer screens, causing the doting husband's Instagram to explode. It has garnered 323,000 followers to date.

The journey of that lovely couple began in 1950, when Geoffrey and Pauline first locked eyes at a "picture queue" at a local cinema. They met again later at village dances; following his conscription and sub-

sequent deployment to Japan for 18 months during the Korean War, they tied the knot in December 1951. They have been together ever since.

"She's a very caring person, caring for other people," Geoffrey said of Pauline, noting that she's always there to help out a neighbor or anyone.

Over seven decades on, Geoffrey knows marriage isn't always smooth sailing. He shared some of their secrets to a happy relationship.

"We have bumps and scratches and all that sort of thing, but we put our back into it and get on with life," he said. "We don't have any serious arguments. As we're getting older, of course, it's getting easier."

Pauline's sage advice to young couples is to "never go to bed on an argument."

Geoffrey said, "When a gentleman asked me what my advice is, I said, 'You need to learn these five magic words: Sorry Pauline, it's my fault.'"

Geoffrey, who loves watching nature programs on television, also suggests something he learned from the behavior of albatrosses who return to the nest to breed every season: "They're kissing and knocking beaks together all the time," he said, jokingly. "We have lots of kisses, every day, hugs and kisses."

The lovely couple in rural England dutifully continue posting content out of a sense of obligation to their newfound audience of adoring fans on social media—fans in seek of some of that good old-fashioned English charm so hard to come by these days.

"We have bumps and scratches and all that sort of thing, but we put our back into it and get on with life."

Geoffrey Walker



(Above and right) A couple of examples of photos posted by Geoffrey Walker on Instagram. The couple meant for the posts to keep family updated but in the process garnered 323,000 followers.



Geoffrey and Pauline Walker have been married for 71 years.



Sisterly Love

22-year-old raises teen half-sister after parents die

LOUISE CHAMBERS

A 22-year-old college senior, who filed for guardianship of her 16-year-old half-sister after the teen's mom died, says that giving her sister the chance to live her teenage years to the fullest is worth the sacrifice.

Hunter Nelson, originally of North Carolina, now lives in Kentucky with Gracie Nelson, a high school sophomore. The half-sisters' father died in October 2015, and Gracie's mom died in May 2021.

"I knew she was already facing difficulties with her life at home," Hunter, who majors in elementary education, told The Epoch Times. "I felt the strong need to make sure Gracie's life after her mom's passing was as normal as possible."

"I didn't want her to be making 'grown-up' decisions so young, and truly felt no one in her mom's family could make that possible."

The girls' father and Gracie's mom both suffered from alcoholism. Hunter said it was their addiction that played "ultimately the biggest role" in their deaths.



Hunter and Gracie Nelson.

"Our father also had numerous other health issues, including a form of cancer," she said.

Hunter said she wasn't really aware at the time that she took up guardianship of her half-sister of how many difficulties she would face, especially the emotional challenges they might have to navigate through.

"I love my life with her, and I love her like a sister and like she is my own child," Hunter said. "But I sometimes do mourn the life I will never get back and what could have been my early 20s."

ACTS OF KINDNESS

Teen Bagger Pays for Struggling Grandma's \$137 Grocery Bill

LOUISE CHAMBERS

A teen grocery bagger felt compelled to pick up the bill for a struggling grandmother when she fell short of cash at the checkout. After learning what a massive impact her kind deed had, she is now sharing her story in hopes of prompting others to be kind, too.

Texas A&M University student Maria Balboa, 19, had been working at an H-E-B grocery store for fewer than two months when an older Hispanic woman and two children approached her checkout on March 28.

"At the time, I did not know they were her grandkids," Balboa told The Epoch Times. "She was using a SNAP [government assistance] card to pay for the groceries, and

it stated it only had \$19 left on it."

Hearing this, the woman was completely unaware and shocked to know that she had only that much money left on her card.

"She said she would have to put all the groceries back, besides a few items for dinner," Balboa said.

Balboa asked the cashier for the outstanding sum: it was \$137. "Immediately, something told me to pay for the groceries," she recalled, despite the fact that the sum was a stretch for her. "I felt something telling me to pay, and it would not stop."

"My heart hurt for this woman and especially the two kids. I wanted them to have groceries."

Initially, the woman was embarrassed and reluctant to accept help, but Balboa insisted, settled the bill, and bagged the groceries, which included bread, butter, fruit, a rotisserie chicken, and snacks for the kids.

After paying for the woman, Balboa went on with her day and never expected to hear from her again. She also didn't tell anyone about this encounter as she was

just happy to have helped someone.

However, a few days later, unbeknownst to Balboa, the grateful customer had sent in a survey to her bosses.

Balboa said: "I got called into the office; I thought I was in trouble, but no, they said someone wrote a survey about me. I thought it was a bad one at first until he told me it was from the lady whose groceries I paid for."

"She explained that she had taken in her two grandkids when they were left by their mother," Balboa said. "This was why money had been tight for her, and she had to take a lower-paying job so they would not go into the foster care system. She thanked me for my kindness that day, because it really helped her out."

According to Balboa, her managers were tearful and praised the grocery bagger for her heart, said Balboa, who then listened in shock as they told her they were reimbursing her the \$137 and gave her a gift basket to show their appreciation.

The helpful college student admitted that the impact of her kind deed hit her on



Maria Balboa, 19, works at H-E-B, a supermarket chain.

the way home that day, and she couldn't hold back her tears.

The grateful grandmother had written, "God put this young lady at [the] bagging area for us."

Balboa, who was born and raised in Corpus Christi, loves working at H-E-B because she has "met so many great people, and the environment is awesome."

Reflecting back on her kind act, she shared: "I have done other kind things in the past, even paid for other people's groceries, but after that, I don't know what happens to them."

"This time, I got the privilege of knowing what happened to the woman and her two grandkids."

The teen's advice to others is to act with kindness when they really feel it in their heart. "It doesn't have to cost you \$137," she insisted. "Being a genuine and kind person costs nothing. It can be something small, like holding the door open for someone; small actions like these are what make the world go round."

Share your stories with us at emg.inspired@epochtimes.com, and get your daily dose of inspiration by signing up for the Inspired newsletter at [TheEpochTimes.com/newsletter](https://www.theepochtimes.com/newsletter)

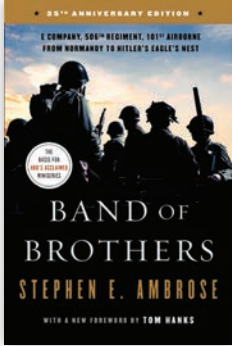
Timeless Books

That Help Us Appreciate Memorial Day

MATTHEW JOHN

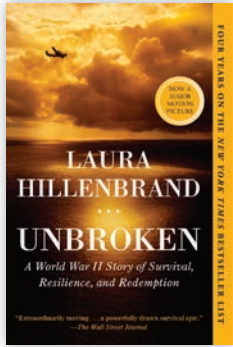
With Memorial Day right around the corner, it's a great chance to tuck into a book or two that celebrates service to our country. This week, we've put together a selection of three timeless reads that really help to humanize this important day—bringing out the personal stories, the heroism, the sacrifices, and the costs entailed for our freedom. The books gathered here stand out in particular for their wide appeal, being tales that any adult can enjoy (indeed, several are bestsellers) but that have also proven to be hits over the years with my own high school readers. The last one also works for middle-grade readers and is a great entrée into the topic. Many have shared that they will never look at the great wars or our soldiers the same way again after these reads. A pow-

erful, up-close story makes for an indelible impression. Great books really can be life changing. I would also add that works like these are timely, as today's millennials have grown up with unparalleled degrees of comfort and convenience in their lives, with the hardships and sacrifices of their forebears—which make today's freedoms possible—often not well appreciated, if known at all.



'Band of Brothers' by Stephen Ambrose Ambrose is rightly celebrated as one of America's greatest chroniclers of war, and "Band of Brothers" is the military historian at his finest, in my opinion. The book is an utterly absorbing nar-

rative of one of World War II's most successful and courageous companies—East Company, 506th Regiment, 101st Airborne. It follows the company from its arrival in Normandy to its capture of Hitler's famed Eagle's Nest outpost in Bavaria, sparing no detail. Ambrose has a remarkable gift of putting you right in the trenches (you can almost feel bullets zinging overhead) while building in an amazing amount of backstory, while never getting bogged down or crushing you with the weight of his research. You come to know his soldiers as individuals, each with their own story, family, and past. The prose always feels brisk, the events immediate. Ambrose's craftwork is striking in itself. What may be particularly eye-opening for first-time readers is the extraordinary degree of discipline and subordination of one's own needs, desires, and interests that are demanded in the service. There is a total dedication to your unit and cause that's evoked by "Band"—that even might entail laying down your own life. (And kids today think forgoing the latest iPhone is a sacrifice!) You really feel the selflessness of our soldiers with Ambrose's writing. One can't help but set the book down a bit humbled by what these men went through and gave of themselves, for a greater good.



'Unbroken' by Laura Hillenbrand A runaway bestseller and major motion picture, "Unbroken" is the unbelievable tale of Louis Zamperini and his harrowing ordeals in World War II as an airman turned Japa-



Christian Jacobs places a flower near the headstone of his father, Marine Sgt. Christopher Jacobs, at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Va., on Memorial Day, May 27, 2018.

EDUCATION

Homeschool: Don't Leave Out the Best Parts

BARBARA DANZA

When most homeschooling parents think about their children's course of study and what subjects to include in their education, reading, writing, math, science, and history likely come to mind. While teaching these is important, of course, so too are those areas of focus that bring delight, beauty, and meaning. They may be barely glanced at in the public school setting, but are arguably even more important than those so-called core subjects. **Virtue** The moral foundation parents provide their children is fundamental. Homeschoolers have the advantage of the time and freedom to incorporate the moral and spiritual values they deem most important into their children's every day. Prioritize the character your children cultivate and their understanding of the divine, truth, goodness, beauty, and diligence. This is the bedrock of an education. What could possibly be more important? **Music** It's easier than you might think to incorporate a rich study of music into your homeschool. We are fortunate to have access with our modern tools to virtually every



Get the kids out in nature as much as possible.

piece of excellent music ever created. Create playlists that focus on specific composers or that match the time period you're studying in history and simply play the music in the background. Gather books about music and musicians. If possible, provide your children with instrument lessons. **Art** Similarly, a parent need not obtain a degree in art history to be able to easily incorporate an appreciation for art in their homeschool. Choose a work of art each week and hang a print of it to enjoy. Gather books about art,

architecture, and artists. Visit museums, watch documentaries, and have your children take art classes. Keep art supplies fully stocked at all times and encourage your children to spend time creating. **Nature** There is so much to be learned from a simple study of nature. Get outside as much as possible with your children and encourage their observation and wonder at the many facets of nature around them. At home, hang bird feeders, plant a garden, curate a collection of natural artifacts found in

redeeming power of religious renewal, years later, when he embraces faith and is finally able to forgive his tormenters and heal. (It should be noted that there is also a Young Adult's Edition of the story, for those wishing to share the tale with middle-grade readers; the original tale has sat fine with my high school students.) **'Fire in My Eyes' by Brad Snyder and Tom Sileo** This is a little-known gem of a book that's been a perennial favorite among my students, and that had a real impact on me. It forever deepened and honed my appreciation for our veterans. "Fire In My Eyes" is the autobiographical tale (unlike the other two stories here) of Brad Snyder, an Explosive Ordnance Disposal officer with SEAL Team Ten who is serving in Afghanistan. **Many have shared that they will never look at the great wars or our soldiers the same way again after these reads.** The unthinkable happens, just months after Bin Laden's triumphant capture, when an enemy improvised explosive device is set off and the explosion leaves Snyder enshrouded in darkness. After endless hours of operations, he is left with the crushing news: His vision will never be restored. He is blind. But like Zamperini before him, Snyder's is a tale of incredible will and optimism in the face of insurmountable odds. He not only battles through the emotional darkness engulfing him—finding the will to go on, allowing himself to love again—but also the physical limitations of his new condition. Driven by incredible courage, Snyder goes on to become a champion swimmer—earning a gold medal at the 2012 Paralympic Games, just one year after his sight was taken from him. It's a tale that's equal parts inspiring and humbling, and every bit as moving. While this is the story of just one serviceman, it's at once the tale of so many more—whose names we might not know, whose ordeals we may never share in, whose sacrifices and quiet heroism we'll never have a chance to personally thank them for. But that's exactly what Memorial Day is for, and there is much gratitude to express. *Matthew John is a veteran teacher and writer who is passionate about history, culture, and good literature. He lives in New York.*



LARGER THAN LIFE: ART THAT INSPIRES US THROUGH THE AGES

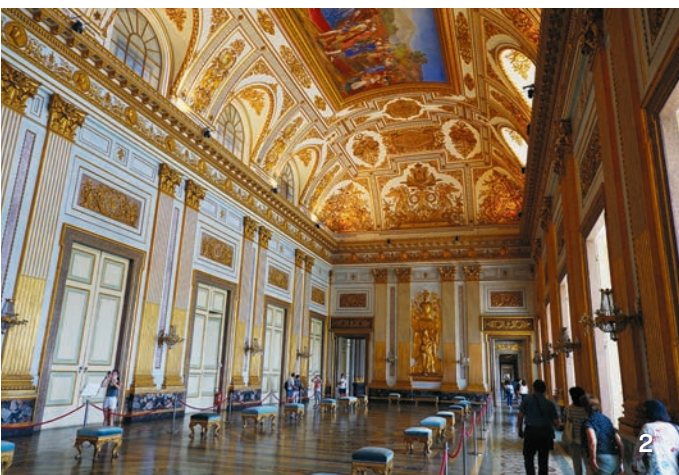
The Largest Royal Palace in the World: Caserta, in Italy

JEFF PERKIN

Standing five stories tall with an incredible 1,200 rooms, Reggia di Caserta, or the Royal Palace of Caserta, is the largest royal palace in the world by volume. Honored as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1997, the palace was called "the swan song of the spectacular art of the Baroque" as part of its confirmation. A highlight of Italian Baroque architecture, the otherworldly interiors of the palace were utilized in two "Star Wars" films. The immensely sprawling property encompasses 300 acres with the palace's floor area making up over a half-million square feet. Designed by architect Luigi Vanvitelli, the palace is a large rectangular plan with four orthogonal arms which create four inner courtyards. A vaulted arcade connects three octagonal vestibules that lead to the four courtyards. The palace's lengthy, two-toned Neoclassical façade is a restrained counterpart to the decadently decorated rooms inside; 40 monumental rooms were built to host royalty and their guests for

various occasions. These magnificent rooms are covered with eye-catching Baroque ornamentation and a myriad of artistic details from floor to ceiling. The Royal Palace of Caserta sits below a surreal chain of basins and fountains that are fed by a man-made waterfall in the distance. A truly surreal setting, the Royal Park seems to extend to the end of one's eyesight. Greenery surrounds the two-mile-long promenade and features many Neoclassical fountains filled with mythologically-significant scenes composed of numerous sculptures. Built for King Charles of Bourbon in the mid-late 18th century, the Royal Palace of Caserta houses two dozen state apartments, the Palatine Chapel, a large library, many fresco-painted ceilings, and a theater inspired by the Teatro San Carlo of Naples. Despite its enchanting grandeur and scale, it remains to be relatively unknown by name outside of Italy. *Jeff Perkin is a graphic artist and integrative nutrition health coach. He can be reached at WholySelf.com*

(Top) Standing five stories tall and 810 feet wide, the Royal Palace of Caserta is the largest palace by volume in the world. This view of the back side of the palace only hints at the incredible two-mile-long promenade and waterway that stretch vastly across the Italian landscape like a man-made river adorned by impressive fountains and sculptures that are framed by natural forests. (Right) The Palatine Chapel is another monumental room at the palace. Like those seen in a magnificent cathedral, large columns line the arcade of this massive space, with gold-painted moldings patterning the arched ceiling above. Above the altar, a beautiful domed apse gives the illusion of greater depth and creates a mighty feeling of solemnity.



1. Entering the Royal Palace, the "Grand Staircase of Honor" is a truly monumental and exquisite architectural feat. The long stairways are lined by walls and columns of colored marble. Arched ceilings soar multiple stories above, giving the visitor the sensation of being in a vast open space of great significance. 2. The Throne Room is one of 40 large rooms considered to be "monumental" at the palace. This marvel of Italian Baroque architecture features a large arched ceiling covered in elaborate gold-painted stucco work, in addition to a large central fresco. Massive doors line the glimmering hall with door handles that are at the height of most people's heads. 3. An example of the decorative rooms at the palace, with all of its myriad details and excessive ornamentation fighting for the viewer's attention in this richly Baroque room. The entire ceiling is elaborately painted with elements of illusory dimension and windows. Gold-painted borders stretch from floor to ceiling, outlining the brightly colored walls and large mirrors and doors. A gaudy glass chandelier hangs low. 4. The Fountain of Ceres is one of a string of fountains along the waterway that is fed by the Great Waterfall in the distance. This man-made waterfall is fed by the Carolino Aqueduct, a 23-mile-long channel that was built to provide water to the palace. The sculptures were made out of Carrara marble and travertine by sculptor Gaetano Salomone.

Trust the Science and Skip the Gender-Neutral Toys and Clothes

ANNIE HOLMQUIST

Stay-at-home father Jay Deitcher prided himself on “blurring gender lines,” a trait he tried hard to pass along to his own young son. So he hid the kiddie clothing that sported footballs and instead gave his son a baby doll to push in a stroller on their walks, Deitcher says on Today online.

And then his 2-year-old discovered trac-

tors, and the gender-neutral charade was over. “I had to make a choice,” Deitcher writes. “Buy him clothes with pictures of heavy machinery on them and make the kid happy, or force him to wear shirts emblazoned with fuzzy animals to appease me.” Deitcher fought it at first, trying to interest his son in other directions, but nothing worked, and finally he gave in, letting his son immerse himself in the traditional boy world of machine-oriented clothing and toys. Deitcher felt like a failure as he saw his attempt at gender-neutral parenting fall apart. And in the eyes of the pop culture that tries so hard to blur the lines between the sexes—demolishing so-called social constructs of gender roles, clothes, toys, and interests of children before they’re fully aware of their surroundings—he did fail. But he shouldn’t take it personally. Unfortunately for him, his quest was always going to be an uphill battle, for it’s pretty hard to fight against the scientific facts of biology.

One of those facts is that there are biological differences between the sexes. And it is those differences—not crafted, politicized societal norms—that drive little boys toward trucks and tractors and little girls toward dolls and other caregiving toys.

Sex researcher and author Dr. Debra Soh explains this in her book, “The End of Gender.”

“Gender is dictated by prenatal hormone exposure, as opposed to coercive gender norms imposed upon infants the minute they exit the womb,” Soh writes. Boys tend to choose “mechanically interesting activities, like playing with wheeled toys” because they have higher levels of testosterone, received while being formed in the womb. Girls, on the other hand, dealing with far less testosterone, are much more empathetic and gravitate toward “socially engaging activities and occupations” such as

those found in playing dolls or house. Soh points out that these biological differences are also present in animals: “Despite lacking socialization from their caregivers or other monkeys, young female monkeys will choose dolls, and male monkeys will choose wheeled toys.”

The reason these biological sex differences are so important to understand is that politically correct pop culture has taught parents otherwise. Parents are told that it is of utmost importance that children not be encouraged toward traditional gender roles and interests, so parents go to the other extreme, as Deitcher did, giving their boys the dolls and their girls the trucks. But as Soh explains, biology soon takes over, leaving parents confused as their sons or daughters gleefully pursue gender-specific toys despite all the attempts to condition them otherwise.

Such confusion shouldn’t be a surprise, however, for it is exactly what happens when parents listen to the cacophony of voices in the media, government, and society at large. C. S. Lewis described it as a tactic of the devil in his “Screwtape Letters.”

Writing to his nephew Wormwood, the demon Screwtape encourages his protégé to let his victim get caught up in the chatter going around so as to keep him from investigating the scientific facts:

“But the best of all is to let him read no science but to give him a grand general idea that he knows it all and that everything he happens to have picked up in casual talk and reading is ‘the results of modern investigation.’ Do remember you are there to fuddle him.”

The message for us today, then, is not to get “fuddled,” thinking that we will only be good parents if we promote gender neutrality to our children. Despite what our culture says, it is perfectly fine to promote

Girls tend to gravitate toward “socially engaging activities and occupations.”



gender-specific toys and clothes to children—in fact, it’s good! And the parents who do so are not stifling their children’s identity. They are simply going along with the facts of biology and are bucking the chatter of a society that thinks it knows everything when really it knows nothing. Encourage your girls to be girls and your boys to be boys. Stop the confusion and start them thinking straight.

This article was originally published on Intellectual Takeout.

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

Parents are told that children should not be encouraged toward traditional gender roles.

Boys prefer “mechanically interesting activities, like playing with wheeled toys,” author Debra Soh says.

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK

Fun Family Night Ideas That Spark Creativity and Curiosity

KAREN DOLL

Family nights are one of the best ways to play together as a family while also strengthening your relationships with one another. Whether you plan a weekly, biweekly, or monthly family night, the anticipation is energizing for kids and parents alike.

Are your kids bored with the same old pizza and board game nights? With a little creativity and preplanning, you can add some pizzazz to your family night fun.

Host a Talent Show

This all-time family favorite makes me smile just thinking about the good old days now that our kids are grown and on their own. I will never forget the time my husband and young son went “surfing” in our family room—donning their swim trunks they balanced on brightly decorated cardboard surfboards while the Beach Boys belted out “Surfin’ USA.”

This is a great time for your budding musicians or actors to put on a dress rehearsal for the real event later. Or maybe the family comedian wants to try out some new jokes, or the amateur juggler wants a chance to shine in the spotlight. Kids can also put a comedic twist on a serious poem, act out a favorite story, or showcase a new skill just mastered. Encourage your kids to get creative and make DIY costumes using whatever they can find around the house. If your kids are young, it helps to pair up with an older sibling or parent.

We even hung a makeshift curtain made from old bedsheets across the room for that wow factor when each act entered.

Go Geocaching

Geocaching is an adventure and a mystery all rolled up into one great big night of family fun and discovery. Simply put, geocaching is searching for hidden treasures or caches using GPS coordinates within the desired radius from your house.

First, familiarize yourself with geocaching by visiting Geocaching.com and setting up a free account. In the Help Center, you can learn the basics and watch video tutori-

als. When you’re ready to start, you can either download a geocaching app onto your smartphone or purchase a GPS device.

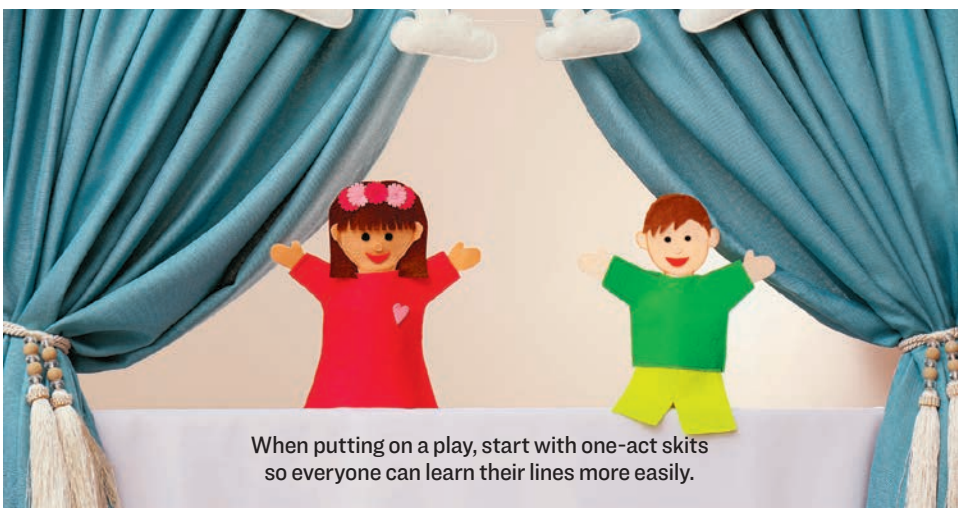
Spotting the cache you’ve been searching for is just the beginning of the adventure. Some caches have small trinkets inside, such as a yo-yo, coins, a mini flashlight, a kazoo, or a whistle. (According to geocaching etiquette, you can keep a trinket, but only if you leave another trinket of equal value in its place.)

Have a Family World Records Night

Did you know that the world’s tallest man, 30-year-old, Sultan Kosen, from Turkey, stands at 8 feet 3 inches? And that Samantha Valle is the owner of two amazing canine record-holders, Geronimo and Feather? Geronimo holds the record for most jump rope skips by a dog in one minute (91) and Feather, a high jumper, hurled herself into the air for a record-breaking jump of 75.5 inches.

For inspiration, spend some time exploring the Guinness World Record site with your kids. Learn what it takes to actually set a record and read about the shining star record holders in the showcase section.

On the kids page, children can play games, take quizzes, and read the stories of young achievers. Who’s up for a challenge? The Guinness folks have also created five special just-for-kids record challenges.



When putting on a play, start with one-act skits so everyone can learn their lines more easily.

Ask your daughter to grab all of her socks and try to put a record-breaking number of socks on one foot in just 30 seconds. Ask your son, the expert paper airplane pilot, to see how many times he can hit a target in three minutes.

I love that this family night idea is adaptable. Your family can make up its own challenges. Invite grandparents to join in the fun. Teach your dog a new trick while also keeping it engaged and happy, especially if it’s a puppy. Athletes can work to break a record while honing their skills and keeping fit. Make this an ongoing family night, and everybody can keep track of their progress on a spreadsheet or whiteboard.

Set the stage for your next family night with a bit of theatrical fun.

Visit a Farm

Have you ever milked a cow? Brushed a horse? Many farms offer free tours and allow visitors to help feed, groom, and tend the animals. You and your kids can get an amazing up-close-and-personal look at real livestock and, for the brave and daring, maybe even help muck out the horse stalls. Depending on the time of year, you might even get to witness the birth of baby goats (late winter through early spring) or chicks (late spring through summer).

Some farms offer a weekend farm stay, enabling you and your family to experience

life on the farm from sunup to sundown. Wake up to the sound of a rooster’s mighty crow and fall asleep to the gentle coos of the hens.

Put on a Play

Set the stage for your next family night with a bit of theatrical fun. Do your kids have a flair for the dramatic? What kid doesn’t? Tap into this thespian energy and put on a play.

Start with simple one-act plays so everyone can practice learning lines and stage positions. Websites such as A2Z Home-school, Freedrama, and Dramatic Publishing (which has free sound effects) offer free, family-friendly one-act plays to download and print out. You could choose a favorite scene from a play you’ve seen, or write your own wacky family skit.

Do your kids have a favorite picture book or story? The bonus here is, they likely know the story by heart because you’ve read it to them about a hundred times, so that could be a good choice. And who knows, this might just awaken a love of acting in one of your kids.

Remember, your play doesn’t have to be an extravagant event. With a little DIY creativity, you can make great costumes and props and even greater memories.

Karen Doll is a freelance writer and homeschooling consultant based in the small village of Wassergass, Pa. She enjoys writing about homeschooling, gardening, food and culture, family life, and the joys of chicken keeping. Visit her at AtHomeWithKarenDoll.Wordpress.com

For More Information

- Geocaching
Geocaching.com
- Family World Record-Setting Night
Kids.GuinnessWorldRecords.com
- Putting on a Play
A2ZHomeschooling.com (search for “Free Scripts for Kids”)
- FreeDrama.net
- DramaticPublishing.com



FOR KIDS ONLY

THE EPOCH TIMES

Week 20, 2022

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE FOG LIFTS IN CALIFORNIA?

PEANUTS/NSODA/SHUTTERSTOCK

“The pessimist complains about the wind; the optimist expects it to change; the realist adjusts the sails.”

WILLIAM ARTHUR WARD (1921–1994), AMERICAN WRITER

JUICE DASH/SHUTTERSTOCK

Clouds

By Christina Rossetti

White sheep, white sheep,
On a blue hill,
When the wind stops,
You all stand still.
When the wind blows,
You walk away slow.
White sheep, white sheep,
Where do you go?

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK

This Week in History

A VOLCANIC ERUPTION

EVGENIY BELIAEV/SHUTTERSTOCK

On May 18, 1980, one of the largest volcanic explosions ever recorded in North America occurred. It began with an earthquake measuring 5.1 on the Richter scale. This triggered a giant landslide on the northern side of Washington state’s Mount St. Helens. This was followed by a massive blast of air that spewed ash and stone and caused devastation for miles.

Today, the area around the volcano has been designated a national monument, and the volcano is still studied by scientists hoping to learn more about volcanic activity.



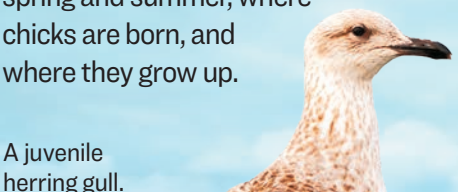
Mount St. Helens erupting.

INTERNET/ORB MEDIA/GETTY IMAGES

By Aidan Danza, age 15

INSIDE A HERRING GULL COLONY

Herring gulls (commonly called seagulls) are like many seabirds, in that they nest in colonies by the sea. This is where gulls live during the spring and summer, where chicks are born, and where they grow up.



A juvenile herring gull.

Most seabirds, including herring gulls, nest in colonies along the coastlines, usually on rocky islands. Often, the colonies can number in the thousands of gulls, and each gull will return to the same spot in the same gull metropolis every year.

Many seabirds, in their colonies, fight over “property” within a colony, and gulls are no exception. However, they appear to have a simple language that they use to keep their cranky neighbors at bay. If a neighbor approaches a “property line,” the encroached neighbor will give a call that is dubbed the “long call.” To perform this display, the gull will lengthen its body, and give a long, squawking call. This call is often given outside a colony, even in the dead of winter.

A “mew” call can be used when a gull requires reinforcement from its mate. The gulls can use upright posture displays to give a neigh-

bor his final warning. In this display, the gull stands straight up, with the wings slightly puffed, but still folded. Then, if the dispute is still unresolved, the gull will perform a charge display, where the gull stands upright, spreads its wings, and runs at its target. Usually, these displays are enough to convince an intruder that the “property owner” means business, but gulls still occasionally fight.

Gulls keep such tight property boundaries in order to protect their chicks. These chicks are born with their eyes open, and covered in feathers. Within a few hours, they are able to move under their own

power, and fledge in around seven weeks.

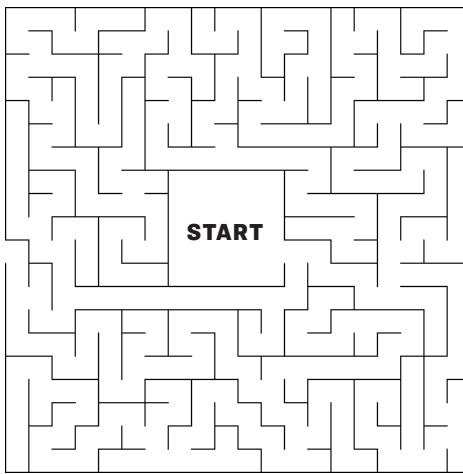
Herring gulls are opportunistic feeders, meaning that they will eat anything they possibly can. With that said, most gulls prefer to eat marine invertebrates, such as crabs, urchins, and clams, and this seems to be their healthiest diet, given the large eggs of the gulls that prefer these meals.



A herring gull nest with eggs.

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

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



Solution For Easy 1

6 - 6 - 2 x 01

Medium puzzle 1



Solution For Medium 1

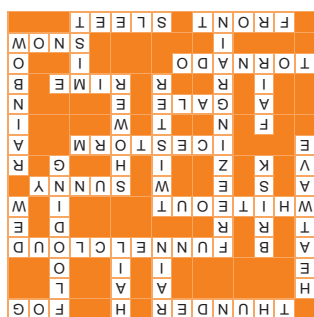
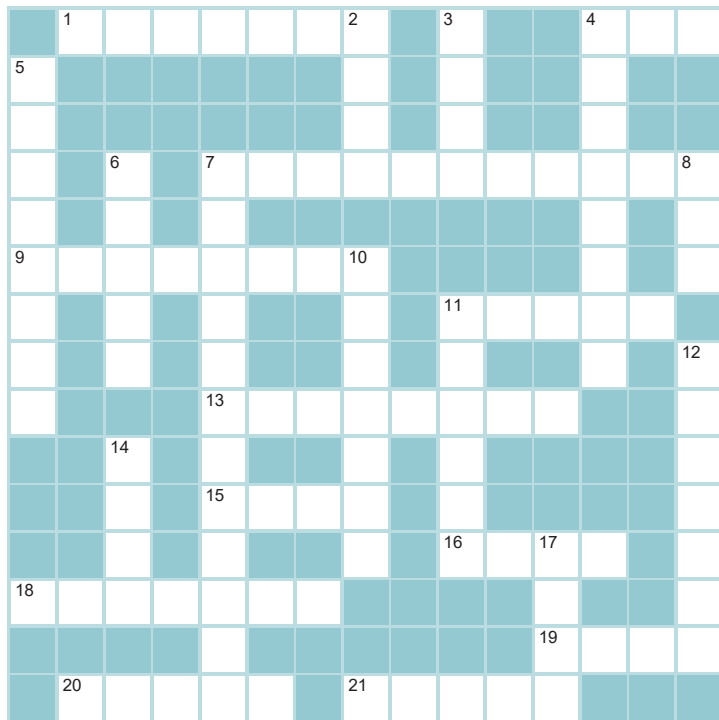
8 + 21 - 8 x 01 (8 - 01) x (8 + 21)

Hard puzzle 1



Solution For Hard 1

22 - 11 x (18 - 98)



Across

- 1 “...down comes up like ____” (7)
- 4 Makes it hard to see (3)
- 7 Where a tornado comes from (11)
- 9 Blizzard hazard (8)
- 11 Bright (5)
- 13 Freezing rain event (3,5)

- 15 Big blow (4)
- 16 Icy coating (4)
- 18 It may take you to Oz (7)
- 19 Falling flakes (4)
- 20 Weather change line (5)
- 21 Really cold rain (5)

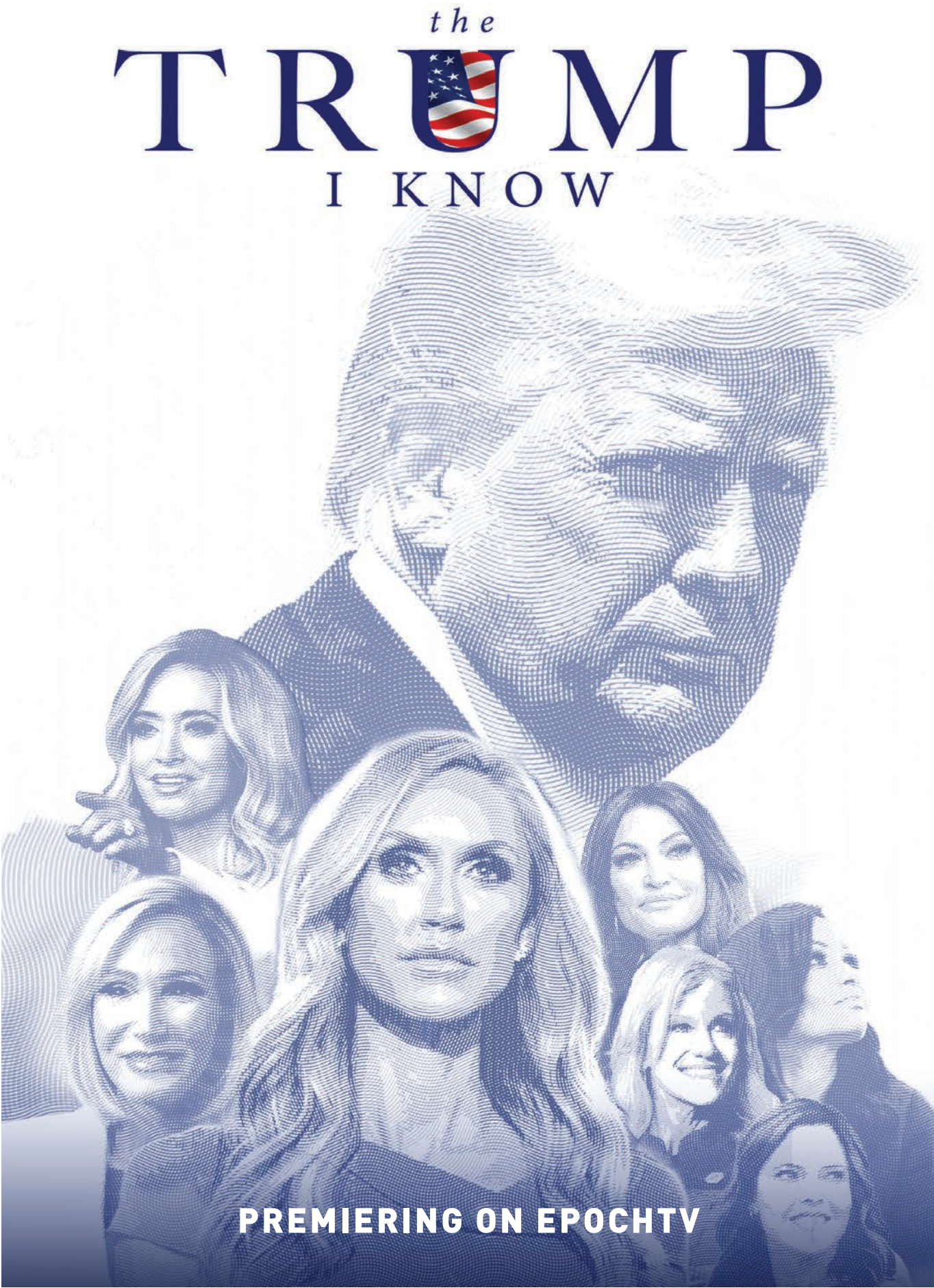
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DOCUMENTARY

Everyone Seems to Have an Opinion of President Trump But Who Is He Really?

Meet the women in the Trump family, administration, campaign, and business. Some are children of immigrants, some are from very humble beginnings, but all are strong, intelligent, and talented patriots. They were chosen because Trump saw something in them that many didn't even see in themselves.

Through their stories and through their eyes, get a glimpse of the Trump they know.

Watch "The Trump I Know" on EpochTV and share this important program with your family and friends!

Watch Now at
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