

THE EPOCH TIMES LIFE & TRADITION

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A Guide to Raising Good Kids

How to give children a strong moral compass

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Take a bike ride with them on the weekend, or go on a hike. A lot of activity will make them strong, ward off obesity, and help them sleep.

A loving home is key for a child to develop into a well-adjusted, responsible citizen.



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What Is Healthy Masculinity?

AARON M. RENN

Healthy masculinity is when men flourish first for themselves, then for their families, posterity, and communities. A man embodying healthy masculinity knows who he is.

He is physically healthy and strong. He is pursuing and developing his skills and capabilities to make him more competent and able to take action. He has a sense of agency, drive, and desire to make his mark on the world, not just have the world make

its mark on him. He is someone who exists in a world where it is realistically possible for him to develop his potential, fulfill his own ambitions, and leave a posterity and a legacy for the future.

There is no one-size-fits-all description of healthy masculinity (and thus a healthy man), but identity, actual health, development of potentialities, genuine accomplishment in the real world, and a legacy are the core.

Men embody this through many roles and archetypes. We can think

of the explorer, the settler, the warrior, the scientist, the philosopher, the artist, the builder, the king, the priest, the monk, the trader, the craftsman, the father, etc.

Some men embody healthy masculinity through extremes—the hero, the world-class athlete, the saint, someone on a quest for greatness or pursuing the audacious idea, a man facing an extreme trial or difficulty or even death, etc.

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Men benefit from finding a group of other men for friendship and shared interests.

A Guide to Raising Good Kids

PARNELL DONAHUE

My wife Mary and I were talking about the shooting in Uvalde, Texas, when she brushed tears from her brown eyes and asked, "What could be worse than having a child shot to death in school?"

I thought for a while and wondered aloud, "I suppose it could be worse to be the parent of the shooter. But I don't know!"

That led to a discussion on how could anyone kill a room full of fourth-graders and what parents can do to make sure their kids have the moral compass and character that would never allow them to be so evil?

How can we protect our kids from becoming the next shooter? I condensed 10 lessons from my parenting book, "Messengers in Denim," which, if followed, should assure that your kids develop a strong moral compass.

1. Provide a Loving Home

A good, loving father-child relationship and a good, loving mother-child relationship are needed for a child to develop the moral code required of a well-adjusted, responsible citizen. Loving parents are always honest with their kids; they offer honest compliments that help kids develop self-esteem and feel good about themselves. If you're a single parent, find a person—sibling, good friend, or other respected individual—of the opposite sex to be your children's mentor. Dads or dad surrogates are essential for girls as well as boys for developing self-discipline.

2. Encourage Music in School, Church, and at Home

Instruments may be expensive, but drummers only need to purchase their drumsticks, and singing is basically free. In "The Ugly and the Good" in Touchstone journal, Anthony Esolen wrote that good music and poetry are the way back to a civilized country and world; both have a way of building friends and peace. And the playing of music, according to Lesley Maxwell Mann, associate professor of music at Belmont University, shows that "practice makes perfect" and that making errors and correcting them lead to easier decision-making and resilience not only in music, but also in life.

Loving parents offer honest compliments that help kids develop self-esteem and feel good about themselves.

Children benefit immensely from daily outdoor play.



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

3. Limit Screen Time—Video Games, Television, and Social Media
Permit none of these at mealtime, study time, or bedtime, and make sure computers are in your view at all times, not in the bedrooms. Don't allow any violent games or porn in your house.

4. Make Time Every Day for Outside Play

Put a hoop on the garage and let your kids shoot baskets. If you don't have outside space at home, find a local park, have them play intramural games after school, and keep them active. Take a bike ride with them on the weekend, or go on a hike. A lot of activity will make them strong, ward off obesity, and help them sleep.

5. Know Where Your Kids Are and With Whom They're With at All Times

A recent article in The Tennessean told of six teens who were shot at 10:45 p.m. One boy was 13, two boys were 15, and two girls were 15; parents weren't mentioned in the article, so we don't know if they knew where their kids were. But I can't imagine any of my kids at that age being any place at 10:30 p.m. without my knowing where they were and who they were with. Actually, I would know—they would have been home with their mother and me.

6. Attend and Be Active in Church, Synagogue, or Temple

Teens who regularly attend religious services are "more likely to do better in school; shun alcohol, drugs, and sex; care about the poor; make moral choices based on what is right rather than what would make them happy," Christian Smith and Melinda Lundquist Denton wrote in "Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers."

Teach kids the 10 Commandments, responsibility, respect, and social manners; be positive in your thinking and speech. Encourage your kids to belong to and attend community or religious youth groups. Read religious magazines and books; have some religious articles around your home.

7. Know Your Kids' Friends, Their Friends' Parents, and Their Parents' Friends

Sponsor parties at your home for your kids and their friends. Invite the parents of one or more of



Music practice builds resilience.

your kids' friends to help. It will be easier to monitor food, drink, and behavior as long as you stay with the party! Be aware that kids will be influenced by their friends' parents and their parents' friends.

8. Establish Rules of Behavior With Your Kids and Be Firm in Enforcing Them

While in practice, I asked high school seniors during their physicals if they thought their parents were more or less strict than average parents. Most of the kids said about average, but there were many who replied with things such as: "They used to be really easy on me, but since I got into high school they're all over me about every little thing. I guess they think that because I got in trouble when I was younger that I'll get in trouble again" or "When I was younger they were really strict, but now they pretty much let me do whatever I want because they know that I'm a good kid and won't get into trouble." Another lesson taught by teens.

9. Be Excited About Kids Getting Their Driver's License

Tell them often, when you're bussing them during grade school years, how happy you'll be when they're old enough to drive and help you with some of your errands. Add that you know they'll be good drivers because they know about speed limits, how it feels to cross a busy street, and any other thing they do that indicates their good judgment and citizenship.

10. Avoid Marijuana, Other Drugs, and Tobacco in Any Form

If you drink alcohol, make sure you're never intoxicated. Tell your kids why you only have one drink.

Remember, be the person you want your kids to become! Swiss psychoanalyst Carl Jung said, "If there is anything that we wish to change in the child, we should first examine it and see whether it is not something that could better be changed in ourselves."

Enjoy your spouse and your kids. Pray for the grieving families in Uvalde, and may God continue to bless you and your family.

What Is Healthy Masculinity?

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But others embody it through the ordinary rhythms of life: establishing a trade, obtaining a household of one's own, building a family, raising children to exceed his own accomplishments, or leaving an inheritance. Most men embody it as part of a group of other men, such as in a military unit or sporting team, but some do so in solitary pursuits, such as the hermit or lone genius. Most will have a family, but some will focus on an all-consuming pursuit.

Healthy masculinity understands the identity and legacy a man has inherited, and seeks to extend that, in turn, to engage in "praiseworthy competition with one's ancestors," as has been attributed to Tacitus. A man's legacy is most often his family, his descendants, his community, or tribe. He seeks to create this legacy, to build it up, and even to sacrifice himself for it at times. But while sacrifice for the sake of legacy is a part of healthy masculinity, it isn't reducible to

that. The man who simply blots out his own well-being, ambitions, and fulfillment for the sake of others isn't exhibiting a healthy masculinity.

How this plays out varies by time and place. In Ukraine today, that means men fighting to save their country. It will look quite different in contemporary America. But here, too, it is possible for 21st-century American men to follow the path of healthy masculinity, even though today's world is in many ways radically different from the past. Here's how it might be embodied or pursued practically:

- Self-confidently be an American man, without being debilitated by attacks that call that identity or its value in question.
- Pursue health and fitness, such as by eating right, exercising, and avoiding drugs and excessive alcohol consumption.
- Develop skills and competence, which could involve starting simple by making minor home repairs or a more audacious move like learning a new language.

- Strive for greater degrees of excellence in what you do.
- Develop and pursue your own goals and ambitions in life, such as starting a business, having a home in the country, or revitalizing your hometown. Men don't need to apologize for having their own goals and things that are important to them.
- Find other men for friendship and common endeavors: a "band of brothers."
- Pursue and build a family, understanding that the degree of difficulty is much harder today, so you have to be consciously working at it and understand how to mitigate risks such as divorce.
- Actively train up your children to thrive in life, and help them build a life throughout their life, culminating with leaving them an inheritance.
- Invest in your community, such as by volunteering at a church, civic organization, or charity.

Not every healthy man will do each of these

things, but there's still plenty of room for men to develop healthy masculinity in America today, building a worthy life for themselves, their community, and their posterity.

This article was originally published on the Institute for Family Studies blog, as part of a series of short essays addressing the meaning and purpose of healthy masculinity in today's world.

Aaron M. Renn writes on men's issues and American culture at AaronRenn.substack.com

Correction

The article "The Lucky Life of Jack Hamlin," published in the June 1 edition, misstated one of the types of guns aboard the U.S. Coast Guard boats at the time when Jack Hamlin was working in the United States. They were 50-caliber guns. The Epoch Times regrets the error.

DEAR JUNE *On Family and Relationships*

Keeping the Hearts of Our Children

You can help children overcome a culture of selfishness through establishing a culture of respect at home, and strict, kind instruction

Dear June,

How do you keep the hearts of your children when all around there is pressure to live selfishly? My children are ages 7 to 17.

A Concerned Father

→ Dear Concerned Father,

This is a question very close to my heart. My three children are all still younger than yours, but already I see the currents of culture pulling them. I don't have a perfect answer, but I think there is a lot we, as parents, can do to help our children's hearts grow to love truth and goodness more than self.

First, it is very important to remember that all of us—parents and children alike—are in a continuous process of changing, becoming, and refining ourselves. It's perhaps obvious that children will change and grow, but we adults do as well, and we can do it more consciously. No matter what our age, we can refine ourselves—becoming more loving, kind, disciplined, and mentally free.

One exercise that I've found beneficial is to challenge myself to learn a new habit; it could be something simple like making your bed every day, or something more complex such as being kinder. It's really not easy! But from our failures we learn to know ourselves better, and we grow in humility and patience, which are key virtues for raising children—and our striving makes a deep impression on our children.

One habit that is helping me be a better parent is keeping my house in better order. I've been working on the habit of putting things away as soon as I've finished. This may seem a bit trite, but it helps me stay calm, think more clearly, and as I've learned to discipline myself in this regard, I'm also able to require more discipline from my children in many areas.

As relates to selfishness, while a clean house is satisfying to me (which is somewhat selfish), I also do it for my husband because it helps him relax at the end of a busy day when he comes home to order and cleanliness. For our children, tidying the house before my husband comes home is also a way to show respect for him; I remind them as we clean that he has been working on our behalf all day.

Respect is an important antidote to selfishness because to be respectful requires restraining selfish impulses. So creating a culture of respect in the family is one way to help children become less selfish. For mothers reading this, if you want to take it a step further, try to really understand what makes your husband feel respected and do those things. In general, men thrive on respect more than love, so by respecting him you will strengthen your marriage. In my experience, a solid marriage is one of the best things you can do for your children because it creates harmony around them and makes family a safe and wonderful place to be. Also, when children are taught respect from a young age, they are much more likely to continue this habit later in life. By respect, I include things like good manners and especially speech.

In the book "The Collapse of Parenting," Leonard Sax writes about the importance of good behavior: "In reality, behavior influences identity, and eventually becomes identity. ... Your actions will, over time change your character. Parents used to teach these moral fundamentals but many no longer do."

Sax also writes: "You don't teach virtue by preaching virtue. You teach virtue by requiring virtuous behavior, so that virtuous behavior becomes a habit."

To go further, it sets up a foundation on which you can later build sound reasoning and a clearer understanding of right and wrong. This is because when children are acting virtuously, they feel in harmony, inner and outer, so they can rationally understand that these actions equate to goodness. Because ultimately, while virtue is hard to earn, it feels wonderful in the heart when you have it.

Sax, more succinctly than I have,



ANNA KRAYNOVA/SHUTTERSTOCK

Teaching children right from wrong is easier when they are young and looking to earn approval from their parents.

parents is how a child first learns right from wrong.

Second, anyone who has spent time with a toddler knows that there's a selfish side to human nature that emerges. In my mind, an important step from baby to toddler is when the child begins to show selfishness. About a month ago, I observed my 1-year-old actively trying to stop a friend from playing with toys, even ones he wasn't playing with. When I saw this, I knew he was in a new phase of development and so I needed to parent him differently, meaning I had to be very clear and consistent about what's right and wrong and not allow him to do things that aren't allowed (cute as they may be!).

It's important to recognize that selfishness is innate to human nature, and so as we approach the issue of selfishness in our children, it's with the understanding that we're equipping them to fight not only cultural influences, but to deal with an aspect of their own nature as well.

Training

Looking back at history, it seems all cultures were concerned with this question of how to raise children up so they didn't fall prey to their selfish desires, because they recognized that the innocent desires of childhood could become vices in adulthood if a moral foundation and impulse control weren't well-established.

However, modern culture now seems have the opposite pull—our great material abundance has created many avenues of indulgence for children to get lost in, and the zeitgeist of modern parenting seems to be that we should make our kids feel happy. We seem to have forgotten that it is only through hardship that we have the chance to become our best selves. In generations past, parents were strict with their children, and if done in the right way, being strict is what allows children to overcome their selfish nature.

If we can give children an inner voice that's kind, rational, and requires high standards of behavior, then we will have done a good job. With young children, action precedes thought, and so right action leads to right thought and ultimately a right feeling in the heart. So a big part of what we can do as parents to keep our children's hearts is to insist on right action. This training is of course easier when children are young, but it's also possible with teenagers.

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also speaks directly to your question about how to keep a child's heart:

"The child expects to look up to the parent, to be instructed by the parent, indeed to be commanded by the parent. If the parent instead serves the child, then that relationship falls out of its natural balance. You will not earn your child's love at all—and the more you try, the more pathetically unsuccessful you may be. I have seen precisely this dynamic play out at least a hundred times in my own medical practice over the past quarter century. The parent who puts the child's wishes first may earn only the child's contempt, not their love."

"But if you are not primarily concerned about winning your child's love and affection and focus instead on your duties as a parent—teaching your child right from wrong and communicating what it means to be a responsible man or woman, a gentleman or a lady, within the constraints of the culture you are trying to inculcate and to share—then you may find that your child loves and respects you. When you are not looking for it."

I would like to add a caveat here, which is that requiring right behavior must be tempered with true kindness in the parent. I have observed a phenomenon in families with strong religious faith, where too much emphasis is placed on behavior and not enough on listening and understanding how the child feels. Then when a child makes a mistake (usually older children and there is an association with sin) the parents react by condemning the behavior and ostracizing the child. In the past, some cultures used shunning as a way to deal with wrong behavior, however, I think this backfires because there are plenty of people ready to empathize with and exploit unhappy youth. So we need to offer forgiveness and mercy (in addition to appropriate consequences) to our children, or else we push them away from us.

Perils of Modern Culture and Social Media

Two last suggestions for helping our children keep their hearts pure and good are, number one, to share with them the spiritual and religious wisdom that guides you, if you are spiritual or religious, and number two, read good literature. In "Books That Build Character," the authors cite a few reasons why we should be reading to our children: "First, because stories can create an emotional attachment to goodness, a desire to do the right thing. Second, because stories provide a wealth of good examples—the kind of examples that are often missing from a child's day-to-day environment. Third, because stories familiarize youngsters with the codes of conduct they need to know. Finally because stories help to make sense out of life, help us to cast our own lives as stories. And unless this sense of meaning is acquired at an early age and reinforced as we grow older, there simply is no moral growth."

I disagree with the final statement as an absolute; I have heard of prison reading programs that greatly reduce recidivism by giving inmates the opportunity to read good literature. Morality can be awakened later in life, but I think we can all agree it's much better to start our children on the right path.

Another great example of the power of literature is from Rod Dreher, the author of "Live Not By Lies," which

looks at how soft totalitarianism has been encroaching on the West.

In an interview on The Epoch Times' "American Thought Leaders" program, Dreher recounts the story of Václav and Kamila Benda, Catholics and leading dissidents against communism in Czechoslovakia. They had five children, all of whom had to attend communist-run schools, and all of whom grew up to be Catholics and dissidents like their parents.

Dreher says that the Benda parents used stories and movies to teach their children. He recalls speaking with Mrs. Benda about how she raised her children:

"I said, 'Kamila, what did you do for these kids to help prepare them to love truth, and to love God and to resist, find courage?' She said, 'Well, I would read to them for two or three hours every day.'

"I said, 'Every day?' Because she taught college, too. She said, 'Yeah, every day.' Even when her husband Václav was in prison—he was a political prisoner for four years—she said, 'I would read to them.' I said, 'What would you read?'"

"She said, 'I would read myths. I would read the classics of Western literature. And I read to them a lot of Tolkien, 'Lord of the Rings.'" I said, 'Tolkien, why Tolkien?' She looked at me and said, 'Because we knew that Mordor was real.'

"And I realized as she was telling me this, what a genius thing this was for her to have done, because these children, they couldn't understand scientific materialism. They couldn't understand Marxism or any of that, but they could understand what the Fellowship of the Ring was, they could understand what Mordor was."

"And they came to understand the movement that their parents were involved in, this dissident movement, as being analogous to the Fellowship of the Ring. So what she was able to do was to build their moral imaginations up to love truth, to love goodness, to love virtue, especially the virtue of courage, so that when they got older and could participate in the movement, that they would naturally step into that. It helped me to understand how important it is to do this prep work."

"You might say of helping keep cultural memory alive, because this is what they did. All of the dissidents, they knew that if they lost, if they allowed the communists to take away memory of what it meant to be a Czech or a Pole or a Slovak, to take that away from them, which they did by taking away the history and the culture, that they were lost."

I take very seriously what culture is currently doing to children. I don't think it's so different from what happens to children under totalitarian regimes, and I take a lot of inspiration from this anecdote. Besides the classics, my literature recommendation would be the "Little House" series by Laura Ingalls Wilder. I've been reading this with my eldest, and there are great examples both for children and parents to follow. (Spoiler alert: The parents are strict and kind, and the children love and respect them very much).

And as a final piece of advice, let us not forget the power of beauty in music and fine art as well, to help children retain goodness in their hearts.

Sincerely,
June



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

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

Woman Reunites With Son, 28 Years After Giving Him Up for Adoption

As a pregnant teen, she chose adoption over abortion

LOUISE CHAMBERS

A Pennsylvania woman who got pregnant at the age of 19 was at the peak of depression and felt hopeless, wanting to end her life. But after an incredible epiphany, she realized that, although she didn't want to live, she had no right to kill an innocent life. Choosing adoption for the infant, she then moved on with her life, relying on her faith and the support of her family.

Twenty-eight years later, her son reached out, and the pair reunited.

Rebecca L. Crist, now 74, shared the story of how she chose an alternative to abortion.

Crist grew up in Ohio and Pennsylvania, one of 10 children. At 19, Crist discovered that she was pregnant; the father was her steady boyfriend from high school, who was an alcoholic.

"He promised he had stopped drinking," Crist said. "After he showed up drunk three nights in a row, I told him we were finished, and he was to stop contacting me. For the first time in five years, I knew it was finally over."

Struggles

After finding out she was expecting a baby, Crist was devastated, and spent three months in denial. She had just undergone serious spinal surgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital, and had ambitions to attend college, and work. She did not want to marry the birth father, who she knew would go on to have lifelong struggles with addiction.

She had moved back to her parents' home following surgery, and confided in a handful of people about her pregnancy, but found being around her own father—an alcoholic—distressing.

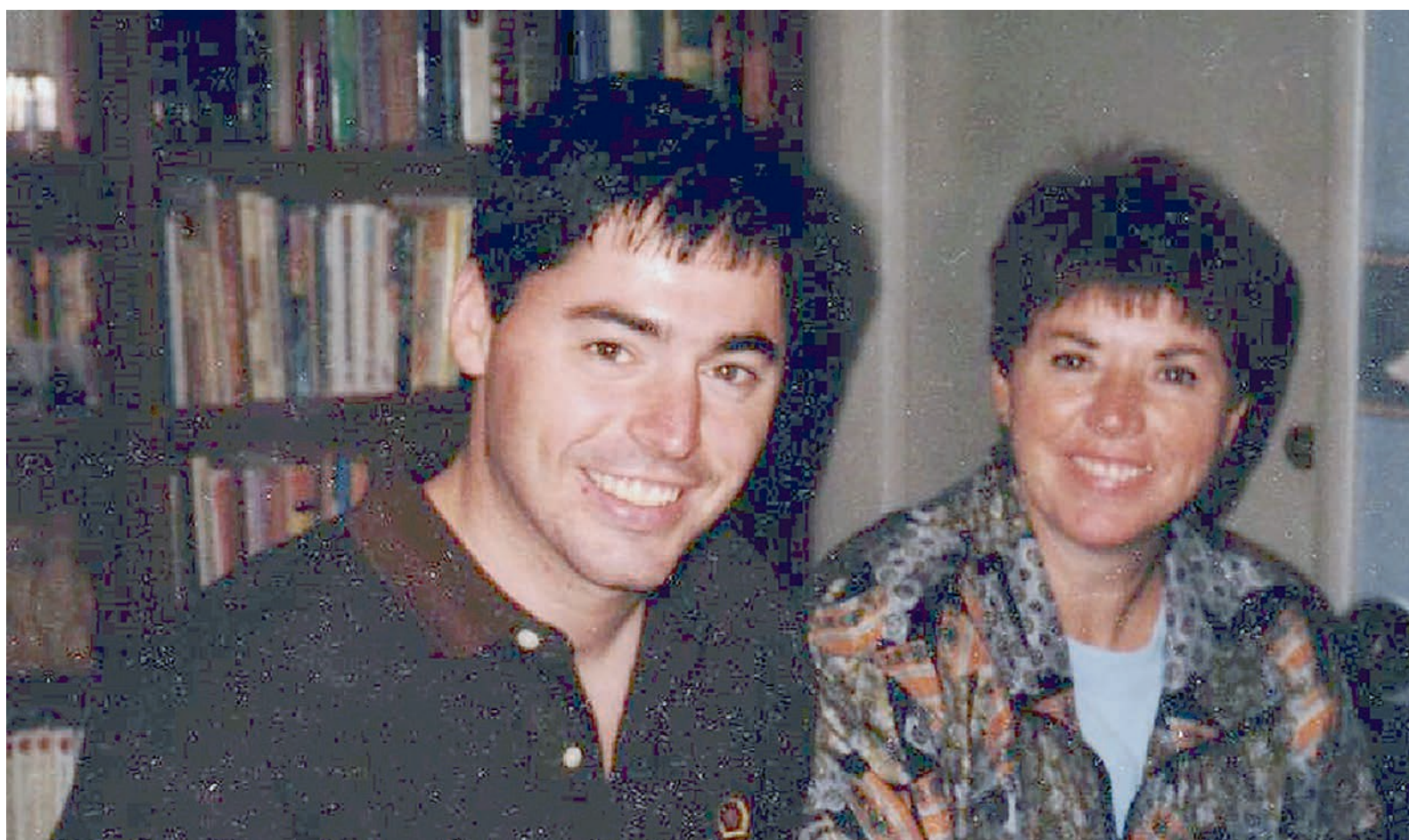
One stormy night, her depression reached its peak.

"I felt totally hopeless," she recalled. "I got in my car and took off, thinking I would just end my life. I drove and drove and didn't know where I was."

"I was trying to decide what I could hit, to put an end to everything, when I almost hit what looked like a man walking on the side of the road. I heard a thump, and was horrified to think I may have hit him."

Epiphany

Terrified by the ordeal, Crist pulled over and searched the area, but found nothing.



Rebecca Crist reunites with her birth son, Steve, 28 years later.



Steve with his family.



Steve at the hospital, when he was just five days old.

Soaking wet, she got back into her car and burst into desperate tears. It was then she had an epiphany: "I don't want to live, but I have no right to kill this innocent baby."

"In an instant, an unexplainable peace seemed to wrap itself around me," she said. "The tears stopped and I headed for home, feeling like everything would work out somehow."

Crist, who was five months pregnant at the time, prayed the whole way home. The next day, her sister-in-law called and invited her to stay at their home in Missouri

while she decided what to do; her husband, Crist's brother, was a medical student.

For Crist, the idea of adoption felt right. It was imperative to her that the adoptive parents be Christian, and she hoped they would love music and sports, like her own family. At the hospital, she received counseling to help confirm her choice.

"I tried to consider myself a 'vessel' that God was using to answer the prayers of someone else," Crist said.

Due to her spinal surgery, Crist was booked in for a Caesarean section three

and helped her brother and his wife with whatever possible. The rest of the time, she read, played the guitar, and wrote songs.

Whenever she felt her baby move and grow, she would pray to God to keep the baby healthy and strong so that he/she could be a perfect blessing to the family that was going to have her.

"I tried to consider myself a 'vessel' that God was using to answer the prayers of someone else," Crist said.

Due to her spinal surgery, Crist was booked in for a Caesarean section three

weeks before her due date. Her brother would be present at the birth, and she had already mentioned that she didn't want to know the gender of the baby.

"I guess I thought the less I knew about the baby, the less difficult it would be to get through the trauma," she said.

However, after the delivery, an uninformed nurse exclaimed: "Congratulations, you have a beautiful baby boy!"

Crist recalls crying so hard that she almost fell off the delivery table, as her brother held the baby and left the room.

Adoption

It was a closed adoption, as per the protocol of the time. As Crist sat up to sign papers the day after delivering her baby, a "spinal headache" was triggered due to the special sedation she had received. She remembers having days-long pounding pain like nothing she had felt before.

"I think perhaps it was God's way of protecting my heart from literally breaking apart because my head commanded all my attention," she reflected.

The baby's adoptive family had been chosen by then: a banker and a college professor, both Christian, with a 2-year-old son, who had also been adopted. Rebecca's sister-in-law, a social worker, bumped into them by mistake and claimed they seemed "so happy and excited."

In the aftermath of the adoption, Rebecca's relationship with God gave her strength. She prayed to find a loving life partner, and for children of her own in the future. Shortly after turning 21, her prayers were answered.

She returned to Pennsylvania and her old job. A month after her return, Crist received a call from a fellow high school alum, who had been an athlete while she was a cheerleader. Surprisingly, he invited her to a Broadway show.

"He was thought to be one of the nicest, smartest, kindest, most capable young men in our school," said Crist. "That date turned into many."

Months later, Crist shared the story of her birth son with her new love, who assured her that she'd made the right decision. He believed the man she feared she had hit on the night of her epiphany was an angel.

The couple married two years later, welcomed two daughters in Baltimore, and they moved to Cincinnati, Ohio. Every time they moved, Crist made sure that she sent a letter to the social worker who had arranged her son's adoption.

When her daughters were old enough, Crist told them about their half-brother.

"The oldest sat there and cried, and the youngest was so astounded ... then said all her best friends had a brother and she always wanted one, too," Crist recalled. "I told her I promised God I would not interfere in his life, but if he wanted to find me, I made it possible for him to do so."

Contact

Five years later, after welcoming her first grandchild, Crist received the phone call she had been anticipating for the last 28 years of her life. Her brother informed her

that her birth son, Steve, had made contact.

Steve had recently gotten divorced and had a 5-year-old son and a 3-year-old daughter. On becoming aware of the news, Crist felt like she had "just drunk a dozen cups of coffee and might possibly faint," but she instructed her brother to put her in contact with Steve.

Their first phone call lasted three hours. Crist discovered that her son had had a happy, peaceful childhood and was supported by his adoptive parents in connecting with his birth family.

"One of the first questions he asked was whether I considered abortion," Crist shared. "I told him I never gave that a thought."

The mother and son then arranged to meet in person a few weeks later, in the fall of that year. Crist was shooting a basketball in the driveway when Steve and his children pulled up.

"I was very nervous and excited," she recalled, lamenting that a chatty neighbor who knew nothing of the reunion wouldn't leave. "It was rather awkward as we saw each other and embraced for the first time in our lives while this neighbor looked on, totally befuddled and amazed!"

Crist accompanied Steve and his kids to Pennsylvania to meet his extended birth family, who hosted a party, stopping at Ohio University on the way to meet Crist's daughter. Bonds were formed immediately; Steve "fit right in" with Crist's funny brothers, and quickly learned where his love for sports and music came from.

Crist still had peripheral contact with Steve's birth father through her older brother and his wife, who ate at the same bar where he did his "nightly drinking." Steve's birth father, who never knew he had a son, wanted to meet Steve, and they happily reconnected.

For Steve, his origin story had finally come together.

Crist had always been troubled by the stigma surrounding adoption.

"It always astounded me how a decision to place a child for adoption seemed far worse than killing one in the womb," she reasoned. "I believe a human is created the moment the egg and sperm unite; what is created at that exact moment is the person he or she will be at birth, when he or she is 10, 50, or 100 years old."

Crist's convictions prompted her to write a book, "A Journey to Blossom," telling the story of creation, development, and birth from the perspective of a baby in the womb. The book was written for young children to preteens, but she said that a lot of adults say they have learned a lot by reading the book.

Over the years, Crist has credited faith as playing a central role in her enduring belief that life is sacred. She was raised by a family for whom "going to church was as natural as eating a meal together."

"I learned to pray to God and believe that he was listening, no matter what I had to say. I also learned to believe that God always loved me, even if I didn't feel lovable," she said.

As an adult, Crist became a writer for Cincinnati's Living Magazines and for her

Over the years, Crist has credited faith as playing a central role in her enduring belief that life is sacred.

Rebecca Crist with Steve and his two children at their first reunion.

family's church and schools, was a folk and church choir singer, ran her own event planning company, and has been a dedicated foster parent and volunteer advocate for children, for which she received The Friends of Children Award in Hamilton County, Ohio.

Meanwhile, Steve, now 53, works as a salesman and is living in Missouri with his father, helping to take care of his mother, who is presently quite ill.

He has also become an integral part of Crist's happy, blended family. He was one of the groomsmen in her youngest daughter's wedding. He has also accompanied the family on several vacations with his kids, and invited Crist and her husband to his college graduation after returning to school to earn his degree.

Crist once wrote a song for her son. The chorus reads: "My son, this is a love song that I'm singing just for you; I never held you in my arms, but I hold you in my heart, and that's where you'll remain my whole life through."

She reflected: "Thank my almighty Lord who does answer prayer, I held him in my arms when he was 28."

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



DEAR NEXT GENERATION

Thoughts for Life

→ Advice from our readers to our young people

Dear Next Generation, I wrote this to my son in 2002 upon his high school graduation. I actually gave it to all three of my kids when they graduated. I'm proud to say, all three of them are wonderful people.

—Jeff Sebek, California

To My Son I've written this letter to you because I feel that a chapter in my life is closing. From the minute you were born, a feeling of unconditional love for you overwhelmed me. It sounds corny, but only three times in my life have I had this kind of feeling. I believe this unconditional love is something that a parent can have for their children and only their children. It is a special type of love that I think no one can hope to understand until they have children of their own. This unconditional love has carried me through the good times with you as well as the difficult times. I will continue to love you the rest of my life.

In no particular order of importance is dear ole dad's key's to a successful life: Character. Your character is defined by who you are when no one is looking. I can't improve on that definition, so I

am not going to try. Your character sets the tone of your life. It's who you are all the time. Sure, you can fool some of the people some of the time, but your true character can never be disguised for long. Character is finding a wallet and returning it with every dollar in it. Character is telling someone they have given you too much change. Character is doing what's right when you don't want to.

Humor. Never take yourself too seriously. I've found that having a sense of humor and being able to laugh at yourself, oftentimes is the escape valve from much of life's difficult situations. Your sense of humor should not be at the expense of someone else's feelings.

Confidence and Humility. Be sure of yourself in what you say and what you do. Knowledge seeds confidence and humility keeps it under control. Don't confuse cocky for confident. All of us have moments of uncertainty. Don't be afraid to admit when you need help.

Work Ethic. Find something that excites you and work your tail off pursuing it. Until you find that "something," work your tail off looking for it. Work harder at your job than the person next to you.



In time, hard work always pays off.

Get to work early and stay late if that is what it takes. You may get discouraged at times that your hard work may not be appreciated. Rise above your disappointment because, in time, hard work always pays off.

Sports. The toy department of life. As you get older, sports should become less important in your life. Focus on your education and surround yourself with good people.

Health. Don't assume you'll always be in the good health you are in now. Take good care of your body—you get just one. There

are a lot of bad things people do to their bodies, especially when they are young.

Temper. You control it—don't let it control you. We all have a temper. A temper used sparingly can be very effective in your life. A temper out of control brings hardship and unhappiness to your life. If your temper gets the worst of you, remember the antidote: "I'm sorry." It doesn't work all the time, but it helps most of the time. To be able to say I am sorry is not a sign of weakness, rather it is a sign of strength. Two other sets of words are important to use in your life. One set is

"thank you" and the other is "I love you." I can not promise you that using these words will bring you happiness, but I can promise you that not using those words will bring sadness to your life.

Honor. Your word is your personal promise that tells a friend or stranger, "You can trust me." It is a very important trait that helps define the core of who you are. A handshake of agreement should mean no less than your signature.

Wisdom is not how smart you are, but rather what you do with your smarts.

Compassion. Care about people who are not as fortunate as you (and there are billions who fit this description) and have sympathy for those who are sad. Without compassion, the soul becomes dark and cold.

God. There is a God and he loves you and watches you every day. Right now, you are not looking for him, but when you do, he will be right in front of you with open arms.

Spouse. Choose your spouse wisely. The most important decision of your life will be who you decide to marry. Look for someone who will be a life partner, who will be by your side through the "good times and the bad." Ask your family and your best friends what they think of the person you are thinking of marrying and listen to what they have to say. People who love you will give you good advice.

I said that these thoughts were in no particular order, but that's not true. The

above thoughts are not in any particular order of importance but this last thought is. It is about happiness and gratitude. Happiness and gratitude are the most important keys to life next to loving God. If you are not happy, these other things I have mentioned become unimportant. Being a happy person is the blueprint to life. The other thoughts are the building materials.

There is a "secret to happiness"—it is called gratitude. All happy people are grateful, and ungrateful people cannot be happy. We tend to think that it is being unhappy that leads people to complain, but it is more accurate to say that it is complaining that leads to people becoming unhappy. Become grateful and you will become a much happier person. When you think you deserve something, you are in trouble. Expect little and appreciate a lot.

Gratitude, the most important component of happiness, is largely dependent



There is a 'secret to happiness'—it is called gratitude. All happy people are grateful, and ungrateful people cannot be happy.

Jeff Sebek

Laughter often provides a necessary escape valve in hard times.

upon receiving what we do not expect to receive. That is why for example, when we give children so much that they come to expect more and more, we actually deprive them of the ability to be happy—because they have less and less gratitude! (I stole a few great words from Dennis Prager.)

Being happy is not a given in life. It is something that only you can seek for yourself. It will not just come to you. You have to work at being happy and you can only be happy if you are grateful for the things you have and for the people in your life. Your adult life is just beginning. I hope what I have written has meaning for you. I wish you the greatest success and happiness that this world can offer.

Lovingly,
Dad

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

Send your advice, along with your full name, state, and contact information to NextGeneration@epochtimes.com or mail it to: **Next Generation, The Epoch Times, 229 W. 28th St., Floor 7, New York, NY 10001**

4-Legged Heroes Are Memorialized at New York Pet Cemetery

DAVE PAONE

There are good dogs, there are bad dogs, and then there are hero dogs. The lives of deceased hero dogs are celebrated at the nation's oldest pet cemetery in Hartsdale, New York, just north of New York City.

When one hears the words “pet cemetery,” it's hard not to conjure up visions from the Stephen King horror movie of the same name. But at Hartsdale Pet Cemetery, there's no horror but a lot of love in the form of monuments erected in memory of the animals that served mankind for the past five generations.

History

According to its website, “Hartsdale Pet Cemetery was founded in 1896 to address the growing need for a secure and dignified resting place for the pets of New York City.”

In 2012, it was added to the National Register of Historic Places, making it the first and only pet cemetery to receive such status.

War Dog Memorial

It was in 1923 when the first memorial on the grounds was dedicated to dogs who had served in World War I.

“The proprietor of the cemetery at that time was a veterinarian named Dr. Samuel Johnson. He was a Manhattan veterinarian,” Mary Thurston, Hartsdale Pet Cemetery's historian, told The Epoch Times. “He pitched the idea of a memorial to the dogs of war to the plot holders.”

It took a few years but he raised \$2,500, which is equivalent to over \$41,500 today. “Johnson had a very deliberative plan,” when he put the memorial at the summit of the grounds, said Thurston. “It's prominent throughout the valley. The war dog looks down over the valley and people down in the valley can look up and see it. It's almost like going to the altar on the mount.”

Dogs of the Great War

The U.S. military didn't employ service dogs during World War I. However, working side-by-side with the military was the American Red Cross, which employed them.

“They were trained to run onto the battlefield and locate wounded soldiers and then go back to the line and lead the medics with a stretcher out onto the battlefield to collect the soldier. And they would know when the dogs had made a find because the dogs were trained to bring back a helmet, a scarf, something from the soldier,” Thurston said.

At first, it was the other Allies and the Ger-

It was in 1923 when the first memorial on the grounds was dedicated to dogs who had served in World War I.



The War Dog Memorial at the Hartsdale Pet Cemetery in Hartsdale, N.Y.

mans who employed dogs on the front lines.

“But the Americans were quick to catch on how valuable they were,” she said.

The life-sized, bronze sculpture of the German shepherd in the monument wears a Red Cross blanket and harness.

Hartsdale holds two annual events: one with speakers for The War Dog Memorial each summer (including veterans who handled dogs in Afghanistan) and a blessing of the animals in the fall. The War Dog Memorial and the cemetery, in general, attract annual visitors both nationally and internationally.

Robby, the Military Dog

For decades, military dogs that became too old for service or developed health problems were put down.

In the summer of 2000, Robby was at the end of an illustrious military career with a specialty in explosives detection. He was brought out before a crowd of D.C. dignitaries in Quantico, Virginia, to demonstrate his skills in apprehending a mock suspect in burlap-padded clothing. But as Robby dashed onto the field, he let out a cry and his hindquarters collapsed.

In that instant, Robby became the face of what would be an unprecedented national campaign to end America's tradition of killing its own war dogs when they get too old to work.

Robby's handler, a 26-year-old Marine lance corporal, was told that the dog was going to be taken back to Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio to undergo “evaluation.” He feared the worst—that Robby would be

put down. The young Marine pleaded with officials at Lackland to retire Robby so he could adopt him and provide a home for whatever time he had left.

His request was denied.

Eventually, Congress passed Robby's Law, which greatly lessened the number of military dogs euthanized each year. The federal act was signed into law by President Bill Clinton, although Robby's handler was never able to adopt him.

Robby's ashes are buried at the foot of the War Dog Memorial.

Before 2016, it was very difficult for handlers of dogs who served overseas in the military to bring them back to the states after the dogs retired. Most often they were left in foreign countries because retired service dogs were no longer considered on active duty and therefore weren't eligible for government-funded transportation.

That changed in 2016 when President Barack Obama signed the National Defense Authorization Act, which included a provision for the transport of retired service dogs back to the United States.

Other Memorials

There's a small section of the cemetery's lower lawn reserved for civilian police dogs and there are other memorials for animals who have served in medical research and agriculture.

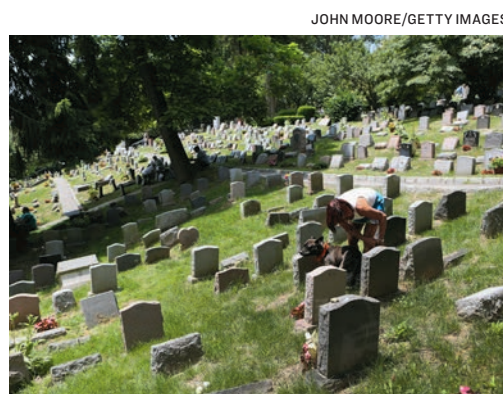
There's also a cenotaph to Laika, the first living creature to orbit Earth (in the Soviet spacecraft Sputnik 2) in 1957, and another one for a fire dog.



DAVE PAONE/THE EPOCH TIMES

(Right) The memorial to Laika, the Soviet space dog.

(Far right) A pet lover visits a grave during a memorial service for military working dogs at the Hartsdale Pet Cemetery in Hartsdale, N.Y., on June 10, 2012.



JOHN MOORE/GETTY IMAGES

Mentoring Program Matches ‘Bigs’ With ‘Littles’

DAVE PAONE

Mark B. is a lawyer in New Rochelle, a northern suburb of New York. Tysaun is a 14-year-old from nearby Mount Vernon, and is what some would describe as an “at-risk” child. In September 2021, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Westchester County matched them together, making Mark a “Big” and Tysaun a “Little.”

The charity is a youth mentoring organization that serves children who face adversity to help keep them in school and away from violence and drugs while assisting them to achieve their full potential in life. This mission is achieved through one-to-one mentoring relationships under a “Big-Little” model that matches adult volunteers with children aged 7 to 17.

A majority of these children are from single-parent households and many are from foster care.

“What they're really just lacking is a positive role model,” Rikki Childs, the Westchester chapter's assistant director, told The Epoch Times.

“Some of our Littles, some of our kids, do come from tough households, tough homes. There may be gang violence in their neighborhood; there may be gang violence in their household,” she said, noting that this is the reason parents seek out the program. “They're looking for someone to remove them from that kind of situation.”

Big Brothers Big Sisters is nothing new; it's been around nationally since 1904, and the Westchester chapter has existed since 1958. What's new is the recent COVID-19 pandemic that shut the country down for months. But that didn't stop the Westches-

ter chapter from soldiering on, making 118 new matches during that time.

The staff knows that making the best match is what leads to success. If a Big just loves fine art museums and a Little just loves professional wrestling, they're not going to be a good match, so the staff does its best to ensure both have similar interests. However, a part of what they do is introduce each other to subjects that they may not have considered previously.

“Sometimes it doesn't happen,” said Childs, who's been with the organization for 17 years. “Sometimes we have three Littles and three Bigs, and they're not compatible.”

It's then that the staff reaches out to find matches for the unmatched.

“The program requires a commitment of meeting four to six hours a month—or what we like to say is two outings a month—for a commitment of no less than one year,” Childs said.

At that point, the pair is asked if they would like to continue.

“The majority of the matches do. Sometimes we don't even have to ask,” she said, “because it's just a natural yes.”

However, on occasion, a Big or a Little will be turned down before a match is even attempted.

In the Mark-Tysaun situation, Mark was looking for ways to support his black community and Tysaun was in urgent need of a positive role model. His mother witnessed his grades decline as he became involved with negative influences in the neighborhood. The match was exactly what both of them needed.

Mark knew it would take time to build a relationship based on trust with Tysaun



A mentoring match, Mark B. and Tysaun, 14.

and didn't want to come across as a nag regarding schoolwork, so their early, bi-weekly jaunts were often going out to eat, so they could talk.

Tysaun's mother has expressed to the program manager that Mark is the exact person her son needed in his life and is very appreciative of what he's done so far. Currently, Westchester has a backlog of female Bigs, awaiting to be paired with female Littles. There are about 60 Littles on the wait-list, mostly boys.

Sometimes parents contact Big Brothers Big Sisters on their own; other times they may be referred to the charity by a social worker, a doctor, or a judge. When there's a shortage of Littles, the organization will

conduct its own outreach.

The cost of whatever activities a pair engages in is the responsibility of the Big. However, the organization stresses low-cost or no-cost activities, such as picnics, homework, and arts and crafts.

From the get-go, matches are required to establish three goals. Program managers follow up to see how far they've gotten in achieving them.

There have been matches that have lasted for 10 years. The chapter's retention rate is currently 84 percent, which means pairs continue past the one-year commitment 84 percent of the time.

Nationally, about 98 percent of the Littles don't engage in substance abuse, while 2 percent do.

“We do a lot of surveys [with the Littles],” Childs said, noting that they find “good things and sometimes not-so-good things,” such as experimenting with drugs.

While Big Brothers Big Sisters of Westchester reports to Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, the national office doesn't fund affiliates. Westchester raises its own money to operate through grants and donations and actually pays fees to the national office for use of its databases.

The question every mother asks when she signs up her child is, “When am I going to get a Big?” Childs finds this question difficult to answer since there are so many factors in producing a match.

“It's a little hard for us to say because we don't know when that perfect Big is going to walk through the door,” she said. “We kind of say, ‘It could be two days, it could be two months, sometimes it could be two years; we just don't know.’”



ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF FIN AND FUR FILMS

Caprock Canyons State Park from “Deep in the Heart.”

DOCUMENTARY REVIEW

‘Deep in the Heart’ An Epic Nature Documentary the Size of Texas

MICHAEL CLARK

Within seconds of the start of “Deep in the Heart” (also known as “Deep in the Heart: A Texas Wildlife Story”), we become aware that this isn't going to be the usual nature documentary feature. It opens with a wide panoramic aerial shot of Guadalupe Peak, the highest natural point in Texas, located in the far west region.

For those of us who have never been to the Lone Star State, it immediately dispels the assumptions that it's just a vast desert spotted with the occasional oil rig and home to millions of roaming horned cattle.

This preamble also marks the first time we hear the voice of native son Matthew McConaughey, whose understated, honey-tinged narration is the ideal vessel for the words penned by his fellow Texan, writer and director Ben Masters.

Dark History

Before delving into the “nature” aspects of his film, Masters presents a brief, but thorough, history of Texas as it applies to wildlife and game, and to his credit, it's not pretty.

Although not exclusive to Texas, the unchecked hunting and slaughter of various species in the state during the mid-to-late 19th century bordered on the catastrophic and resulted in the near-obliteration of some animals and the total extinction of others. On the upside, those in power reacted with new laws designed to right these many wrongs, and for the most part, they succeeded.

One of the first of these corrections, spearheaded by ranchers Charles and Molly Goodnight, involved the relocation of the endangered Plains bison to Caprock Canyons State Park, where they, along with white-tailed deer, continue to thrive and increase in number.

It's also during this stretch that Masters reveals his funny bone with comical cameos turned in by prairie dogs and an owl with a disapproving scowl that leads into an exuberant exit-stage-left strut.

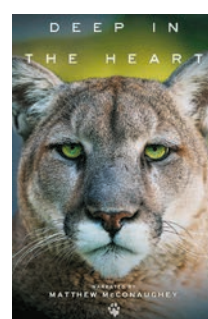
At one point inhabiting roughly 30 percent of the state, the 80 or so remaining and endangered ocelots can now only be



Ben Masters, director of “Deep in the Heart.”



Actor Matthew McConaughey, narrator of the documentary “Deep in the Heart.”



‘Deep in the Heart’

Director:

Ben Masters

Narration:

Matthew McConaughey

Running Time:

1 hour, 43 minutes

MPAA Rating:

PG

Release Date:

June 3, 2022

★★★★★

found in the southernmost part of Texas, close to the marshes and barrier islands bordering the Gulf of Mexico. Bearing a strong resemblance to jaguars, the ocelot is relatively small (15 to 35 pounds), sports black spots atop a tawny or grey coat, sleeps in trees, and hunts at night.

Atypical Storytelling

In the space of a mere 10 minutes, Masters puts the audience through an emotional wringer after a mother ocelot becomes separated from her two cubs while foraging for food. In the woods bathed in moonlight, the mother cries out, hoping the cubs will hear her.

Almost in a whisper, McConaughey says, “The worst sound a mother can hear ...” followed by 20 seconds of still, motionless footage. The sentence is then punctuated with a final, ominous word. It's gut-wrenchingly bittersweet and is just one example of Masters' multiple uses of mystery, thriller, and nonverbal storytelling devices seen throughout.

Much of the same can be said for the multi-genre score by Noah Sorota, sound designer Lyman Hardy, and editor Sam Klatt, all of whom subscribe to the “less is more” school of thought.

The placid images in the film more often resemble barely moving oil paintings than the usual earsplitting, whiplash-inducing, millisecond length cut-and-slash flicks that tend to overwhelm and numb the senses of the viewer.

In bridging the gap between land and water, Masters, director of photography Skip Hobbie, and a few of the eight other cinematographers on the project include a time-dissolve shot of the Devils River, which is part of the Rio Grande drainage basin.

Pointing out that rainfall in Texas lies at the far ends of the extremes, drought and flood, this 10-second clip—which took weeks to film—depicts a stretch of the river going from bone dry to a deluge, and it will relieve you of your breath.

Going Underground

The first of two water-based segments takes place in a cavern located deep below the surface at the San Marcos Pool portion

of the Edwards Aquifer. It's the home of several endangered amphibians, including the blind Texas salamander and the blind catfish, a creature with such a low metabolism, that it can go four years without eating.

One of the more unique creatures to show up toward the end of the film is the alligator gar, a ray-finned euryhaline fish with origins that go back more than 70 million years.

Lying just below the ground on dry land is Bracken Cave just outside of San Antonio, which houses 20 million Mexican free-tailed bats, making it the largest concentration of mammals on the planet.

When flying in packs, their “safety in numbers” mentality keeps them alive, but if the bats stray, they become easy aerial prey for red-tailed hawks and peregrine falcons. In one scene, a wayward bat becomes the target of a coachwhip snake, which at 4 miles per hour, makes it one of the fastest of its kind in the world.

Located in the Chihuahuan Desert near the Mexico border is Big Bend National Park, the habitat of both black bears and mountain lions, which unfortunately are still not protected by hunting limits.

Masters' visual inclusion of bear traps does come with a payoff, but not one we might be expecting. It's yet another great example of nontraditional documentary filmmaking.

The Whole Package

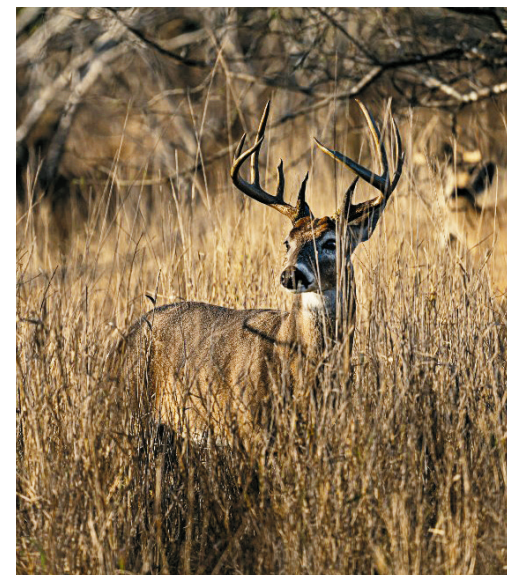
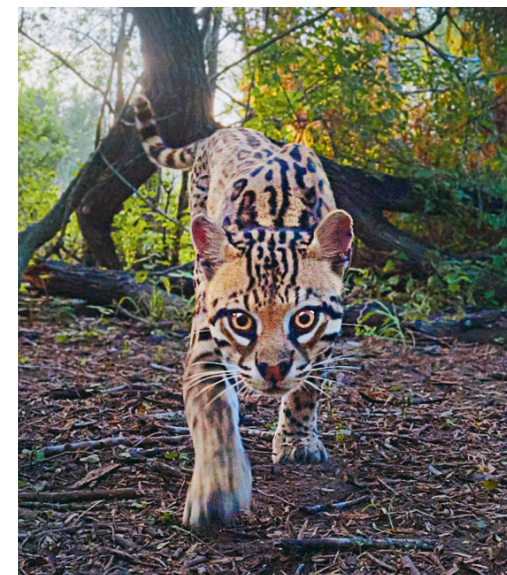
Some documentaries look great, but are thin on content, while others are highly informative, but lack visual appeal; the bulk of them are exceedingly stuffy and arid.

“Deep in the Heart” comes deep from the heart and has it all and then some. Beneath its splendid veneer is soul, humor, intelligence, and warmth. It took three years to make at a budget of just over \$1 million, yet it looks like something that cost 20 times as much.

It's a glorious celebration of life that will put anyone who witnesses its wonders in a state of utter amazement and awe.

Masters and his creative team have created one of, if not the finest nature documentaries ever produced.

Originally from Washington, D.C., Michael Clark has provided film content to over 30 print and online media outlets. He co-founded the Atlanta Film Critics Circle in 2017 and is a weekly contributor to the Shannon Burke Show on FloridaManRadio.com. Since 1995, Mr. Clark has written over 4,000 movie reviews and film-related articles. He favors dark comedy, thrillers, and documentaries.



(Far left) Big Bend National Park, the habitat of both black bears and mountain lions, from “Deep in the Heart.”

(Middle) An ocelot featured in “Deep in the Heart.”

(Left) White-tailed deer featured in the documentary “Deep in the Heart.”



An internship can provide opportunities to build professional connections.



What to Know About Internships for High Schoolers

Internships are a great way for high schoolers to get real-world experience

BARBARA DANZA

When you think about internships, you may assume they're something offered only to college students, but these days some employers are offering them to high school students as well. An internship can provide an excellent opportunity for high schoolers to test the waters of career paths they may be considering and to improve the quality of job experiences they'd otherwise not have access to.

Julie Lammers is senior vice president of government relations and advocacy at American Student Assistance (ASA), a nonprofit organization dedicated to guiding young people toward a rewarding career path. I asked her about high school internships and her advice for parents and students who may be interested.

The Epoch Times: Internships are usually something that college students consider. How widely available are internship opportunities for high school students?
Julie Lammers: Given that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated challenges to keeping students engaged with their education and future planning, now more than ever the expansion of work-based learning for high school students is critical for both individual student success and long-term economic outcomes for all. The problem is that too many students are simply unaware of these invaluable opportunities to gain real-world experience.

Based on research cited in ASA's newly published guide "High School Work-Based Learning: Best Practices Designed to Improve Outcomes for Today's Youth," while 79 percent of high school students are interested in a work-based learning experience, only 34 percent are aware of any opportunities for students their age—and just 2 percent of students have completed an internship during high school.

At the same time, we know that work-based learning benefits both young students and employers in a number of ways, including enabling students to connect classroom learning to the real world, giving students the chance to earn industry credentials before graduation, allowing students to build social capital, and cultivating a pipeline of talent with new perspectives.

The Epoch Times: What are some practical steps parents and high school students can take to identify internship opportunities they may find valuable?

Ms. Lammers: While more educators, employers, and policy leaders have seen the benefits of high school work-based learning programs and the positive impact these opportunities have, many students aren't hearing about these opportunities.

Parents and students should investigate whether there are any community-based or state- or town-run programs that coordinate internships. Increasingly, community-based organizations and government entities have become important intermediaries for helping students find internship opportunities. They should ask their local YMCA or Boys & Girls Club, or a city or state entity such as Skills for Rhode Island's Future, Career Connect Washington, Employ Milwaukee, or Massachusetts Connecting Activities.

There are also corporate entities, such as John Hancock Life Insurance Company, that might offer community-wide programs in your area. Moreover, some states allow employers to post opportunities, and stu-

dents can search the options that align with their interests and career goals.

The Epoch Times: What are the advantages of working a high school internship versus a standard summer job?

Ms. Lammers: First, I would note that ASA advocates for paid internships so that students don't have to make the tough decision between having to work to earn and being able to earn while they learn.

One of the biggest differences between a paid internship and summer job is the professional network that can be built. Research shows that most jobs are filled through networking. That's why it's imperative that we look beyond skill sets alone and strategically invest in student professional networks. A student can have the strongest skills in a particular area, but without the proper support system, they might not be able to access the same resources and opportunities as peers who are more well-connected.

Internships, including virtual and face-to-face experiences, help young people to build and grow career networks over time. Students should start with resources available at their school. However, they should not limit their conversations to career counselors (if available). Nonprofit organizations, such as Big Picture Learning, as well as teachers, coaches, friends, and their friends' parents can also help connect young people with invaluable internship opportunities.

A paid internship is more likely to help a student build their professional network because it is aligned with long-term career goals. A summer job may have a different role: It allows a student to make money and gain some workplace skills, but it is not a part of a longer career plan. A student is less likely to make the connections that can help with building a professional network. Working at the mall, for example, is a good way to learn important skills about customer service and showing up on time, but unless the student wants to stay in retail for their career, they are unlikely to make the kind of professional connections that can help to build their social capital. And with over half the jobs coming through a personal connection, it is very important that students start to build that network of career connections early.

The Epoch Times: When it comes to narrowing down a career path, what advice would you give high school students?

Ms. Lammers: One of the reasons that we are so focused on work-based learning in high school is that it gives students the opportunity to test and try the things they might like, as well as to learn about the kind of work experiences that are not for them. Eliminating the things a student might hate is just as important as finding something they love, and it's really important to take the time to test and try before the risk of trying and failing is too high.

Oftentimes, we see students waiting until college to take their first internship. If they discover at that point that they don't like their chosen field, it often comes after they have taken lots of classes and spent a lot of money. The pivot to something else at that point in the educational journey can be both costly and time-consuming. That is one reason why we would love to see high school be the time for students to test and try these work-based opportunities, allowing them to make a well-informed, confident choice for their educational and career paths.

To do this best, students should keep

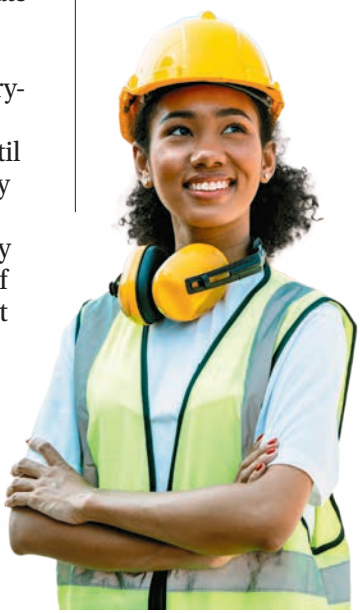
“While 79 percent of high school students would be interested in a work-based learning experience, only 34 percent were aware of any opportunities for students their age.”

Julie Lammers, senior vice president of government relations and advocacy, American Student Assistance



Only 2 percent of students have completed an internship during high school, according to the nonprofit American Student Assistance.

Rather than pursuing a customary summer job, a high school student may want to look into getting an internship and widen his or her network in a field of interest.



learning inside the classroom and out. They should seek out opportunities to participate in career exploration challenges that will enable them to experiment with different job roles while solving real-world problems, as well as free, virtual meet-a-career professional events, such as the ASA Engage Spring Series.

Students should experiment, or “try on,” as much as they can. In high school, they should seek out work-based learning opportunities such as in-person or virtual internships, pre-apprenticeships, experiential learning opportunities, service learning, or entrepreneurship experiences. All of these experiences allow students to build a workplace identity, helping to narrow down the types of roles or activities they foresee for themselves in the workforce (e.g., working in an office versus working in a lab, or working as part of a team versus working independently). Every experience teaches a student something new about how they like to work and how they can be most successful. These experiences should be valued and multiplied for every young person.

The Epoch Times: How can high school students best prepare to apply for internships?
Ms. Lammers: The best way for a student to prepare is to start by exploring potential careers based on their interests and passions, both through resources that may be provided through school counselors as well as through the use of free, online career exploration tools available outside the classroom. We believe that middle school is the ideal time to expose students to activities that can help them explore their skills and talents, experiment with their interests, and start planning for their future.

On the school side, schools often serve as an important facilitator of these experiences—they help to smooth the way for participation, ensure the students can get credit for the experience, help with transportation and logistical issues, etc. Many high schools have listings of internship opportunities or can help students search and apply for internships. Schools can provide additional support by ensuring that students are workplace-ready with an appropriate resume and interview skills, and that they understand the basics of the workplace, including the importance of showing up on time and dressing appropriately.

The Epoch Times: How can high school interns make the most of their internship experience?

Ms. Lammers: The most important thing for a student to do is to take the internship seriously as an opportunity to learn something about the world of work and their own personal work style. Even an internship that students hate can help them build social capital, understand their workplace identity, and develop workplace skills. The key is to understand that an internship can be just one step on the journey of finding what they love to do and where they want to fit into the working world. Students should embrace that learning experience, be unafraid to try and fail, and keep at it until they find what's right for them.

This interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.

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FOR KIDS ONLY

THE EPOCH TIMES

Under the Flag

By Florence Earle Coates

Under our own flag, still we will sail her—
Gallantly sail her, our own Ship of State;
Faiths we have lived by still shall avail her,
Hope at her prow, wing'd, expectant, elate!

Over the deeps of a perilous ocean,
Honor compelling, we still will sail on;
Giving, unfeared a loyal devotion,
Until, in life—in death, danger is gone.

Deem not that we, whom our fathers before us
Taught to love freedom and died to make free,
Coward shall fly, while the Heavens are o'er us,
Craft of the ether or boats under sea.

There is in valor that hearkens to duty—
Something that dearer may be than long years;
And in man's service may be a beauty
Higher than glory, and deeper than tears.

WHY IS THE U.S. FLAG THE HIGHEST RATED?

IT HAS THE MOST STARS.

“When we honor our flag, we honor what we stand for as a Nation — freedom, equality, justice, and hope.”

RONALD REAGAN (1911-2004), 40TH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES



This Week in History

AN INFLUENTIAL NOVEL IS PUBLISHED



The author George Orwell in 1943.



Orwell battled tuberculosis while writing "1984." He would die seven months after its publication.

On June 8, 1949, author George Orwell published his now famous novel "1984." The book, considered a prime example of dystopian (describing a society with great suffering and injustice) fiction, depicts life in the state of Oceania and warns against the consequences of totalitarian government. It made famous terms like "Big Brother," "doublespeak," and "thought police." "1984" is still widely read today.

MORE AESOP'S FABLES

THE CAT AND THE MICE

A cat once heard of a house that was infested with enormous quantities of mice and decided to take up residence there. As she ate the mice, one by one, the remaining mice went into their nests and stayed there. Upon realizing she had no more food, the cat came up with a trick to coax them out. Climbing up the wall, and hanging by her claws, she pretended to be dead.

When the mice did not see or hear the cat, an old mouse gradually peeped its head out of the hole and saw the cat across the room, hanging and looking quite dead. He said shrewdly: "Oh, that's clever! But even if you turned yourself into a bag of corn hanging there, we still wouldn't come near you."

As he entered the hole again, he used the opportunity to tell the younger mice: "If you are wise, you won't be deceived by the innocent airs of those whom you have once found to be dangerous."

THE DONKEY IN THE LION'S SKIN

A long time ago in Africa, a donkey found a lion's skin. The donkey draped the skin over himself and frightened everyone in his village.

He was so proud of this newfound respect that he decided he could roar like a lion, too, and he brayed loudly, giving his identity away.

Everyone around laughed and laughed, while an elderly observer stated, "Fine clothes may disguise, but silly words will disclose a fool."

THE EAGLE AND THE ARROW

An eagle was soaring through the air when he suddenly felt a pain in his side, which caused him to crash helplessly to the ground. As he felt his life slip away, he looked at the arrow which had felled him and found that the shaft was feathered with one of his own tail feathers, and he lamented for all the mountains and sky to hear:

"We often give our enemies the means for our own destruction!"

AMAZING ESCAPES!

1	2	3	4	5
6				7
		8		
9			10	
11				
	12	13	14	
15				16
			17	
				18
19				20

Down

- The "Star Spangled Banner" is our national _____ (6)
- To show mourning, we fly the flag at half-_____ on naval vessels (4)
- "Stars and _____ Forever" (John Philip Sousa march) (7)
- The stars on our flag (4-7)
- Flag's position of mourning (4-5)
- Finial on top of a flagpole (5)
- Citizen of the USA (8)
- Banner, especially on a vessel (6)
- We only _____ the flag during the day (3)

Across

- Flag position to show mourning (4-4)
- They rest on a field of blue (5)
- Eagle on a flagpole (6)
- _____ of Allegiance (6)
- Month Flag Day falls in (4)
- Flag is raised on this (4)

Easy puzzle 1

7	10		
67			
7	10		
+	-	x	÷

Solution For Easy 1: 01 - 2 + 2 = 01

Medium puzzle 1

7	20		
54			
3	13		
+	-	x	÷

Solution for Medium 1: 01 - 2 + 6 = 02
01 + 02 = 6 + 2

Hard puzzle 1

13	22		
69			
3	14		
+	-	x	÷

Solution for Hard 1: 6 x (01 - 01 + 22)

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK

TRUTH and TRADITION

In Our Own Words



“

I try to create a beautiful, uplifting, or thoughtful experience in order to reconnect us to our spirituality.

Sharon Kilarski
Arts and Culture Editor

The Best of the Human Experience

Dear Epoch VIP,

If you're at all like me, you know that it can be ugly out there. You read about it in the news, watch it on the screen, and maybe even see it out your window. And it seems worse lately—depressing. That's where The Epoch Times steps in.

Ever since its creation, The Epoch Times has featured an arts and culture section that acknowledges the importance of the truly beautiful—whether beautiful in a physical sense or a moral one, and we continue that mission today.

And as the Arts and Culture editor, the mission is at the center of how I run my section.

In keeping with our motto of Truth and Tradition, we aim to present the best and noblest that human culture has to offer. By exploring the best craftsmanship in the world, we acknowledge that diligence, hard work, and patience produce excellence. In reviewing films, we search for those that are actually good for the soul, or, conversely, we point out where they have failed in this regard. By looking to our heritage for historical, literary, and mythical figures, we seek those with outstanding character and virtues to offer as exemplars to emulate. And by looking to the classics in music, the performing arts, and fine arts, we find themes that emphasize dignity, uprightness, harmony, and purity to inspire us.

In a sense, traditional art, stemming from traditional culture and values, aims at the heart and can speak

to us in surprising ways—as though we are having a conversation with a dear and trusted friend.

And just as conversations with a friend will sometimes touch on pain, the traditional arts not only capture the breadth of human experience but its depth as well, allowing us to recognize our sins and frailties, and transforming humanity's inevitable pain to give that pain meaning. It is the beauty of the classics that carry out this alchemy.

Most importantly, I believe that art has traditionally been a link to the sacred, as a way to remind us of purpose on earth. As the late philosopher Roger Scruton wrote, "True art is an appeal to our higher nature, an attempt to affirm that other kingdom in which moral and spiritual order prevails."

That our society today has forgotten this purpose is all the more reason that each week, as the editor of Arts and Culture, I try to create a beautiful, uplifting, or thoughtful experience in order to reconnect us to our spirituality.

I'm continuing to find paintings, stories, and remarkable figures that astonish me and I hope they will affect you, dear reader, too. I hope you will enjoy the Arts and Culture section, and that it can help you step away for a moment from the violent, cynical, demonic, immodest, insulting, and tasteless. I hope our content leaves you refreshed and anticipating the next issue.

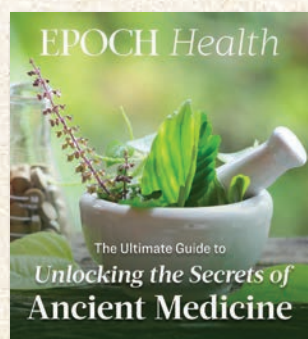
In Truth and Tradition,

Sharon Kilarski
The Epoch Times



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