

THE EPOCH TIMES

LIFE &

TRADITION



BIBA KAYEWICH

Pathways Through Grief

Dealing with the death of a loved one

JEFF MINICK

In “C.S. Lewis on Grief,” editor Lesley Walmsley wrote, “There is a great hurt in grief, generally a feeling that no one else really understands, that no one else has ever suffered in quite this way or to quite this extent.”

To be human is to suffer, but grief is in a category of pain all its own. For example, two mothers I’ve known accidentally backed their cars over their toddlers in the driveway, a burden of guilt and pain I can’t imagine carrying. Others among us have mourned a child lost to cancer, a close friend

or sibling who dies in some horrible accident, or a parent whose passing means those treasured visits by phone have ended.

As implied by Walmsley, those undergoing the dark nights and days of this ordeal often feel isolated. Caring friends and family members may provide tremendous comfort, sometimes by kind words, an embrace, or, more simply, by their mere presence. But that moment always comes, especially when the horrible wound is fresh, when the grief-stricken are alone, sitting on a porch at dusk or lying in bed at night, and their great sadness again becomes an impenetrable wall.

A Sadness Beyond Sadness

In many instances, bereavement so overpowers us that even simple tasks such as brewing up a pot of coffee or writing a short email take on enormous weight. We find we must force ourselves to trudge through the bleak days, pushing aside the hours as if we were wading up to our waists in dark waters. We wake exhausted, go to bed exhausted, and sometimes can’t even remember what we did or said that day. The months after my wife died remain a blur to me, with only a few memories standing as markers along that lost highway of time.

Continued on Page 2

▲ Widows and widowers can find great solace in a group. There are resources for starting such a group, including a curriculum created by Lori Bohning of Beauty From Ashes.

Treasured Libraries

Man photographs libraries in 101 countries across the world

ANNA MASON

Photographer Richard Silver, 60, has traveled to 101 countries capturing timeless architectural wonders through his lens. His favorite subject of all is libraries, and his stunning collection shines a light on their splendid glory, all over the world.

“Libraries offer symmetry to me,” Silver told *The Epoch Times*. “The books are lined up, aisles, desks, all are clean and symmetrical, keeping its lines straight and organized.”

His work encompasses all kinds of libraries—roughly 40 and counting—but what they have in common is their calm and beauty. The viewer can get lost in the timelessness of locations such as Saint Geneviève Library in Paris and the New York Public Library in New York or in the ornate interiors of Strahov Library in Prague and the Austrian National Library in Vienna.

“I admire the much older libraries with [their] classic wood, but the clean and very modern libraries also offer me a new way to see books. Also, the colorful way the books are lined up,” he said.

Silver, who adores the Strahov Library, said it reminds him of a rococo decorated church and is “one of the most ornate libraries in the world.”

His other favorite is the Stuttgart City Library in Germany: “It is just this clean, white box of a room with multiple floors. Be it that it is all white, it has a sterile feel to it, but the clean-lined architecture along with its fantastic lighting makes it a modern wonder to me.”

Silver, who studied computer science at college, started taking photos as a hobby while at high school in his native New York. Living in Brooklyn, he was fascinated with skyscrapers, especially the New York skyline.

At night, after work, he would drive to Manhattan just to take photos of buildings in the city. One of the attributes of architecture he appreciates is its permanence.

“It is there for you to use; it sits and waits for you to come see it and asks you: Take my photo,” Silver said. “Architecture will always be my first love, and over the past few years, landscape is a very close second.”

Continued on Page 3

COURTESY OF RICHARD SILVER



Biblioteca Joanina, Coimbra, Portugal.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF RICHARD SILVER

Pathways Through Grief

Dealing with the death of a loved one

BIBA KAYEWICH

Continued from Page 1

Yet in truth, grief is commonplace. In our grocery stores, on the sidewalk, or driving on the highway, odds are that we're passing strangers every day who are suffering from some personal catastrophe or wound. We probably won't see that pain in their faces or demeanor, but there they are, shuffling through a reality that, for them, has suddenly become nearly unbearable.

But here's some comforting news. Most of these people will put their shattered lives together again. They'll carry scars from their wounds, as do any adults worthy of the name, but slowly, they make their way past the sorrow that has for so long lived in their hearts. And if asked, each of them will have a different story of their recovery, such as how they rediscovered the beauty of a sunrise or the laughter of a friend.

Here are just two of these stories, told by women who lost a beloved spouse.

The Girl Next Door

"Ken and I knew each other since I was 11 years old," said Linda Meadows, a neighbor of mine in Front Royal, Virginia. "We grew up on the same block in Alexandria and played together as kids."

When Ken was drafted during the Vietnam War, he came home after boot camp on a three-day pass and married Linda, his childhood sweetheart. Afterward, he spent his time in service in Germany, where Linda joined him. Eventually, Ken made his mark in the world of insurance, while Linda worked a variety of jobs. Corporate conventions sent the two of them to such places as Hawaii and Rome.

"We had a wonderful life together," Linda said.

After a long bout with skin cancer, several surgeries, and a stroke, Ken collapsed at home one evening. Linda called the rescue squad, and further medical examinations revealed blood clots in his lungs. With the help of hospice, Linda cared for him during his last days, often alone and exhausted.

The end of 52 years of friendship and marriage left Linda wondering, "What am I going to do now?"

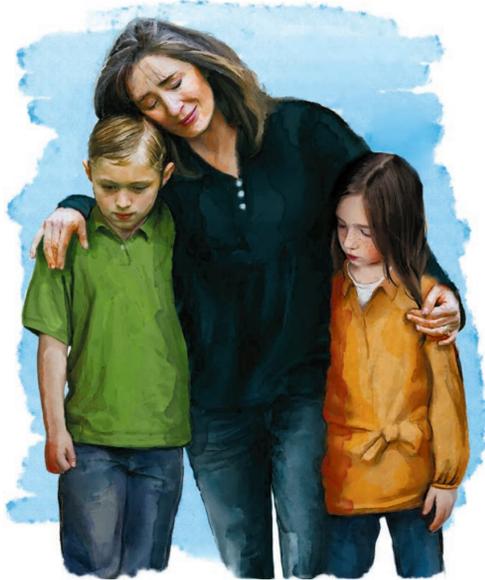
Ken had handled their finances, and although the paperwork following his death often proved daunting—she mentioned that the most difficult part of this crash course in finance came while she was dealing with a rude Social Security employee—Ken "had seen to it that I'd be all right."

The couple had no children, and Linda had no siblings, but "I had the Lord, my church, and Ken's family." Ken's brothers, who live nearby, have helped her, and "a nephew calls me nearly every night." Her involvement at Rivermont Baptist Church has brought her great comfort, and she frequents the library and goes three times per week to a local gym, where she has also made friends.

"I keep myself busy," she said.

Just Breathing Can Be Hard

When Rob Bohning, 46, died after a three-year battle with medullary thyroid cancer, he left behind his wife, Lori, and two adopted children, then ages 6 and 9.



Though some people may try to put the grief behind them as fast as possible, grieving takes time.

"If the dictionary used pictures as definitions, my face would be next to the word 'Broken,'" Lori said of that time in her life.

During those years of struggle and medical treatment, which included a move to New Braunfels, Texas, to be closer to better health facilities, Lori provided much of the primary care given to her husband. After his death, she found herself dealing with funeral arrangements, trying to help her children cope with their own grief, and maintaining her composure, especially in front of the children, while having to force herself to perform the simplest of tasks.

"Because I had the kids, I had to role model suffering for them," she said. "I could have pulled the covers over my head and let them suffer, but I had to walk in front of them. I just kept telling myself, 'Do the next thing. Lori, brush your teeth.' I just wished people would come in and help me even with breathing."

Despite the prognosis for Rob, Lori believed until the last moments that God would heal him.

"It was probably a year before I fully accepted that he was forever gone," she said. "At times, I just breathed. That's all I had. That was my only hope. I knew that this was something I needed to walk through. I needed to step through the grief."

Talking to Lori by phone reminded me of conversations over the years with others who have lost a loved one to death: the terrible emptiness in the heart, dealing with the emotions of devastated children, and the loneliness that won't go away.

Feeling crushed by Rob's death, Lori reached out for help.



“At times, I just breathed. That’s all I had. That was my only hope. I knew that this was something I needed to walk through. I needed to step through the grief.”

Lori Bohning

'When We Grieve, We Get a Gift for Compassion'

In a widows group that met an hour from her home, Lori found what she was looking for. These women were an enormous source of comfort and advice, and after two years, she became determined to start a similar group in her town. As Ferree Hardy reported in her article "Kingdom Equity" on Plain Values:

"She knew she couldn't do it by herself, though. So she bravely phoned Stand In the Gap, a ministry for orphans, widows, and prisoners in Oklahoma. When Lori asked how she could start a widows group in her town, 'coffee, cake, conversation' was what she was told. They suggested she make fliers to post around town announcing a get-together for widows with the day, place, and time for 'Coffee, Cake, Conversation.' They also told her that the crucial point of the meeting would be to ask the women, 'What do you need in a widows group?'"

And so was born Lori's ministry to widows, Beauty from Ashes.

With its name inspired by Isaiah 61:3, Beauty from Ashes has spread its wings to help widows both in New Braunfels and elsewhere. Lori, who also became a transformational life coach after Rob's death, has written a curriculum about grief, widowhood, and finding one's way when all seems dark. She also offers advice and encouragement to bereft women on her website.

"Widows have often said to me, 'I don't even know who I am now,'" she said.

Widowhood often means "having to rediscover yourself," Lori tells me.

Unfortunately, similar groups for widowers are much less common.

"It just takes one widower to start it," she said. "Hey, guys, let's go for coffee and talk."

Lori mentioned a relative whose wife had died and who feels extremely isolated.

"I'm so lonely I could die' is a real thing," she said. "And all it takes to start a group is one man who is willing to share his heart."

Although aimed at widows, the curriculum she has created could serve equally as well for men.

Broken No More

Stay busy. Accept help when it's offered. Be patient and let time do some of the work of healing. Find comfort and strength in faith. Linda, Lori, and countless others have discovered the value of these assets as they've journeyed through grief.

Although they don't mention it specifically, Lori and Linda also offer us this important message: Let yourself grieve. Some people try to push through that agony of mourning, to put it behind them as fast as possible. Lori tried to stay busy in those first awful months, "but the Lord kept telling me to be still." Just as a broken bone requires rest and time to mend, so too is the case with loss.

Finally, Lori and Linda tell us—again implicitly—to never give way to utter despair. We often hear the expression "a light at the end of the tunnel." As the words and deeds of these two women remind us, hope is the engine that carries us to that light.

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.



Strahov Library, Prague, Czech Republic.

Treasured Libraries

Man photographs libraries in 101 countries across the world

Continued from Page 1

When on vacation, Silver was always the guy with a camera in his hand—even before the digital- and phone-camera era. Later, he purchased an SLR camera, becoming more serious. His "constant muse" was all of the skyscrapers in the city. Investing sincere time and effort, he elevated both his interest and his skill.

"I became more serious when I learned how to Photoshop; it was a life-changing tool. I was selling Manhattan real estate for over a decade from 2001 to 2013 and just felt I needed a change," he said.

Silver then decided to devote his time to

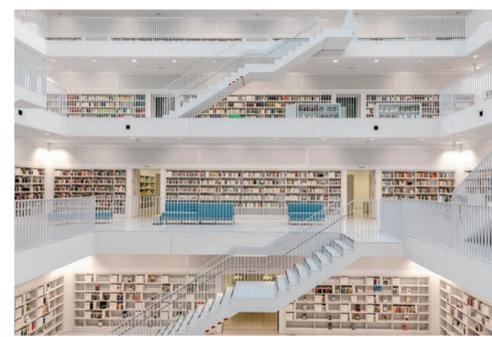
travel photography.

He plans to relocate from New York to Miami in the fall while continuing his library adventures. Sometimes he has to seek permission, such as in the case of the "gorgeous, classic building" of Saint Genevieve Library before it opened to the public. Often, libraries don't allow photographs at all when people are present—or charge "exorbitant" amounts of money for the privilege—he said.

If he's lucky, Silver gets to shoot with the use of a tripod.

"That makes a tremendous difference in the quality of the image for printing purposes," he said.

While some places can seem a little rigid with their rulebook, others are much less so. "The Red Cross Library in Lisbon, Portugal, was one where I just got so lucky that it was open when I went," Silver said. "The woman working there was so appreciative of me wanting to photograph it."



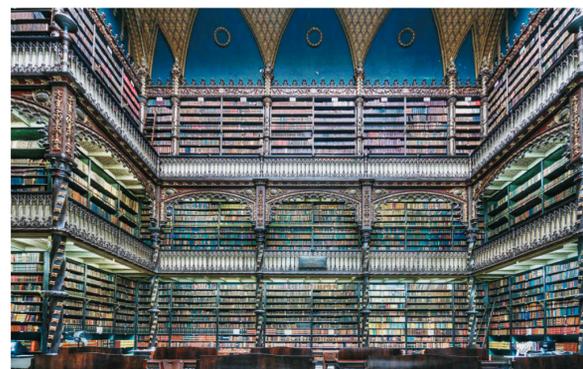
Stuttgart City Library, Germany.

And then there was the Real Gabinete Português de Leitura (Royal Portuguese Cabinet of Reading) in Rio de Janeiro: "That one is in a pretty poor neighborhood and is like a hidden gem."

In a fast, online world where quantity so often overtakes quality, Silver's library collection

sticks out like a rare jewel among the sand.

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



Real Gabinete Português de Leitura (Royal Portuguese Cabinet of Reading) Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.



Red Cross Library, Lisbon, Portugal.

Want to Change Hearts and Minds? Try Humility

ANNIE HOLMQUIST

A friend recently sent me a popular meme called the Pyramid of Intellect. It shows the various academic degrees, starting at the base of the pyramid with a high school diploma and narrowing its way up to a doctorate. But at the very top of the pyramid is a little section that reads, "People who fix their cars after watching DIY videos."

I laughed at it, but I couldn't deny that this meme contains a decent amount of truth. Political elites, journalists, and those in the ivory towers are in the headlines, giving the press conferences, and standing in front of millions, looking important, and poised far above the common folk—those who often work with their hands, barely visible as they're tucked in some little corner of Middle America.



Thomas Paine, (1737–1809), circa 1780.

HULTON ARCHIVE GETTY IMAGES

But which of those two groups is the wiser? The simple folk who are in the trenches working with their hands, or those who think they are hot stuff just because they hold an important position in Congress or academia or journalism or the bureaucracy that seems increasingly to be running the country?

For my money, I would say the simple folk.

Is this always the case? No, of course not. But I think it can often be true because of one important quality that these simple folk have: humility.

Simple folk aren't usually full of themselves. Their humility enables them to listen to other people and ideas, while also opening the door to greater life experience, for those who are humble will be less afraid to get in the trench and try things. If they fail, so what? They are already humble, so they don't have far to fall—plus, they know

We look at our humble, simple lives and wonder what we, the average folks of America can do to put her back on course. The answer is a whole lot.

they can learn from failure regarding what to avoid or do differently next time.

The humble aren't condescending or lofty in the way they present their own ideas to the masses; instead, they speak the average Joe's language while standing shoulder to shoulder with him. This makes the simple, humble people much more relatable—and as a result, their ideas have a chance to be far more influential than those of any proud influencer on some social media platform.

How do we know this is true? Because we've seen it play out previously in history. Author Neil Postman elaborates on this idea in his book, "Building a Bridge to the Eighteenth Century." The success of the American Founders, he implies, wasn't in their elite superiority, but in the fact that they were average folks doing average things, thinking big thoughts but communicating them in a humble, average, commonplace way to their family, friends, and neighbors. Take Founders such as Thomas Paine, the writer of the Revolution's influ-

ential "Common Sense," for instance. Postman writes:

"Paine was not, of course, a professional philosopher. He had been a corset-maker in England, and then in America a printer. To write political philosophy did not require, of him or anyone else, the mastery of an arcane, specialized vocabulary. The language of the common person was deemed entirely suitable for the expression of philosophical ideas."

In other words, the reason the Founders were so successful at getting their ideas to take and spread to the point that an entire nation was established on those ideas is that the Founders themselves often lived humble, unpretentious lives, and they made their ideas accessible to the common man. They were straightforward and courageous, skeptical but clear in their writings, Postman writes.

"If one goes through the list of famous prose writers of the Enlightenment, one finds few who thought of themselves as professional authors; fewer, as philosophers, even fewer who made a living as either. These men were

public intellectuals who had something to say to the public—not merely to one another—and who had found a form in which to say it. And that is why the consequences of their writing were so serious."

There are many people these days who say they want to make a difference in this world. The trouble is, many of them seem to get into politics or build a big platform or do something impressive—and when that happens, they immediately forget the common man, placing themselves above him. In doing so, they lose one of the greatest opportunities for influence they could have had.

There are many of us humble, plain, average folks in Middle America, doing our jobs, feeding our families, and sending our kids to school. We want to make a difference for good, but we look at our humble, simple lives and wonder what we, the average folks of America, can do to put it back on course.

The answer is a whole lot. As the greatest man who ever walked the earth once said, "Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." The average man doing average things, thinking great thoughts, and doing it all with an attitude of humility will have a far greater impact on this world for

good than any arrogant politician, academic, or journalist can ever hope to have. And it's those Average Joes that America needs.

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*.

Simple folks—often those working with their hands—possess a humility that allows them to be more open-minded than "experts."



PHOTOILLUMINATIONS

DEAR JUNE *On Family and Relationships*

Friend Cuts Ties Over Trump, Alleged Racism

Dear June,

I'm sad that my Democratic friends of more than 25 years have said that they don't want to communicate any longer because I voted for Trump. They think he's a racist and therefore I'm under suspicion by association. I don't believe he's a racist. Any advice?

—Would Be Friend

→ **Dear Would Be Friend,**

I can understand your sadness. The loss of a good friend is a real loss.

Perhaps you can find a small measure of comfort in the fact that you aren't alone in this. Losses such as yours are becoming more common; they're one effect of the great cultural tides crashing over our country. People are being divided now over several contentious issues, one of which is racism.

On the issue of racism, it's important to understand what people mean when they use the term, because the definitions have been changed.

It sounds like your friends aren't reacting to anything you've said or done (other than voting); instead, they're reacting to political ideas, so don't take this too personally. At the same time, it's important to allow yourself a grieving process. Your sadness means that you really valued their friendship.

One thing that might help is writing letters to your friends—perhaps never to be sent. In these letters, you can share your feelings and say all the things you wish they could hear. If you do plan to send the letters, I would suggest keeping them heartfelt and free of any political ideas. If you feel open to picking up your relationship at some point, make sure they know this. Perhaps you can also give them some time and approach them again to see if their hearts have changed.

Last year, I lost a dear friend over politics, even though we had never discussed them. In my heart, I believe that we'll be friends again, so I left it to her to decide when she's ready, I am, too. Part of being friends is sometimes allowing people to be where they are, being patient, willing to wait and listen, and having faith in their good nature. People are more apt to change for the better when others are able to hold such a space for them. It's very important that we have faith in our fellow humans.

Wider Trend

Perhaps you are wondering, why bother wasting any more time and energy on people who clearly don't value your friendship? This is a very fair question. We do have to guard our own energy, and it's not a good idea to keep people in your life who are unsupportive or shallow.

I don't suggest that you keep in contact with people who really bring you down, but I do urge you to consider the following.

For us as individuals, it's sad to lose friends and family over politics. On a societal level, this division is very dangerous because it signals the emergence of shallow, politicized thinking and a loss of values. I know people on both sides of the aisle are concerned about where our country is headed, and I think the most fearsome threat that we face is the loss of values. This is guaranteed to destroy us. So for me, it's very important to use every conflict to strengthen values. The strength of society lies in the strength of families and, to a lesser extent, the bonds between friends. So to whatever extent we can maintain these bonds, the better it is. At the very least, we shouldn't hold bitterness or antipathy, but as I said above, have faith in friends that their hearts can change.

I mentioned small measures of comfort, but what I think offers the greatest measure—the real solace—is core values such as truth and mercy. Loss



HOWLBY

and hardship can make us stronger, wiser, and humbler. Our country, with its unprecedented freedoms, was built on sacrifice and on brave, virtuous thoughts and deeds. This spirit makes us stronger than the tides trying to tear us from one another.

Definitions of Racism

On the issue of racism, it's important to understand what people mean when they use the term because the definitions have been changed.

Perhaps you are wondering, why bother wasting any more time and energy on people who clearly don't value your friendship? This is a very fair question.

One example is the definition presented by Ibram X. Kendi, author, professor, and anti-racist activist. In an excerpt from his book "How to Be an Antiracist," Kendi wrote that the definition of a racist is "one who is supporting a racist policy through their actions or inaction or expressing a racist idea." Racist policies and ideas, he wrote, refer to any policy or idea that contributes to inequity between races. Here's one of his examples of inequity in the United States: "71 percent of White families lived in owner-occupied homes in 2014, compared to 45 percent of Latinx families and 41 percent of Black families."

According to Kendi, equity is synonymous with no racism (what he calls anti-racism). For example, if 60 percent of whites, Latinx, and blacks all owned homes, this would be equity.

"There is no such thing as a nonracist or race-neutral policy," he wrote. "Every policy in every institution in every

community in every nation is producing or sustaining either racial inequity or equity between racial groups."

I would like to use a personal example to illustrate why this definition is such a problem. All throughout my childhood, I remember my godparents taking long trips to Malawi in Africa, where they helped set up schools, train teachers, and bring clothes, books, and any support they could to the people there. They clearly had a great heart to help, and they came back with many photos and stories that inspired me, as a child, to want to adopt one of the children from the orphanages.

My godfather has passed on, but if today my godmother were to speak with Kendi and agree that African Americans in this country aren't thriving and something surely must be done, but that she doesn't agree that equity is the solution, then Kendi could say to her, "Then you're a racist." And she would be, by his definition.

And if she said that some policies that support minorities are fine, but that the majority should be race-neutral, then she's a huge part of the problem for Kendi.

"The most threatening racist movement is not the alt right's unlikely drive for a White ethnostate but the regular American's drive for a 'race-neutral' one," he wrote.

What Kendi's definition boils down to is that if you don't agree with his political solution, priorities, and values, you're a racist—regardless of how much you care about black people or what else you've done to help them. And thus, even black people can be racist against other blacks. The documentary "Uncle Tom," which you can watch on Amazon Prime Video, has stories from black people who are considered "race traitors" or "the black face of white supremacy" because of their conservative and religious ideas.

Kendi's definition is no longer fringe. His book has met with praise from me-

dia outlets such as The New York Times and Time magazine.

If you're interested in further study, I recommend watching the "American Thought Leaders" interview with James Lindsay, "The Roots of the New Race-based Marxism Gripping the West."

What I'm afraid is happening right now in the United States is that many people, when they hear the word "racist," have no clue about definitions such as Kendi's and assume it's referring to the old definition—that a racist has antipathy toward people of another race. By Kendi's definition, I would guess that a majority of people in our country would be racist, perhaps including some of your friends.

Even though Kendi's definition is very destructive, I don't think we should get angry, because the forces of chaos thrive on discord. What's most important as we face struggles with our family and friends is to value these people. Strive for kindness, compassion, empathy, and patience. Speak the truth if you can and remain steadfast if they aren't ready to hear it. Holding this kind of space for those close to us is the best way help their hearts, and even if they aren't ready to listen and talk, at least our hearts will be strong and at peace.

—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.

EDUCATION

Word-Dancing With Mother Goose

Nursery rhymes are wonderful for both learning and play

JEFF MINICK

Six years had passed since my children, their spouses, and their children had last gathered for some time at the beach, and things, I quickly discovered, had changed.

The kids who had once splashed in the ocean or dug for sand fleas at the tide's edge were now teens who spent a good part of their time watching the widescreen television, taking sedate walks on the beach, and putting their heads together in quiet conversations broken by sudden laughter. They walked rather than ran to meals and treats, and when they weren't wearing bathing attire, dressed as if it mattered, especially the girls.

Replacing them was a squad of siblings ranging in age from a toddler to a 10-year-old. This gang spent half the day in the surf, sifted for hours through the sand hunting for sharks' teeth, and ran everywhere they went. When I served up my traditional ice-cream lunch—and yes, most of the toppings were healthy fruits, nuts, and granola—the rising second-grader who had polished off her final helping stepped to the deck, raised her clenched fists like a triumphant boxer, and roared, "This is the most perfect day ever!"

The more I watched them, the more these younger ones fascinated me. They would become absorbed in some object—a bucket filled with seawater, a dead crab, a puzzle—that would have bored the teenagers in a heartbeat. Play really was serious learning; you could almost see the wheels spinning in their heads.

That brings me, in about as roundabout a way as possible, to nursery rhymes as one of those toys of learning and play.

A Brief History of Rhymes

*Ding, dong, bell,
Pussy's in the well.
Who put her in?
Little Johnny Flynn.
Who pulled her out?
Little Tommy Stout.
What a naughty boy was that,
To try to drown poor Pussycat,
Who ne'er did him any harm,
But killed all the mice
In the Farmer's barn.*

That nursery rhyme comes from 1580, the

oldest recorded in the English language. In an earlier version, the cat dies, and the "ding dong" comes at the end as a sort of church bell dirge.

Many other such poems for small children are nearly as old. "To Market, to Market," "London Bridge Is Falling Down," and "Jack Sprat" are just some of the children's verses written between the 17th and early 19th centuries.

By the Victorian Era, sometimes called a golden age of children's literature, authors such as George MacDonald and Beatrix Potter were pumping out stories aimed at young readers. Among these were poets who composed nursery rhymes and songs for the wee ones. In her "Rhymes for the Nursery," published in 1806 and written in collaboration with her sister, Anne, British writer Jane Taylor introduced "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star." Although some controversy exists about the identity of the original author of "Mary Had a Little Lamb," Sarah Hale, also known as the "Mother of Thanksgiving" for promoting that holiday, first published that piece in her "Poems for Our Children." This poem became so famous that Henry Ford preserved the schoolhouse visited by Mary's lamb, and Thomas Edison used the verse for the first audio recording on his newly invented phonograph.

Words at Play

As we can see, many of these rhymes are old, and many center on rural imagery—sheep, barn cats, farm chores. So what's the point in teaching them to modern-day children? Few of us plow a field or tote water from a well. Where's the relevancy?

Besides the fact that most 3-year-olds couldn't give a hoot about relevance, there are other reasons to teach them these poems.

Tradition. Not only do these Mother Goose rhymes stretch back into the past, but the odds are likely that grandparents, other family members, and friends will know them as well; nursery rhymes are a bridge between generations. Grandma remembers how to play "Pat-a-Cake," and Uncle Charlie will get a kick out of teaching his nephew "Purple Cow."

Literature. What are these nursery rhymes if not an introduction to poetry and story? The youngster who learns "Little Boy Blue" and "Three Blind Mice" is ready to hear or memorize Robert Louis Stevenson's "The Swing" and Christina Rossetti's "Who Has Seen



PUBLIC DOMAIN

"And the Dish Ran Away with the Spoon" by Randolph Caldecott, 1882. Pen and ink, gouache, and watercolor on paper; 6 5/16 by 7 3/4 inches. London: George Routledge and Sons.

the Wind?" As they add to their repertoire of words, they're prepared to tackle "Hansel and Gretel" and "Snow White," then move on to "The Jungle Book," "Little Women," and "Where the Sidewalk Ends." They're building a library inside of themselves, and the foundation stones are nursery rhymes and fairy tales.

Language. What better way to introduce the words, sounds, and rhythms of the English language than through Mother Goose rhymes? Beat, meter, unusual words, and more are the heart and soul of these gifts to the young. For instance, here's one of the shortest of these poems:

*Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall;
All the king's horses and all the king's men
Couldn't put Humpty together again.*

Pre-school kids couldn't care less about whether this verse may refer to the death of King Richard III, and they probably won't question why poor Humpty is depicted as an egg in a long-practiced artistic convention. But what they will love is that wonderful name, Humpty Dumpty, and the magic embedded in the beat of the lines.

The Best Reason of All for Sharing Mother Goose

Joy. Nursery rhymes provide sheer, good fun for parents and kids alike.

Amongst the 1949 edition of the "Childcraft" set of books on my shelves is Volume 12: "Guide



PEOPLEIMAGES.COM • YURI A/SHUTTERSTOCK

News Veteran Ernie Anastos to Host 'Positively America'

DAVE PAONE

Ernie Anastos, a 44-year veteran of television news in New York, will launch a national syndicated series in the fall called "Positively America With Ernie Anastos."

The weekly show will feature stories that illustrate America in a positive way.

"I've been doing, call it 'positive news,' for a long time," Anastos told The Epoch Times on his 79th birthday. "On all of my newscasts over the years, I always found a way to bring in more of the positive stories."

"I've always been one to promote interesting stories, uplifting stories, because I believe in that."

"This is an extension of what I've always been doing."

One might say the baby that is "Positively America" was conceived by two unlikely parents: Anastos's modus operandi of uplifting stories and the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The pandemic really has done a job on all of us," he said. "On a world level, we've talked about and felt more of the humanity, of the bond we all have."

During the lockdown, Anastos was an anchor at WNYW, the Fox flagship in New York, and found himself reporting nightly on the "astronomical numbers" of daily deaths.

These deaths got Anastos thinking about "how small the world is and how we all belong to one another."

He says that "people are looking at life in a different way," in what he refers to as "The Great Reflection,"

mostly due to COVID.

"People really are tired and they want a break from all the negativity," Anastos said. Anastos connected all these dots, and the last dot was "Positively America."

The show will mostly be Anastos interacting with notable personalities and experts with new insights and helpful information about today's lifestyle.

Some of the personalities on tap are sports legend Bob Costas, "Extra" host Jennifer Lahmers, filmmaker Ken Burns, HGTV host Alison Victoria, MLB manager Bobby Valentine, actress Mariel Hemingway, TV host Joan Lunden, and celebrity chef Lidia Bastianich.

Regular show segments will focus on the latest trends in social culture, family and relationships, education, health, fashion, and consumer news, entertainment, and technology. "Positively America" will also feature on-the-street interviews, a television news staple. The program will also be interactive, capturing videos and comments from people all over the country and connecting with communities for their positive stories.

In all his time in television news, Anastos has made it a point to be balanced in his reporting, never pontificating on the news, just reporting it. He'll continue this practice with "Positively America."

"What we're looking to do is give people good information that they can utilize," he said. "We stay away from the political issues."

In a forward-looking segment, experts will look at "what new technology will change the way we think and the way we live."

"I want this program to be a teaching mechanism," Anastos said.

At the end of each interview, a link to a specific website will be listed, should viewers want more information on the subject.

Anastos has been a fixture on news programs in New York for decades, as both a reporter and an anchor. During his career, he's accumulated more than 30 Emmy Awards and nominations, including a Lifetime Emmy for highest professional achievements, and an Edward R. Murrow journalism award.

Among his other countless honors is an induction into the New York State Broadcasters Association's Hall of Fame, a U.S. Marine Corps Honorary Service Award, and a National Father of the Year Award. Former New York Mayor Bill de Blasio designated March 21 as Ernie Anastos Day.

Anastos, who is of Greek heritage, credits many of his values to his upbringing.

His grandfather, the Rev. Anastasios Anastosiu, was one of the first 100 Greek Orthodox priests in the United States.

"He was a pioneer in the Greek Orthodox Church," Anastos said.

His grandfather died when Anastos was quite young, "but he shared a lot with me," he said. "He was also a role model for living a life filled with enthusiasm and recognizing our special gifts and talents to faithfully serve mankind."

"I learned a lot from my home. I learned a lot about believing in yourself, but also respecting, believing, and loving others."

Anastos wrote a children's book, "Ernie and the Big Newz," which is somewhat autobiographical. In it, the protagonist is a child named Ernie who builds a radio sta-

tion in his basement with his friends and has a dream about becoming a reporter. That's exactly how Anastos started out.

He has gone on a lecture circuit at elementary schools in New York, speaking about the book and encouraging children to live out their dreams, and has so far donated more than 15,000 copies to schoolchildren.

Anastos served in the information corps of the U.S. Army Reserves for six years, reaching the rank of specialist fourth class. "It was one of the best experiences of my life," he said.

"The military to me is very important. It would be great if everybody could serve some time in the military. I think you learn a lot and you also give something back to your country."

As for "Positively America," Anastos believes the time is right for a series such as this.

"I'm going to be one reassuring voice on my television show," he said.

"Research shows that good news can help you live happier and healthier."

"When you hear something good, when you hear something positive, it does affect how you feel. I think you can live longer. Research shows that you can."

The program will start the weekend of Sept. 10. For more information or to find a list of stations where it will run, see PositivelyAmericaTV.com



COURTESY OF ST. FRANCIS FOOD PANTRIES AND SHELTERS

Elementary schoolchildren with Ernie Anastos's book "Ernie & the Big Newz," at Christ the King School in the Bronx, N.Y.



Kenyan-born artist Gordon Pembridge (New Zealand) knows the wild African bush well. He lived in Kenya until he was 10 years old, experiencing the country's rich wildlife firsthand. Although now based in New Zealand, Pembridge often visits the African bush for artistic inspiration and adventures. His painting "Dappled Respite" was a runner-up. Oil painting; 35 3/8 inches by 22 1/2 inches.

FINE ART

Visual Art's Ode to Nature

Wildlife Artist of the Year competition raises awareness for wildlife conservation

LORRAINE FERRIER

The late wildlife artist David Shepherd set up the UK-based David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation (DSWF) in 1984 to conserve the animals that helped him become a successful artist. The conservation charity works across Africa and Asia to end wildlife crime, and to protect endangered species in their natural habitat.

In 2008, the DSWF founded its annual Wildlife Artist of the Year competition to raise funds and awareness for wildlife conservation. This year, 850 artists from 55 countries entered the competition (in association with BBC Wildlife), and now the winners have been announced. Here we feature some of the short-listed and winning artworks.



Korean-born artist Yun Gee Bradley (U.S.) is in awe of wild animals, from their colors to the details of their eyes and coats. "It reminds me that there is a touch of God in everything," she said in her artist's statement. Bradley's artwork of a tiger is titled "Patience." For centuries Korean artists have used "hanji" (Korean mulberry paper) for weaving, felting, and cording, but Bradley uses the paper for a new technique. Using tweezers, she pulls fibers from the hanji, which she then glues fiber by fiber onto her work to create detailed tactile compositions that appear as sculptural reliefs. Short-listed finalist in the Earth's Wild Beauty category. Mulberry bark and paper; 11 3/4 inches by 16 1/8 inches.



Wildlife artist Alex Fleming (UK) stays true to nature in his art. He's so fascinated by nature's beauty that he finds no need to embellish it with imagination. Fleming's pastel and pencil drawing "Home" (inspired by wildlife photographer Rick Beldegreen's image "Polar Bear and Ice Fog") received a highly commended award in the Earth's Wild Beauty category. Pastel and colored pencil drawing; 35 3/8 inches by 23 5/8 inches.

The late wildlife artist David Shepherd set up the UK-based David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation (DSWF) in 1984.



Wildlife and pet-portrait artist Clare Parkes's (UK) pastel drawing is titled "Little Red." The artist fondly recalls the red squirrels she saw in Norway when visiting her father. In all of her animal art, she loves defining the animals' unique details and personalities. Parkes discovered this love for realism while working as a wax figure painter at Madame Tussauds, where she's worked for the past 14 years. Short-listed finalist in the Facing Extinction category. Pastel drawing; 13 3/8 inches by 18 7/8 inches.



Pet and wildlife artist Jacqueline Bright's (UK) pastel is titled "A Cast of Crabs." Bright believes that crabs are often overlooked, but she sees them as beautiful and incredible creatures. Into the Blue category winner. Pastel drawing; 11 3/4 inches by 11 3/4 inches.



In "The Sontry" by artist Garth Swift, a lioness on a granite outcrop keeps watch while the rest of the pride shelters under a gnarly tree, away from the intense midday sun. Swift said in his artist's statement that a rare hot wind breaks the still air, and the warning trill of the go-away-bird sounds out across the land. Short-listed finalist in the Animal Behavior category. Oil painting; 39 3/8 inches by 48 inches.



Award-winning wildlife artist Neal Griffin (UK) derived the composition for his painting "One Horned Rhino" from a friend's photograph he'd taken on a trip to India. Short-listed finalist in the Facing Extinction category. Oil painting; 29 7/8 inches by 20 1/8 inches.

DAVE PAONE

Hollywood loves a "fish out of water." Put a poor family from the Deep South into a posh, Los Angeles suburb and you have "The Beverly Hillbillies." Put a New York City lawyer and his Park Avenue-loving wife on a rural farm and you have "Green Acres." Put a hardboiled, Philadelphia detective into an Amish community and you have "Witness."

One might say actor-producer John Schneider is a real-life fish out of water. Schneider, both a conservative and a Christian, found that jobs become less frequent after his political and religious values were known in the industry.

"What they do is they just don't hire you," he told The Epoch Times.

There was a time when Schneider was the go-to presenter or host on award shows.

"A lot of that dried up. A lot of that went away, because again, the people who have control of the microphone don't want anyone else's narrative to come through the airwaves," he said.

Schneider has found a way around that predicament. But let's start at the beginning.

'The Dukes of Hazzard'

At the young age of 18, in 1978, Schneider landed the acting job that launched his career. He played Bo Duke, one of a pair of brothers in fictional Hazzard County, Georgia, in the television series, "The Dukes of Hazzard."

For seven seasons, the "good old Duke boys" and their cousin, Daisy Duke, went wild—much to the chagrin of the corrupt county commissioner, Boss Hogg.

Although technically a one-hour drama, there was a lot of tongue-in-cheek humor from cartoonish characters, with "yee-ha!" shouted from the mouths of Bo and his brother, Luke, quite often. The series ran from January 1979 through February 1985.

All during that time, the Duke boys drove a tricked-out 1969 Dodge Charger, dubbed "The General Lee." As did the real General Lee, their set of wheels had a Confederate flag. It was painted on the roof, often prominent in shots in the never-ending car chases in the series. In the 1980s, no one cared.

An Early Example of Cancel Culture

By 2015, the world was a different place; or, at least the United States was. After a mass shooting of black congregants at a South Carolina church, it was learned that the white gunman had previously posted images of the Confederate flag. At the time, "The Dukes of Hazzard" was in syndication on the cable station TV Land.

Executives at TV Land concluded since the shooter was racist, and had posted pictures of the flag, and the Duke boys had said flag on their car, then they must be racist as well. They pulled the series from the lineup.

"It's absurd, but that's true," Schneider said.

"'Dukes of Hazzard' was not a racist show in any way," he said. "When they said that the General Lee and therefore everyone who drove it or had anything to do with 'The Dukes of Hazzard' was in fact a racist, it was absurd."

"I have not one time had a black man, woman, or child come up to me and express any concern or problem with 'The Dukes of Hazzard' or the General Lee, ever," Schneider said.

He actually sees the cancellation as a blessing.

"But in many regards, it made the show more cultish, more popular," he said. "Nothing will make people want to do something more than The Man telling them they can't."

A Long, Successful Career

As an actor, Schneider has had a long, successful career, mostly in episodic television. He had a supporting role on "The Haves and the Have Nots" with Tyler Perry for eight seasons, and played Clark Kent's father for 10 seasons of "Smallville," to name a few shows. One of his most recent appearances was the film "Love is On the Air," which premiered in 2021.

Schneider is also an accomplished musician, and his latest album, "Southern Ways," was released in March. Among its 11 new tracks is the touching song, "Younger Man."

For the general public, this looks very easy and glamorous, but the entertainment industry is both cutthroat and fickle. Getting a job can be downright impossible and the public's tastes change, which can sink the careers of even the most successful actors.

For Schneider, being a conservative Christian in Hollywood makes getting and keeping work that much more difficult.



Actor and filmmaker John Schneider.

ENTERTAINMENT

Actor-Filmmaker John Schneider: Making Movies Outside Hollywood

John Schneider Studios

There are five steps to making movies and television series: development, pre-production, production, postproduction, and distribution.

For many aspiring filmmakers, getting past step one is nearly impossible. Development is where actors are attached and, more importantly, money is raised. For the most part, finding money is dependent on the major studios. Getting blessed by the studio gods is something every filmmaker wants but few get.

Once a filmmaker accomplishes step one, steps two through four (actually making the movie) are the easy parts, comparatively speaking. But step five, getting the movie in theaters and on streaming services, can be just as impossible as step one. A filmmaker may scrape up the money to make his movie, yet can't get a company to distribute it.

For the filmmakers who rely on studio money for production and distribution, their lament is being at the mercy of meddling executives who want endless changes but don't really know much about making movies.

Schneider has found a way around all of this: He opened John Schneider Studios in Louisiana, which is both a film studio for rent and a production company for his own movies.

Schneider finances his own movies and has his own streaming service, Cineflix Digital on Demand, to distribute them—all without having to beg the



A young John Schneider (R), as Bo Duke, in the popular 1980s series, "The Dukes of Hazzard."

studio gods for support.

Essentially, Schneider has told the powers-that-be in Hollywood he can make his movies without them. Since he's paying for everything, there are no meddling studio executives.

On the website for the studio rental, there's a long list under "amenities" that every production company needs, such as sound stages and production offices, located on John Schneider Studio's 58 acres. But since it's in Louisiana, it also has a swamp.

"We have swamp," said Schneider. "If you're looking to do a movie called 'Swamp Thing,' you don't want pond; you want swamp."

A Double Partnership

Not only is Alicia Allain Schneider's wife, she's also his business partner. Schneider writes and directs in addition to acting, but leaves the business half of show business to her. He knows that she can't do what he does—but more importantly, he knows that he can't do what she does.

Several years ago, Allain was diagnosed with stage-four breast cancer, which had spread to her bones. With a combination of medical treatment and diet change, she's currently cancer-free.

Schneider credits the power of prayer for giving them the strength to fight through.

"When we prayed for that, we prayed for the strength to do it," he said.

Their prayer wasn't "God, cure this cancer," but "Put us down the right road so that we can take care of this and, basically, not bother you with it," he said.

Bo Duke at Heart

Though Schneider was born and raised just north of New York City, he describes it as "a rural place," and that, most of the time since then, he's lived on a dirt road.

"Every couple of decades, Hollywood will turn their backs on all things rural," he said. "So when Hollywood turned their back on dirt roads and fast cars and community depending upon beer-drinking, barbecuing people," Schneider said goodbye.

And that's when he bought a swamp in Louisiana.

Small Business

The movies that Schneider makes aren't big-budget blockbusters. They're low-budget, and since their distribution is mostly digital with limited theatrical releases, John Schneider Studios is essentially a small business—and he knows that small businesses are the backbone of America.

"Go to that kiosk in Poughkeepsie and buy local coffee. Drink local beer," he said. "Because this country is only as strong as its individual communities, and those individual communities are only as strong as, basically, the chamber of commerce—and you are at the head of that."

Schneider encourages everyone to dump the chain restaurants and box stores. "Stop supporting that which you disagree with because it's convenient."

A sentiment that Bo Duke would agree with for sure.

“This country is only as strong as its individual communities.”

John Schneider, actor and filmmaker



Actor John Schneider visits the SiriusXM Studios in New York on Nov. 26, 2019.

Become an Expert on Your Own Health

INCLUDED IN YOUR SUBSCRIPTION

Epoch Health strives to empower our readers to take meaningful ownership of their own well-being. We strive to help our readers become informed consumers of health care services and give readers insight into health traditions that lead to a better lifestyle.

► Check out our **Digital Guides** for an in-depth look at the latest trends in health.



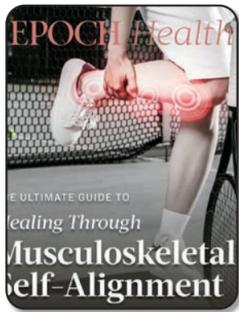
The Ultimate Guide to Growing Your Own Food

No green thumb? No problem! Feeding your family with a home garden is easier than you think. See our expert tips on how you can get started here.



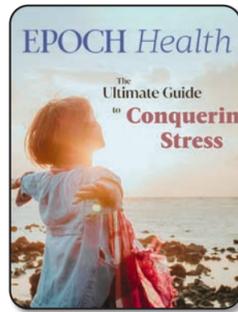
Healing From Long COVID and COVID Vaccine Effects

Learn about the lifestyle changes and treatments that can help you mitigate the symptoms of long COVID and COVID vaccine side effects.



The Ultimate Guide to Healing Through Musculoskeletal Self-Alignment

Discover simple ways to address muscle and bone pains that you can incorporate into your daily life.



The Ultimate Guide to Conquering Stress

Find your inner peace, even when the going gets tough. We show you how to build a resilient body and mind in this ultimate guide.



For more Epoch Health magazines, visit

EPOCH Health

TheEpochTimes.com/edition-special-series

American Essence

FROM THE PUBLISHERS OF THE EPOCH TIMES



“Non-political, real-life look at goodness, decency, and excellence in the world.”

—EDWARD LONG



“A breath of fresh air in troubled times.”

—CHARLES MIDDLEMAS

“You’ll hear a voice that reminds you all is not lost.”

—PAT MORACHE



“Uplifting stories, stunning photos. ... exceptional magazine.”

—MONICA GUZA

Bring Home Traditional American Culture and Great American Stories.

Subscribe today at AmericanEssence.net