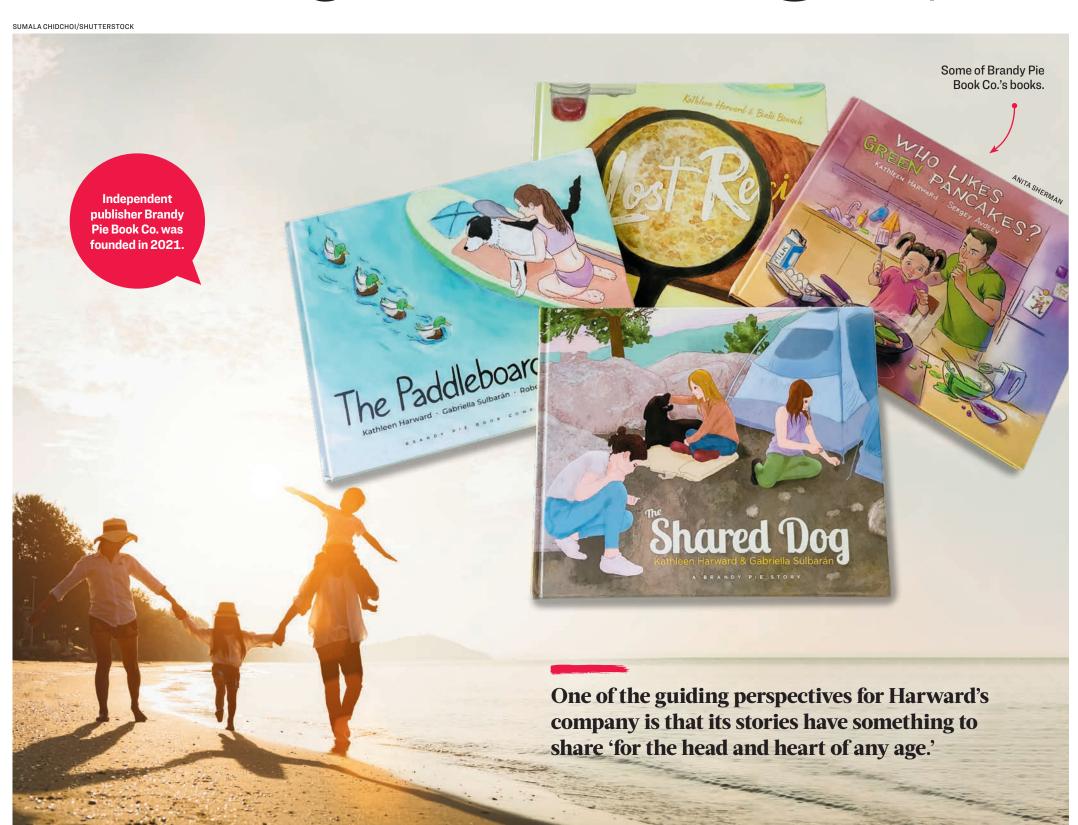
# THE EPOCH TIMES LIFE TRADITION



# Brandy Pie Book Co. Offers Value-Driven Children's Books

Attorney-turned-author Kathleen Harward builds a defense for today's youth



**Kathleen Harward,** the founder of Brandy Pie Book Co.

### ANITA L. SHERMAN

For Kathleen Harward, the heroes and themes in her books are her medicine for today's social ills. She sees them as antidotes for a generation of youth that would rather blame and destroy instead of solve and create.

Her path as an independent publisher of children's books is one inspired by experience and heart. In 2021, she founded Brandy Pie Book Co. This move came after serving for almost 15 years as a campus lawyer, serving as director of student legal services at Colorado State University. In that capacity, she helped college students overcome mistakes, learn resilience, think entrepreneurially, and develop abilities to make their own and other people's lives better.

But her time in a university setting often put her at odds with her colleagues.

"I was sometimes the only voice speaking out in meetings against policies that I didn't like," Harward said. She felt the students were being indoctrinated with ideologies that were mislabeled and pushed forward as "social justice." "I think what I experienced is unfortunately pervasive today. It's a tear-down message rather than a build-up one."

Harward decided to do some investigations of her own into the children's section at her local libraries. What she found disturbed her.

"In earlier years, I believed the destructive trend was limited to the higher education bubble, but it's apparent now that children in many elementary schools are already being primed for this way of thinking," she said.

"I was shocked when I saw what was new and being added to the shelves, all these brand-new picture books and early books for children—and identity politics in them.

"I grew up surrounded by everyday heroes," such as dogs, kids, grandmas, nurses, teachers, and parents. Instead of blaming others, "you overcome obstacles, learn to do the hard things, and make lives better."

The thought of staying silent was concerning to Harward.

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### HISTORY

# The Sound of the Enemy

How the US Navy's ocean systems technicians tracked the Soviets

### DUSTIN BASS

When Geoff Ugent was discharged from the U.S. Navy, he had to wait 27 years to talk about anything he did for the branch of the military. His former job title, ocean systems technician (OT), sounds more like he worked in ocean-ography or marine engineering than in one of the most select groups in naval intelligence.

"We were very rare," Ugent said. "Most people in the military didn't know what we were." In 1974, fresh out of high school, Ugent was considering joining the military. He met

with all branches in the recruiter station. The Navy, stationed at the end of the hall, was the last to interview him. Ugent told the recruiter that he would consider joining if he could receive a guarantee that he would never be placed on a ship.

It was a rather oxymoronic request, being that scouring the oceans is what the Navy does, and in order to do that, they have to use ships. As much as it sounded like a poor joke, Ugent was in earnest.

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Geoff Ugent was tasked with identifying and tracking enemy military ships.

# How to Enjoy Life More

There are ways, both big and small, to enjoy life in any situation

### **BARBARA DANZA**

njoying life can seem like an elusive prospect sometimes. Everyone has their ups and downs, the state of the world seems chaotic, and modern life tends to be all too busy.

So we think to ourselves, "After this busy season, I can slow down and enjoy life,' or, "Once I've saved enough money or lost enough weight, I can enjoy life," or, "When I retire, I can enjoy life."

The truth is that we can find ways, both big and small, to enjoy life at any time—even in difficult circumstances.

### **Forgo Complaining**

One way to enjoy life more is to simply stop complaining. It's so easy to complain, either aloud or to ourselves: The service was bad someone left a mess behind, that person was rude, that experience was disappointing, this chore is cumbersome. Complaining casts a shadow of negativity that sucks the joy out of life.

Oftentimes, the mundane things we tend to complain about could just as easily be seen in a positive light. When feeling resentful of our routine chores, for example, we could recognize how blessed we are to have dishes to wash, clothes to clean, tools to make the job easier, and a family to care for. We could slow down and actually enjoy the process of doing this work—of improving our lives and the lives of those we love, one simple step at a time.

Even when our complaints seem completely warranted—we're mistreated, we're suffering—we can find the lesson within the experience and utilize it as an opportunity for growth and improvement. We can see unsavory behavior in others and consider whether we ever behave that way. We can pick ourselves back up after a fall or failure and move forward with increased fortitude. It's coming through life's challenges better may be able to do is become a refreshing,

### Seek Quietude

Relentless inputs from media and technology can make enjoying life more challenging. Spend some time each day disconnected to the constant onslaught, and let your mind find calmness, stillness, and peace. You may find great enjoyment in some flash of inspiration that comes or a fond memory you recall, or simply the ability to take in the present moment and allow your spirit and body to relax.



### Savor Beauty

If life is so hectic that we're not stopping to smell the roses, we're leaving enjoyment on the table. Take in nature, the arts, music, and stories. Learn about history, travel away from your small corner of the world, bake a delightful treat and share it, plant a garden, and light a candle. Life is full of simple pleasures, but you need to allow the buffer time between obligations and worries to experience them.

### **Dispel Fear**

Fear seems pervasive at the moment. Recognize the ways in which fear is driving you, and consider whether that fear is a help or hindrance. We can't enjoy life if we're scared that the sky might fall at any

Take on the responsibility to diligently manage what is within your control and let the rest go. One of the greatest things you ight-hearted, and optimistic influence on the lives of those around you.

### **Revisit Play**

Do you remember play? You likely did it all the time as a child. What would you play with now if you could? Would you head outdoors and kick a ball around, swing on the swingset at a park, paint a picture, or start a collection? Rekindling a sense of play can reinvigorate your creativity and certainly bring more enjoyment to life. You think play is just for kids? Give it a try.

### **Deepen Connections** Take the time

to savor beauty,

whether it's a stroll in

nature or a concert.

Oftentimes,

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Technology was doing a pretty decent job of encouraging separation between people, even before the events of the past few years. Is there a way you can rekindle or better tend to the relationships in your life? Reach out to the relatives and friends you haven't connected with in a while. Visit loved ones face to face and shoot the breeze. Send a surprise in the mail to someone far away just to ease their loneliness.

As a society, we've underestimated how precious our relationships are. Buck the trend and gather.

### **Improve Yourself**

We all are works in progress. Each of us, if we're brave enough to look, can easily see the countless ways in which we can improve. Aim to make tiny improvements in yourself each day. You'll be amazed at how enjoyable that is.

Improve your habits, attitude, diet, space, appearance, and skills-whatever you wish to improve upon—and simply try to improve a tiny bit every day in that area, and see where that strategy takes you.

### **Embrace Gratitude**

Life is truly a miracle, if you think about it. Take time to note the big and small things you're grateful for. A daily gratitude practice reminds you just how delightful, enjoyable, and truly amazing life really is. Don't miss out on being able to see that.

# Brandy Pie Book Co. Offers Value-Driven Children's Books

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"This stuff [such as identity politics] is so damaging. We need to find a better way," she said. "We need to help our children" and family and good books are a good place to start.

Harward took a leap of faith. At the end of 2020, she decided to leave the university and get to work creating children's books about characters who are "makers" and not "breakers."

"I felt I had to do something in my own simple way to help our children," Harward said. One way to do that was "to give them a coat of armor, show them they are surrounded by everyday heroes, and perhaps to help them grow into heroes themselves."

### **Collaborative Creativity**

Her first book, "The Shared Dog," is about a mother and father who guide their children through the life of a family dog. They, their three daughters, and a chocolate Labrador named Brandy Wilbur Pie share a life of nurturing care. Brandy turned out to be the perfect caregiver for them all, even extending vigilance to the grandparents living next door. From their wonderful family dog, the girls learn valuable lessons throughout their childhoods about unconditional love.

The inspiration for this book came from a real-life chocolate Labrador named Brandy Wilbur Pie-who also serves as the namesake for Harward's new publishing com-

As she navigated the new territory of publishing children's books, Harward looked to CJ Designs in Colorado to help with branding, book layout design, and establishing an e-commerce-based children's book company.

Brandy Pie Book Co.'s branding and logo design are intentionally warm, friendly, and serenely soothing. The illustrations are easy on the eye: soft, inviting, and created with a style that is graceful and gentle. Harward intends to keep the memory of this faithful, spirited, and beautiful dog alive as the company moves forward.

To execute these visuals, Harward discovers young artists in different countries for the task of illustrating her stories, art ists such as Gabriella Sulbarán from smalltown Merida, Venezuela, or Sergey Avdeev, an artist and art teacher from Siberia. Harward is keen on helping young entrepreneurs succeed.

Incorporating young artists not only showcases their talents, but also helps with Harward's hopeful messaging: encouraging confidence, curiosity, and collaboration. For Harward, children start out this way, and she wants her books to encourage these natural impulses.



Brandy Wilbur Pie was a beloved family dog and the inspiration for Kathleen Harward's series of children's books.



Kathleen Harward, founder and author of Brandy Pie Book Co.

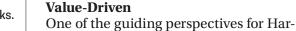
I felt I had to do something in my own simple way to help our children.

Kathleen Harward. author and founder, Brandy Pie Book Co.



This young girl pictured with Brandy Wilbur Pie is the inspiration for Alba in "The Shared Dog."





ward's company is that its stories have something to share "for the head and heart of any age." She calls them the "pots and pans" stories of living. Harward knows that children would rather play with the pots and pans they can find in a cupboard rather than a toy out of a box.

Harward's good friend Rebecca Hill, a

teacher and writer, assists with book edit-

"Children lean toward what is authentic!" she said.

After "The Shared Dog," Harward published three more children's books.

"The Lost Recipe" is about a search for Grandma's lost recipe, which illustrates that remembering and savoring favorite recipes from those we love is a way of honoring their memories. In "The Paddleboard Dog," a science teacher and her Border Collie-mix offers her students daily lessons on living a full life in the great outdoors. And finally, "Who Likes Green Pancakes?" follows a creative nurse who juggles the precious care of sick children with her own daughter's dreams for the holiday season.

"Our stories are set in creeks, canyons, mountains, backyards, and kitchens" and are meant for everyone," Harward said. "We create for ages 3 to 100. We start early and never stop trying to figure things out. As for Brandy Pie Book Co., "our stories are about a way of living."

### **Homegrown Stories** Harward's decision to start her own com-

pany took courage. "I come from a family of courageous

people," she said with a laugh. Her father was a small-town Nebraska lawyer. The county he worked in as a prosecutor was a safe haven for homeschoolers.

"At that time, it was illegal to homeschool ... parents could be put in jail," said Harward, fondly remembering her father's respect for the power of parents and offering them sanctuary in the county he served. After she left home, those lessons stuck with her.

"When I was an undergrad at Rutgers, we had great teachers but there was a push to socialism," Harward said. "You had to resist

to point out the flaws."

Harward now has three grown daughters. Two are nurses and the other is a science teacher. They are stellar young women in her eyes, and poignant stories from their lives were incorporated into several of her books. There is much authenticity, and as a result, her stories resonate with strength and sensitivity.

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### **Looking Forward**

Harward is working on her fifth book, which focuses on adults who lead. While having her books do well commercially, she is keen on having them available on library shelves and classrooms throughout the country.

Thanks to a recent generous donor, Brandy Pie books are now available for donations to libraries and classrooms. She's on her wav.

After a visit to Montana to visit her youngest daughter, Harward shared that her books are now available in downtown Billings at This House of Books.

"It is a co-op model where anyone can buy a share of ownership in the co-op and get discounts and the like, and author-owners get shelf space at the front of the store, presence on its website, and promotional events," said an enthusiastic Harward. "There are some very well-known authorowners, too!"

While Harward's company is small, her vision is large. With the holidays approaching, she's optimistic that families craving fresh stories with timeless values will look to her Brandy Pie series.

"There's a special role for each one of us. ... We have an obligation to make the world a little better," she said. "Hopefully, these

stories will show children how." To order books or connect with Kathle

Harward, visit BrandyPieBooks.com

Anita L. Sherman is an award-winning journalist who has more than 20 years of experience as a writer and editor for local papers and regional publications in Virginia. She now works as a freelance writer and is working on her first novel. She is the mother of three grown children and grandmother to four, and she resides in Warrenton, Va. She can be reached at anitajustwrite@gmail.com

# The Sound of the Enemy

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The reason he didn't want to be on a ship was because several of his friends who had joined the Navy had told him that they were constantly on maintenance duty, keeping the ship clean.

The recruiter took Ugent at his word and said that of the approximately 70 jobs available in the Navy, he could offer him one that would help to ensure he wouldn't be placed on a ship. He said that if Ugent could pass the intelligence test, then he could be considered for the position. So what was the

"He told me, 'I don't know much about it because it's highly classified.' He didn't have much to share with me" about the position, Ugent said with a laugh.

"Imagine trying to sell that job. 'I can't tell you much about the job. You want it?"

After passing the intelligence test and undergoing a thorough background check that cost the Navy \$10,000 (approximately \$55,000 today), he was off to boot camp, where he spent a brutal winter on the Great

Lakes before being stationed at a secret submarine base in Key West, Florida, for his technical training, also known as A School.

### **Listening to the Enemy**

Once Ugent received his secret level clearance, secret bases became something of the norm. Those bases, of which he would experience several, were always protected by no fewer than a dozen Navy SEALs. He noted how rare and elite the OTs and SEALs were.

"Only 1 percent of the active-duty Navy are allowed to be Navy SEALs at any one time, which is about 2,500 people in the world. There were 2,500 of those, but there were fewer than 1,000 of us," he said, referring to the OT position.

### **Ugent found himself at the** center of a Soviet attempt to gather classified Navy technology.

While the Cold War raged on, as it would for nearly two more decades, the United States remained in a death struggle with the Soviet Union.

Ugent and the rest of the OTs were assigned the task of tracking and identifying Soviet seacraft. They were on constant alert, listening to whatever was lurking in the world's oceans, from submarines and

battleships to cruisers and shrimp boats.

"We used hydrophone arrays," Ugent said. "We had them fanned out on the continental shelf. Each base had two arrays. A couple of bases had a third one. Sound coming from a particular direction will hit this hydrophone before this one so you can triangulate sonically what direction that's coming from.

"When you have 80 hydrophones listening, you can be pretty precise on where something is coming from. But where is not enough information. It's important, but what is it? We had the intel to be able to identify any type of ship—surface or subsurface—based on the noises it made."

### The Sound of Technology

The technology for the hydrophone arrays originated from a theory by ocean scientists Maurice Ewing and J. Lamar Worzel in 1944. They believed that low-frequency sounds from hundreds of miles away could be heard in the ocean's deep. Their theory proved true.

Toward the end of World War II, this proven theory was put to use in order to locate the position of downed sailors. The sailors would drop a small explosive device from their life raft and the sound of the explosion would be heard from listening stations and then triangulated in order to find the location of the life raft.

Over the years, the Navy used this scientific discovery to create more advanced technology called the Sound Surveillance System (SOSUS) in order to locate

the position of Soviet diesel and nuclear submarines.

Ugent said the OTs were listening for very low-frequency sounds, around 500 hertz or lower. He said the ship would make various noises based on its machinery, and the sound frequencies would emanate from the ship's hull.

"If we could identify three or four of those sounds, we had the intel to know what kind of ship it was," he said. "All ships make sounds, but they don't all make the same

### The Chain of Command

Ugent was once stationed at a secret base on San Nicolas Island off the coast of Southern California, where the closest Soviet port was approximately 9,000 miles away. He said that as soon as a Soviet ship or submarine came out of port-minus the lag time of that sound traveling that distance—he and his team could pick it



One of the most difficult things for Ugent was that he couldn't tell his family about the imminent threats he knew about that could affect them.

up and identify it. Once their intelligence was gathered, it was a short chain of command to the president. The quick relay of information was pivotal because, as Ugent stated, there was the constant threat of nuclear attack.

"We reported to our direct officers on the base, then that report went to a hub—either on the West Coast or the East Coast," he said. "The hub reported directly to the secretary of the Navy, and then the secretary of defense would get involved, and then they would report to the president and the vice president. Based on our information, they made decisions about what the rest of the Navy and about half the Air Force was going to do at any given

### **Keeping Top Secrets Secret** Just as U.S. leaders had tried to keep the

moment."

himself at the center of a Soviet attempt to country's nuclear secrets away from prying ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF DUSTIN BASS



There were fewer than 1,000 ocean systems technicians when Ugent served, compared to 2,500 Navy SEALs.

Soviet eyes during the Manhattan Project, they tried to do the same with the SOSUS technology. In both instances, the Soviets succeeded in placing spies within the American ranks.

Toward the end of 1967, John Walker, a Navy chief warrant officer and submarine communications specialist, walked into the Soviet Embassy in Washington and agreed to become a spy. Eighteen years later, he would be credited with arguably the worst security breach of the Cold War.

According to then-Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, Walker's spy ring provided the Soviets with "access to weapons and sensor data and naval tactics, terrorist threats, and surface, submarine, and airborne training, readiness, and tactics." Perhaps from Walker's information or

gather classified Navy technology. "I can personally attest that that was an interesting day," he said with a laugh.

by other means of espionage, Ugent found

When he was stationed at San Nicolas Island, he and his team tracked a surface vessel that had come out of a Soviet port in the northwest Pacific. They followed it as it went around the Aleutian Islands chain, down the coast of Alaska, Canada, and Washington state, and stopped near Santa Barbara, California, where it attempted to port. After the Santa Barbara Port Authority denied the Soviet ship access, the ship made its way

farther south to San Nicolas Island. The island has a 27-mile perimeter. The se-

cret naval base takes up a very small portion of that coast. Oddly enough, the Soviet vessel stopped two miles away from the coast, directly in front of the base. Ugent noted that not only was it a violation to stop in front of the base, but the island also restricted ships

from being closer than three miles. "We were issued M16s and were lined up 10 feet apart down the beach," he recalled. "A half dozen SEALs took off in a boat and met up with the Soviet landing craft about a mile out that was trying to come to shore. At the same time, two Navy F-16s came flying overhead."

The Soviets in the small boat stated that their ship was a research vessel.

"I suppose they were a research vessel and they probably had a bunch of Soviet Marines onboard," he said, laughing. "What were they coming for? They were coming to raid us and steal our intel. They were coming to kill us, because we weren't about to give that up."

When the Navy SEALs told the Soviets that the F-16s would soon sink their ship if they didn't leave, the group turned their small boat around, boarded their ship, and left. Ugent said the ship definitely left. He and his team tracked it all the way back to Hawaii.

"What was interesting about that ship was what it was. It was actually a Soviet destroyer without the big guns," he said. "They took the big guns off of it and painted everything that wasn't glass white. It had no flags. No identifying markers. Nothing. "Since it was our job to know what it was, tory" podcast.

we knew what it was. We knew what it was when it came out of port. It wasn't even out of the ocean chain before the president knew about it because of what we did."

### **A More Dangerous Time**

Ugent has been out of the Navy since 1980 and hasn't had to track ships since then. But he has been tracking the nuances of the Cold War, which he believes never ended. He said the war is now covert, rather than overt. And just like the decades of the overt Cold War, the threat of thermonuclear exchange is still a very clear and present

"China is the new big threat in the room because they have even grander thoughts about taking over stuff than the Soviets

did," he said. "The Soviets wanted the Eastern bloc and all that. China wants everything. They aren't like our country, where we think in blocks of two years or four years. They're thinking a hundred years in advance. That's a different threat than the Soviets.

"The dicey thing is the countries that won't act properly, like Iran and North Korea. They're the loose cannons, so to speak. The world is much more dangerous now than in the '70s when I served.'

Dustin Bass is the host of EpochTV's "About the Book," a show about new books with the authors who wrote them. He is an author and co-host of "The Sons of His-

COURTESY OF DEFINING 78 PHOTOGRAPHY VIA STEVE ULLMER

One of the foundations of civilization, work bestows self-respect

### **JEFF MINICK**

n the television show "The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis," aired before many of my readers were born, Bob Denver, later of "Gilligan's Island" fame, played Maynard G. Krebs, a beatnik—for young readers, think early hippie. His trademarks were a goatee and an aversion to work. Whenever someone mentioned the word, Maynard would panic, yelp "Work!" and sometimes, even drop into a faint.

Along with my siblings, then old enough to appreciate that show, I'd always laugh at Maynard's line, although it was one we never dared try out on our parents.

Dad, a small-town physician at that time, worked 60-plus hours a week, and when he was home, he switched gears from his examining room to the yard and woods around our house. My brother and I were still in elementary school, but we worked alongside him, clearing brush, pulling weeds, and raking leaves.

We also helped Mom with household chores, mowed the lawn, and fed the horses housed in a barn built by Dad and his father, a carpenter.

Dad was old-school, a child of the Depression and later, an infantryman fighting the Germans in Italy. He'd grown up poor in a household where the adage—"if you don't work, you don't eat"—was a living reality.

He bestowed his work ethic, perhaps his greatest gift, on each of his six children. Both Mom and Dad considered all work honorable and worthy, no matter how menial, and we were raised to believe the same.

### **Work: The Basics**

In Genesis, God banishes Adam from the Garden and lays a curse on him: "By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread" (Genesis 3:19). Like Maynard G. Krebs, some Americans still see work as anathema, preferring to take money from the government rather than earn it from an employer. Citing stress on the job, others have recently laid claim to the idea of "quiet quitting," a philosophy which may be summed up as "I'll do what I'm obliged to do at work, but not a whit more."

Others, however, appreciate hard work of all kinds. Ben Franklin, a man as industrious as they come, wrote, "It is the working man who is the happy man. It is the idle man who is the miserable man."

Just recently, skilled trades advocate Mike Rowe remarked, "Work ethic is important because, unlike intelligence, athleticism, charisma, or any other natural attribute, it's a choice."

When we try to define work, we probably think first of labor exchanged for some kind of payment. Whether it's a teller at the bank or the guy driving a truck, both are working, at least in part, to make money. In their own way, they are heeding the trademark words of America's early pioneers: "Root, hog, or die."

That was harsh, but the meaning was clear: If you wanted to survive, you'd better get on with the job.

### **Work: The Deeper Meaning**

All work is a form of service, often unrecognized as such by the laborer himself, to our fellow human beings. The kid who dispenses hamburgers and fries at a local fast-food restaurant is feeding the hungry, which, in Christian tradition, constitutes a corporal work of mercy. The tall gentleman once employed by my public library cleaned the bathrooms, mopped the vestibule, wiped down the tables, and brought some sparkle to that place. A nurse I know well, now retired, gave her all at a hospice, caring for the dying and, on occasion, returning home in tears at what she had witnessed.

Christianity has long extolled the value and dignity of work. "Ora et labora," which translates to "pray and work," has guided monastic life for many centuries, and the ancient Rule of St. Benedict notes that "idleness is the enemy of the soul."

### The Shame of Our Shaming

To the detriment of our culture, our society, and ourselves, some people don't always grant this dignity to others. They hail the talents and wealth of actors and Silicon Valley emperors, and they look with respect on the doctor they've just met at a party, but they look past or through the man who introduces himself as an auto mechanic. I've actually encountered one blue-collar worker, a carpenter, apparently talented, who seemed apologetic when telling me what he did for a living.

What our culture has done by dishonoring certain work or jobs is ridiculous and harmful on two levels. First, this superior attitude toward the blue-collar and working-class steals away their worth as human beings. The broker or bureaucrat who considers herself somehow better than the plumber she meets at a backyard barbecue is behaving like so many people, arranging her fellow human beings into some sort of hierarchy and judging them by what they do rather than who they are.

This same widespread notion of position and status has also affected the trades in our country, which are crying out for competent workers. For decades, we have pushed our young people to attend college, whereas many of them might have enjoyed happier lives, and high incomes, becoming welders, masons, or technicians. The jobs are out there, but those who are qualified to work them are missing.

Some show this same disdain for the woman who chooses to care for her husband and children, maintain the house, and assume all the responsibilities this decision entails. Over the years, I've seen perhaps a dozen or so women who, when asked that most American question, "What do you do?" say with some sense of embarrassment, "I'm a stay-at-home mom." Long considered one of the most vital of human endeavors, managing a home and raising children no longer qualifies as worthy labor. To shame such work is, in itself, shameful.

### The Fruits of Human Labor

Work isn't only about money and human dignity. It's the foundation of civilization.

I'm writing these words in a coffee shop on Main Street in Front Royal, Virginia. Directly outside of my window seat is a candy store in an old building built from thousands of bricks. In the window of the café are posters and decorative lights. To my right are wooden and metal tables, chairs, a nook with a widescreen TV and sofas, glass counters encasing ice cream, and a score of other fixtures common to such establishments.

Every item here, from the largest to the smallest, is the work of human hands and human ingenuity. Ditto on the sandwiches made in the kitchen, the bagged chips, and the Peet's coffee. The establishment is clean and organized—again, the results of someone's labor.

### To the Best of Our Ability

In "The Book of Man," William Bennett includes a profile of Terry Toussaint, who took a job as a sanitation worker in Fort Valley, Georgia, where he cleaned gutters, fixed potholes, and eventually became supervisor of the department. Toussaint believed in making each day count. Bennett writes, "His attitude, not his job or his status, defines who he is as a man."

The same is true for all of us. Our attitude toward work tells others who we are. And here we must remember that work, no matter what it is, doesn't bring dignity to us. No—we bring dignity to the work, and the key to that dignity is our attitude.

When we give ourselves to a job, performing with competence and an upbeat, can-do attitude, we not only serve others, but ourselves as well, daily adding another coin, usually without even realizing it, to our treasury of

Jeff Minick lives and writes in Front Royal, Virginia. He is the author of two novels, "Amanda Bell" and "Dust on Their Wings," and two works of nonfiction, "Learning as I Go" and "Movies Make the Man."





Steve and Erin Ullmer got engaged in April 2018.

# Tragedy Brings Widow and Widower Together

Love and forgiveness prevail in this newly blended family of 8

### **LOUISE CHAMBERS**

A second chance at a happily-ever-after came for a widow and widower from Wisconsin when they met after both having lost their spouses in sudden, tragic circum-

Steve Ullmer, 42, and his second wife, Erin, 40, have now been married for four years. Together, they parent six children: four from Steve's first marriage, and two from Erin's. Their blended family is a testament to their faith-filled journey.

### **Falling in Love**

Steve met his first wife, Wendy, at Menasha High School in Wisconsin where he was a senior and she was a junior.

He told The Epoch Times: "We had a class together ... We started to date right at the end of my high school career, but just for a few months ... I went off to school at the University of Wisconsin; she stayed to finish high school."

Later, Wendy went to a school to become a nurse.

For the next five years, the couple managed to have a long-distance relationship. with drugs and drinking.

"That was not something Wendy was into," he said. "It damaged relationships, affected my school, and I started to actually get some physical injuries from my drinking. I had to have surgery, and by the grace of God it could have been much worse."

Despite all this, Wendy never gave up on her love and was by Steve's side. "I don't understand to this day why she

stayed with me but she did," Steve said. "She was just a very loving, honest person." But Steve knew that something had to change in his life and he began to seek out a path. He started reading the Bible and found pure truth between the pages.

"I was 22 years old, in my last year of college. I was very hungover and was all by myself in my car in the middle of the night," Steve recalled. "I felt the presence of God strongly, physically, in a way that I could not explain. It changed me, and from that day forward I surrendered my life to Jesus.

"I stopped drinking, stopped doing drugs ... I asked Wendy to marry me two weeks later."

During their 13-year marriage, the couple had four sons: Liam, now 16, Jack, 15, Silas, 12, and Judah, 8. Steve had various jobs in the copper mill where he is now a production manager. Wendy worked as a

part-time nurse so that she could stay home with the kids. She used her skills to help her friends stay healthy, and when she and Steve decided their family was complete, they began writing a book together. That's when tragedy struck.

### Losing the Love of His Life

"I remember the last date I went on with her just talking about the future," Steve said. "Five days after that last date, she was gone." On March 16, 2017, Wendy began experi-

encing heart palpitations. She wasn't worried, as she'd had them before. But Steve took her to the doctor, where she was fitted with a heart monitor.

It was a normal night and Steve went to sleep an hour earlier than Wendy.

However, an hour later, Steve woke up to hear his wife gasping for breath beside him.

"I tried to wake her up, and she would not respond to me at all," he said. "I started to shake her and yell her name, and she was totally unresponsive ... I called 911, I performed CPR on her, the paramedics came, the sheriff came, they all came to my house and tried to revive her, administered During this time, Steve was seduced by a shock to her heart ... and they couldn't

> At the hospital, doctors managed to restart Wendy's heart and placed her on a ... the man still standing pulled out a gun, ventilator, but her blood

The cardiac surgeon advised against another resuscitation, but Steve insisted; he believed God could still heal his wife. The entire family prayed for a miracle, but Wendy passed away the very next

pressure deteriorated.

Steve didn't know how to tell his children that their mother, who was only 36, had died. At that

time, they weren't sure of Wendy's cause of named Adam, Jon, and Olivia, and took death. It wasn't until a few months later that he found out Wendy had died from sarcoidosis, an abnormal collection of inflammatory cells, in multiple organs throughout her body.

Nobody had known Wendy was sick. Luckily, their children tested negative for the disease, and Steve leaned on family and the church for support as they tried to cope with the grief.

"All of a sudden being a single dad, trying to raise four young boys, it was so challenging," he said, "but I'm thankful that

during that time, because they kept driving me forward." Steve dragged his boys' mattresses into

God gave me the kids that I have, especially

Steve and Erin Ullmer from Wisconsin got married in June 2018.

one bedroom so that they could all sleep together and ask some tough questions to each other, such as "Where is mom now?" and "How did God let this happen?" During this time, there was an outpour-

ing of support from the community, as people prepared meals for the family, gave the children haircuts, and sent cards and messages stating that they were praying for him and his family.

In late June 2017, Steve received a message through Facebook from Erin Stoffel, a woman well-known in his Wisconsin her. She reached out to me during a time hometown for suffering an immense tragedy of her own. Erin had lost her husband and eldest daughter in a shooting incident in 2015.

Erin's message to Steve was simple: "Hey, Steve, you don't know me, but I'm praying talking, sharing their lives. for you and your boys. Just keep trusting in Jesus."

Just like Steve, Erin had met her husband, Jon, in high school. They attended Bible College in California together and married young. The couple welcomed their first daughter, Olivia, when Erin was only 19. Later, a son and second daughter followed: Ezra, now 15, and Selah, 12.

On May 3, 2015, Erin and Jon took advantage of a pleasant day and took their three kids on a walk across Menasha's 1,600-foot Trestle Trail Bridge

"At the halfway point of the bridge, there's a red pavilion with some benches," Steve said. "People like to fish, or just sit, because you're out in the middle of the lake on this bridge. They saw there was a man who was slumped over on a bench, and another man A Happy, Blended Family

"Jon wanted to go see what had happened

that Erin was just

trying to help him,

but Erin confided

that Steve had

shot Jon, shot Erin, and shot Olivia. They all fell to the ground." As their friendship Erin had been shot developed, Steve felt

through the leg but grabbed Selah, who was beside her, and started running, later sustaining two additional gunshots to the hand and stomach. She pleaded to her son, Ezra, to run before she collapsed.

helped her heal, too. The shooter had killed the slumped-over man his own life by shooting himself.

### 'May God Forgive You'

Erin was transported to the hospital and had to undergo immediate surgery to stop the bleeding.

When she woke up after the surgery, she had tubes in her mouth.

"She couldn't talk, and the only way she could communicate with everyone was to write on a piece of paper," Steve said. "She asked about Jon and Olivia. The family had to confirm that both of them were gone.

"One thing that struck me from this story is that Erin had heard her husband's last words to the shooter. He had said, 'May God forgive you.' Erin wrote that on a piece of paper ... she shared that with everyone."

Jon was 33 when he died and Olivia was 11. When Steve received Erin's comforting message after losing Wendy, he was moved by her selflessness. He asked a lot of questions about how to cope after such a loss. Erin sent him songs and Bible verses, and

eventually, the pair grew close. Steve said: "She is one of the most unique people I've ever met. She's very, very loving, very outgoing, and had very strong faith; that's one of the things that drew me to when I was going through some very dif-

ficult things. I'm just very thankful for her." The pair met in person for the first time in July 2017, at the Christian music festival, Life Fest. They spent hours walking and

As their friendship developed, Steve felt that Erin was just trying to help him, but Erin confided that Steve had helped her heal, too.

They found their kids could support each other in a similar way. "They don't have other friends or kids their age who have been through something like this. Suddenly, now they have each other," Steve said.

When Erin felt ready, Steve accompanied her back to the Trestle Trail Bridge to make peace with her loss.

"It was very hard, but we felt like we could do things like that with each other," he said. "Both of us believe it was God that brought us together."

Before long, the couple felt "God was calling" them to form a relationship. They turned to friends to seek advice about blending families before getting engaged in April 2018. They got married two months later.

Describing their wedding day, Steve said: "It was beautiful. I just feel so blessed to have all of these families around us, supporting us, and they were all there. It was a really unique experience.

"When I got married to Wendy in 2004, that was for life. I viewed that as a Christian, and she was the same way, so I would never have thought I'd get married again. But that's not the story God has ... He works for the good of those who love him."

Together, Steve and Erin want to share their stories to bring glory to God, comfort those in grief, and encourage others that hope can be found.

"My faith, having that peace, it can sustain you through anything that this life throws your way," Steve said. "It's hard to understand till it happens, but there's no peace to be found on that level in anything else."

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



Elsie with firefighter Brandon Huber.

# Firefighter Remodels 90-Year-Old's House

The call was a false alarm, but Brandon Huber saved her house anyway

### **LOUISE CHAMBERS**

A Washington firefighter came to the rescue when an elderly neighbor's "life alert" pendant went off. Although it was a false alarm, it turned out that she did need a helping hand.

Elsie, a Monroe, Washington, resident who's in her 90s, was mowing her yard when she accidentally set off the pendant she wears in case of an emergency.

According to King5, Snohomish Regional Fire & Rescue immediately showed up at Elsie's 1939 property and

realized that it was a false alarm. However, after learning that Elsie mowed her own yard, firefighter Brandon Huber, who had been dispatched that day, went above and beyond to heed the call.

"I have four sons, so I told her we would come and take care of her lawn,"

Huber said.

As Brandon got to know Elsie and her "old house with withered paint and a long history," he wanted to help out further.

"A larger and more visible calling pushed him to do more than just mow the lawn," Snohomish Regional Fire & Rescue shared on Facebook. "The chipped paint and old wood shingles were in dire need of a makeover."

With funding from Fire 7 Foundation, a nonprofit organization that provides support to the community during tough times through financial, educational, and emotional means, Huber bought the supplies he needed.

Enlisting the help of his four sons and dedicating four days of his own time to pressure-washing and repainting the exterior of Elsie's home, Huber completely transformed the place.

The house was finished in a fresh, crisp white paint with dark-blue trim. Elsie looked on with pride at her revamped home as Huber and his sons completed their handiwork.

"[The house] was in rough shape,

mostly wood and almost no paint," Huber said. "It needed some love."

Elsie said: "Nobody asked him to do this. He has four kids and works 24hour shifts, but he did this on the side, and it's amazing. It changed my life!" Praise for Huber flooded in from netizens, too.

"That's what I'm talking about! Helping the ones in need," one Facebook comment reads. "Being able to lift a heart is the most incredible thing a human can do. ... God bless your heart and hands!"

Another comment reads, "Wonderful. It's stories like this that make me think humanity will be OK in the end.'



The revamped house, painted white with blue trim.

# Photo Albums Breathe Life Into Family History

→ Advice from our readers to our young people

love taking pictures, to the point where my children and grandchildren groan when it's time to take one. Some family members are very cooperative, others, not so much. I am known as the family historian because that is what I do: I preserve the important people and occasions in our lives.

These days, it's simple to make a visual family history since most photos are digital. I can create all my photo pages on the computer, which takes very little time. No longer do I have to scan each photo into the computer, correct the color, resize it, store it, and then insert it into a document. I just open a new page, insert the photo, add a caption and date, and I am done.

Currently, I have one photo album for each year I have been married (52 as I write this), plus other albums of relatives who are no longer with us or pictures taken by others so long ago, I don't know the place, the people, or why the photo was taken. We even have a photo of the log cabin in which my great-grandparents lived, where my grandmother was raised. That's six generations ago.

Of course, my children have plenty of pictures and videos as well, but theirs are stored in a cloud or on a flash drive, hard drive, computer, or camera. Digitally, they exist, but since they are never downloaded and printed out, no one ever sees them unless a photo happens to get posted on social media, or if we specifically ask to see one.

Regrettably, gone are the days when my in-laws would drag out the slide projector, and we'd all gather around to view each slide as Dad or Mom narrated every single one. What was even more enjoyable was when the movie projector was set up, and we watched "old-time" movies of when Dad was young or my husband was just learning to walk. This made for great fun, but it also showed our children who these people were before they were born.

To make my photo albums accessible to my grandchildren, I store them in our family room. Each one is individually marked with the year's date and one or two important events that happened that year. This makes it easier when someone is looking for a particular picture. Many of our grandchildren will spend lots of time going through the albums. They love seeing photos of when their parents were young, when their parents got married, or when they were born. They laugh at the "funny" clothes, absurd hairstyles, and ridiculous poses.

They ask questions about the people in the pictures, which gives my husband and me an opportunity to tell them about their great-grandfather, or how we met, or what their parents were like when they were children. Family history is discovered in those pictures.

One evening, we were talking about my husband's favorite aunt and uncle who are no longer with us, and our granddaughter was able to tell her father about them and why they were so deeply loved. My son remarked that his daughter knew more about our family than he did. His daughter's comment was, "Dad, that's because I spend time looking at Grandma's photo albums!"

Needless to say, I believe photos are important as well as valuable. They not only give a visual history of our family, but they provide a sense of belonging because they connect us to those people who came before. It's like saying, "Hey,



our family is important and here's why." Printed pictures let us capture a certain moment in time, and then keep it for generations to come. Oftentimes, the pictures express emotions that words cannot, allowing our family to relive the wonderful memories while experiencing them again and again. But none of this can happen if your photos are hiding away on your computer or camera! Isn't it time to get those photos downloaded and printed out, then into the hands of those whom you love? —Vicky Rauch

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

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.





LARGER THAN LIFE: ART THAT INSPIRES US THROUGH THE AGES

# Nemours Estate

### OF ROYAL FRENCH INSPIRATION

The Petit Trianon of Versailles is a nod to Louis XV's summer palace

**JAMES HOWARD SMITH** 

esigned in 1909 on the tailcoats of America's Gilded Age, Nemours Estate graces the southern Delaware countryside with its French neoclassical architecture and formal garden. The 200-acre estate was designed for French industrialist Alfred I. duPont by architects John Merven Carrère and Thomas Hastings, both of whom trained in classical architecture at an École des Beaux-Arts (school of fine arts) in Paris. The mansion gives a nod to Louis XV's summer palace, garden.

the Petit Trianon of Versailles.

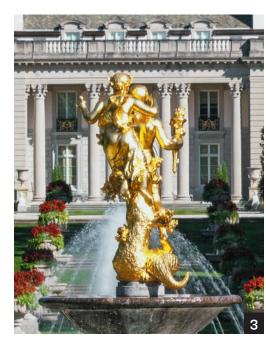
The mansion sits on the plateau of a grand vista surrounded by ponds and a parterre garden, largely composed of orderly boxwood hedges. The main façade focuses on a central bay set in behind six Corinthian columns. The covered front porch looks out over the vista.

The estate design is symmetrically arranged on an inclined axis, with the mansion at the top. In front, a terraced lawn lined with pedestals that are topped with flower-filled French urns lead the eye to a large fountain where the duPont family once swam and paddled in row boats. Behind, a maze garden surrounds the gilded sculpture of Achievement that looks upwards towards the mansion. A colonnade defines the edge of the upper part of the

The colonnade was designed with an archway that leads through to the lower part of the estate. There, visitors can explore the sunken garden, an additional expanse with grottos, fountains, and a lake, before coming to a garden folly that makes a picturesque addition to the landscape.

Nemours was the largest residence in Delaware at the beginning of the 20th century and influenced architecture in the local region. It was the architect's masterful use of the French classical style that has made Nemours estate a timeless source of beauty.

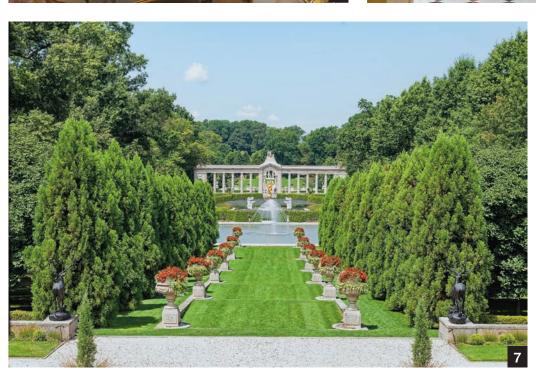
James Howard Smith, an architectural photographer, designer, and founder of Cartio, aims to inspire an appreciation of classic architecture.













1. The overall composition of the main facade shows similarities to Versailles' Petit Trianon with the centered corinthian columns, slender proportioned lower windows, refined sculptural ornamentation, and a distinctly French balustrade on the rooftop. The Nemours design then takes on its own style displaying cut stone trim with stucco walls, and a

2. The main central stairway is a transition from private quarters to family activities. The intricate crystal chandelier is surrounded by an elegant wrought iron balustrade. A large tapestry is featured.

large round-top entrance.

3. A view through the archway in the colonnade over the shoulder of the gilded sculpture of Achievement by sculptor Henri Crenier as it looks toward the mansion. On either side of the

sculpture are Carrara marble fountain sculptures of Triton, the god of the sea. The sculpture is surrounded by western arborvitae and crimson pygmy barberry.

4. The drawing room offers aesthetic harmony and delight. Soft off-white paneled walls are masterfully adorned with gilded trim, marble mantels, and pastel curtains. Elegant curves grace the wall corners, ceiling cornices, and the legs of furnishings, creating a subtle sculptural effect.

5. Carrère & Hastings was one of the first architectural firms of the age to offer a specialized interior design staff that mastered French neoclassical and renaissance styles. The main entrance hall, with its coffered ceiling, gilded trim, and marble mantel surrounding the fireplace, is seen through the arched doorway.

6. The conservatory offers summer enjoyment during the winter months. Sunlight fills the room of exotic plants, where exquisite singing birds hint at the expansive and inviting outdoors.

7. Viewed from the second floor of the mansion, the "Long Walk" is a terraced lawn lined with pedestals that leads from fountain basins to the Reflection Pond and colonnade beyond. Each step of the walkway has flower-filled goblets

8. The mansion also enjoys a view over a formal French parterre side garden (garden beds arranged in an ornamental design) with symmetrically arranged patterns formed from boxwood hedges and red flowers in between as accents. A white stone pathway accentuates the patterns.

# Baltasar Gracián: Critic of an Oppressive Age

A 17th-century Jesuit priest, known for his advice on worldly success, took aim at a despotic regime

### **ANDREW BENSON BROWN**

"Self-knowledge is the beginning of selfimprovement." Many variations of this simple advice exist today, but this formulation was originally the motto of a 17th-century Jesuit priest named Baltasar Gracián y Morales.

Although not widely known outside of Spain, Gracián does occasionally transcend obscurity. Thirty years ago, Christopher Maurer's translation of Gracián's book "The Art of Worldly Wisdom" unexpectedly made The New York Times bestseller list and sold more than 200,000 copies. It the following:

"Cautious silence is where prudence takes refuge."

"The greatest fool is the one who doesn't think himself one, only others."

"It takes much reflection to keep a passion from bolting like a horse; and if you're wise ances are as important as substance. on horseback, you're wise in everything." "A beautiful woman should break her Too Worldly Wise? mirror early."

bear similarities to those found in "Poor Richard's Almanac." In the world of academic philosophy, practical thinkers get ignored in favor of theoreticians. But while old theories are rendered obsolete by newer ones, wisdom is timeless. Gracián's writings retain a perennially modern quality even after 400 years.

### **An Empire in Decline**

Born in 1601, Gracián lived in a time much like our own. The Spanish empire was on the wane: The government was rife with corruption, the economy was failing, and individual liberties were under attack.

Gracián observed that moral decline was accompanying social decline. He felt that he needed to combat this tendency by writing ethical manuals on how to navigate an uncertain world.

He wanted his readers to attain a special type of understanding, which he described experience when, in "The Art of Worldly

using a word that has no direct equivalent in English: "desengaño." As his translator, Maurer, explains it as a state of "disillusionment in which one gains control of one's hopes and fears, overcomes deceitful appearances and vain expectations, and weans oneself from false worldly values." The closest English approximation is probably "disenchantment," but without that word's pessimistic connotations. Maurer's phrase "bittersweet beatitude" perhaps best describes Gracián's intended brand of enlightenment.

Gracián teaches us how to cultivate excellence, good taste, gracefulness in action, emotional mastery, and other prudent beconsists of 300 wry observations, such as haviors. Never be content with imitating others, he tells us—be singular and original. Strive toward perfection without trying to impress anyone. Hide your depths from

> those who would be envious of your talents. He belabors this last point in all his books. As he succinctly puts it, "Do, but also seem." In dangerous times, appear-

Some might think it strange that a Jesuit priest would write about how to achieve Gracián's proverbial wit and brevity is success in earthly affairs. This apparent famous in Spain, and his best one-liners contradiction wasn't lost on Gracián's contemporaries. Although his writings aren't controversial today, the Spanish Inquisition was at its height during his lifetime. Thousands of people were tortured and executed on charges of witchcraft, heresy, and immorality, sometimes based only on the suspicions of a neighbor. Many books some of which are now classics—were deemed harmful, placed on a forbidden index, and burned.

Gracián's ecclesiastical superiors considered it unbecoming of a man who had taken holy orders to publish shrewd advice books on nonspiritual matters. His catchy maxims about concealing one's intentions struck them as dishonest and sinful. On top of this, Gracián didn't seek approval to print his books. Instead, he went around the authorities and quietly published them under pen names.

He seems to have been speaking from



Portrait of Baltasar Gracián (1601-1658). Iglesia de San Miguel, Graus, Spain.

Wisdom," he writes: "Being defeated is hateful, and besting one's boss is either foolish or fatal."

Gracián was more intelligent than his superiors, constantly outshone them, and was perpetually insubordinate. Upon discovering that he had authored another book, they would discipline him by placing him on rations of bread and water or exiling him to remote areas of the country.

Fortunately for Gracián, he was friends with a wealthy nobleman who financed his publications and saved him from the Inquisition's most excessive punishments. The bureaucracy driving the censorship was also inefficient enough that Gracián could squeeze by as a repeat offender. His books were printed in pocket-sized editions. This made them not only easy to carry, but to conceal.

### **Brief Enmity, Lasting Fame**

Gracián's final book won him his greatest acclaim as an author—and animosity from the Spanish elites. Unlike his earlier advice manuals, this one was a novel: "El Criticón" ("The Critic" or "Faultfinder"), which ranks with "Don Quixote" as one of the masterpieces of Spanish literature. In it, a cynical man of the world named Critilo is shipwrecked on a deserted island. He meets Andrenio, a "natural man" who has lived his entire life on the island and is innocent of social customs. Together, they set out on a journey toward the "Isle of Immortality"

and have many adventures along the way. The tension between the practical realist Critilo and the naïve, idealistic Andrenio

allows Gracián to comment hilariously on the evils of Spanish society during his day—even daring to criticize King Philip IV and his corrupt ministers.

To ridicule a despotic regime was no laughing matter. Though Gracián published the first part of the novel under the pseudonym "García de Malones" (an anaram of Gracián y Morales), his superiors discovered the book's true authorship and punished him. He was prohibited from writing anything ever again. Despite his own advice about keeping up appearances, Gracián wasn't very good at it himself. He had a dangerous habit of speaking the truth even when it led to bad outcomes.

As Gracián writes, "A wise man gets more use from his enemies than a fool from his

friends." Even while the Spanish authorities denounced "The Critic," it was being widely translated. Gracián couldn't resist the allurements of fame and completed two

more parts of the novel. When the third volume appeared in 1657, his superiors finally had enough. He was expelled from his professorship at a Jesuit College and sent to live out his days in a rural village. The general of the Society of Jesus ordered Gracián's seniors to keep watch over him, inspect his hands for ink stains, and search his room. If any secular writings were found, he was to be locked up without paper or pen "until he is humbled and recognizes his error." Gracián died a

few months later. His literary achievements, however, achieved enormous popularity throughout Europe, outliving the enmity of narrow minds.

It's well to remember that freedom of the press, something Americans take for granted, still doesn't exist in many countries today. Writers suffer harsh retribution for criticizing those in power. Outspoken journalists disappear, never to be seen again. It's heartening, then, that even in the worst of times there have been those who don't submit to coerced ideological conformity.

"Speak what is very good, do what is very honorable," Gracián writes. "The first shows a perfect head, the second a perfect heart, and both arise in a superior spirit."

Andrew Benson Brown is a Missouri-

based poet, journalist, and writing coach.

He is an editor at Bard Owl Publishing and Communications and the author of "Legends of Liberty," an epic poem about the American Revolution. For more information, visit Apollogist.wordpress.com

# The Civil Disobedience of Raising a Family

Raising a traditional family is the new counterculture

**ANNIE HOLMQUIST** 

n case you haven't noticed, times have changed, and somehow, those who hold to traditional societal norms have become the new face of L counterculturalism. As this is unfamiliar territory to those on the traditional end of the spectrum, a few lessons are needed on how to live up to this new moniker. One of those lessons is how to engage in civil disobedience.

If you're like me, the phrase "civil disobedience" conjures up images of braburning hippies protesting Vietnam and demanding that society "make love, not war." But in a world where up has become down and good has become evil, civil disobedience no longer means that we must take to the streets and chain ourselves to some inanimate object.

In reality, the best civil disobedience we, as members of the new countercultural movement, can perform is right in our own homes, raising our families. Author Neil Postman recognized almost a quarter-century ago just how

countercultural the idea of raising a traditional, nuclear family was becoming. "If parents wish to preserve childhood for their own children," he writes in his book "Building a Bridge to the 18th Cen-

tury," "they must conceive of parenting as an act of rebellion against culture." With that end in mind, he offers a few simple ways in which parents can engage in this rebellion.

The first is to stay married. Doing so is "an insult to the spirit of a throwaway culture in which continuity has little value," Postman writes.

Today, we're very dismissive of the prominent role that marriage plays in raising a strong family, with many parents choosing to divorce or never marry at all because they would rather pursue some elusive happiness for themselves than build a strong foundation for their children.

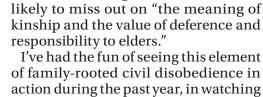
As a friend recently observed to me, it's no wonder we have such an identity crisis these days, with boys wanting to become girls and vice versa. The compounding of several generations of divorce has released children from their moorings, and they drift out to sea, desperately trying to find their places in life and to gain acceptance.

A second way to engage in this new civil disobedience is to raise a family in close contact with extended relatives, such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins.

"It is ... almost un-American to remain in close proximity to one's extended family," Postman writes, likely referring to the tendency of adult children to move away and establish themselves in cities many miles from where they grew up. Many adult children are also actively cutting off their parents over disagreements or other allegedly "toxic"



A second way to engage in this new civil disobedience is to raise a family in close contact with extended relatives.



I've had the fun of seeing this element of family-rooted civil disobedience in action during the past year, in watching a friend of mine and her family move in across the street from her widowed mother. While I'm sure the close proximity has its challenges at times, all parties involved regularly express delight about being neighbors. Grandma has a steady stream of company, while daughter and son-in-law appreciate the meals and help that another pair of adult hands can offer their growing family.

behavior, making children ever more

A third exercise in civil disobedience is found in teaching children good morals. Postman encourages us "to insist that one's children learn the discipline of delayed gratification ... modesty in their sexuality ... [and] self-restraint in manners, language, and style." In an age when children are told to be true to themselves and do whatever feels good, teaching them to restrain their emotions and desires, putting others first and themselves second, "is to place oneself in opposition to almost every social trend."

Postman's fourth civil disobedience recommendation is the "most rebellious of all," for it strikes at the heart of what today's society deems important, namely, media—social, entertainment, and news.

We should limit the media that children are exposed to, Postman writes, while also being fully aware of what they do view and then being ready to counteract and "critique ... the themes and values" that media serve up.

Keeping tabs on the media your children consume requires a lot of commitment and determination to stand your ground, despite what your children and others think of you. It will mean denying your children phone privileges until they're much older. It will also mean that you must set a good example, limiting your own media consumption in order to spend time with your children so that they won't even miss the entertainment that media provide.

Furthermore, it will mean that you need to be prepared to have conversations with your children about difficult topics-such as sex, gender, and other hotbutton political issues—so that they hear your perspective and viewpoint before they try to sneak off and find the answers to their deepest questions from media.

Are you ready to engage in a little civil disobedience for the new counterculture? It isn't hard to start—especially if you're already married with kids—and it can be done from the comforts of your own home.

The hard part, however, is in the perse vering, for this type of civil disobedience can't be done in one short, little protest. It's a long march that requires patience and commitment, but one that offers great rewards not only for yourself, but for your children. And for everyone else in society. That's what civil disobedience is for.

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.

to restrain their own desires and to put others first might well go against societal trends these

Teaching

Society may of the role marriage plays in

raising strong familiies. but it is fundamental.

ALL IMAGES BY SHUTTERSTOCK

**HOMESCHOOL** 

# Brighten Up Homeschooling

7 ways to cheer up a routine school day

### **BARBARA DANZA**

One of the greatest joys of homeschooling is all the fun you can have as a family. From creative projects to scientific experiments, to deep dives into all of the topics your kids are interested in, to field trips and family adventures—the possibilities are endless. Of course, not every homeschool day is

going to entail fun-filled excursions or elaborate projects. But it's easy to inject levity into routine school days as well, even when focused on things such as mathematical equations and sentence diagramming. Here are seven simple ways to brighten any school day.

Break out all the cheesy puns and dad jokes that are "so bad, they're good" to keep things from getting too serious in your homeschool. When does a joke become a dad joke? When the punchline becomes Insert jokes like this into any situation

"Building a Bridge to

the 18th Century"

by Neil Postman.

that could benefit from a giggle, chuckle, or even a smirk and eye roll.

Homeschooling isn't without its challenges. When the math lesson is a struggle, when the online class is dragging, or when the project just isn't turning out the way they'd hoped, a plate of warm cookies or sliced fruit can go a long way. Pairing the difficult things with an occasional

tasty treat makes it all just a bit more joyful and possible.

### Celebration

There's almost always something to be celebrated, so go for it. The seasons, birthdays and anniversaries, traditional holidays throughout the year, and even the madeup ones like National Donut Day are too

fun to skip. Add some festive, decorative accents to your homeschool space, cook an appropriate celebratory treat, and mark the occasion together. As you study history and geography, you're sure to learn about celebrations of other cultures and places that you can incorporate as well for lessons your children won't soon forget.

### **Prizes**

Some aspects of your child's education may benefit from some external reward. Prizes can be utilized in a variety of ways to encourage sticking to new habits, going the extra mile, or encouraging continued success. Catching your children doing something great and then rewarding them with something small but fun will brighten

their day for sure.

Soft, classical music playing in the background can have a remarkable effect on your homeschool's atmosphere. When celebrating, more festive music would be appropriate. When it's time to get everyone involved in the cleanup, perhaps more energetic

playlists would coax everyone along. Use

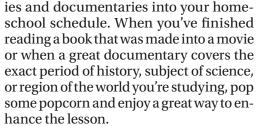
music to set the tone and brighten each day.

### Fresh Supplies It's almost comical how joyful

a new notebook, pen, eraser, or color of paint can be to a hard-working homeschooler. Surprise the kiddos every now and then with a fresh new tool to put to use. It's a small gesture that keeps things interesting.

### Movies

Remember how it felt back in regular school when the teacher rolled in that television cart? Even television can be educational. From time to time, incorporate mov-



As you diligently make sure your children are progressing in their studies, don't forget to enjoy the process and have fun as a family. It's easy to brighten any home-





# WHY DID **COLUMBUS'S** CREW

FIND HIS MUSIC **MONOTONOUS?** 



**Nothing** 

that results

in human

progress is

achieved with

unanimous

consent.

Those

that are

enlightened

before the

others are

condemned

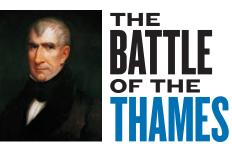
to pursue that

light in spite

of the others.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS





eventual election to the presidency.

n Oct. 5, 1813, the War of 1812 saw one of its most important battles in which British forces lead by Gen. Henry Proctor, along with their Indian allies led by Shawnee Chief Tecumseh who died in battle, were defeated by the Americans led by Gen. William Henry Harrison. A turning point in the war, it led to Harrison's



Kentucky mounted volunteers led by Colonel Richard M. Johnson, 5th Oct. 1813. 1833 lithograph, hand colored

By Aidan Danza

# ALL ABOUT HURRICANES

urricanes are very large, cyclonic (spinning) tropical storms that can inflict a lot of damage throughout the tropical and subtropical reaches of the Atlantic Ocean (and sometimes even beyond

them). It seems as if every location along our East and Gulf coasts (and our various Caribbean territories) can remember a particularly damaging hurricane. With that said, however, it's quite interesting how hurricanes form and how they actually get to be so treacherous.

The formation of a hurricane is a long process over thousands of miles and many days. Firstly, an area of low atmospheric pressure must form off the coast of West Africa. Atmospheric pressure is the force exerted by the weight

of the atmosphere. For this low-pressure system to become a hur ricane, it must satisfy certain requirements.

The sea surface temper ature must be 80 degrees F or more, the system must be at least 300 miles from the equator, and the atmosphere must be cool enough at high altitudes and contain enough water vapor to form a storm. The reason for this restric-

tion is the Coriolis force, which causes the hurricane's rotation, but is inactive within West Africa, and it's from this area that most hur-

ricanes originate. However, this system is still only a tropical depression. For it to become a hurricane, it must travel a long distance over the ocean. The storm derives its energy from the heat

wind speed ranges from 39 to 73 miles per hour. A tropical storm becomes a hurricane when the wind speed is greater than 74 miles It's when a hurricane hits land

300 miles of the equator. Usually, the area that also at this point that it will begin to decay. Without satisfies all these conditions is off the coast of the ocean to fuel its development, the hurricane will not survive for long once it makes landfall.

of the oceans. Hot water vapor that radiates from the ocean will be sucked into the eye of the hurricane and is added to the storm as wind and clouds. As energy is added, the wind will begin to blow faster, and the system's classification will change accordingly. A tropical depression's wind speed is 38 miles per hour or less, while a tropical storm's

speed ranges from 39 to 73

WORD SEARCH: Columbus Day

A tropical storm becomes a hurricane when the wind speed is greater than 74 miles per hour.

A tropical

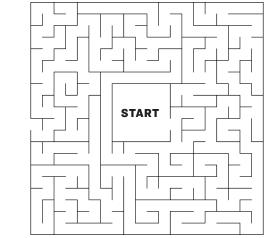
38 miles per

hour or less.

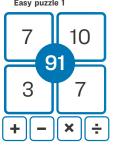
A tropical

storm's wind

**AMAZING** 



**USE THE FOUR NUMBERS IN THE CORNERS, AND THE OPERANDS** (+, - AND X) to build an equation to get the solution in the middle. There may be more than one "unique" solution but, there may also be "equivalent" solutions. For example:  $6 + (7 \times 3) + 1 = 28$  and  $1 + (7 \times 3) + 6 = 28$ 



Solution For Easy 1

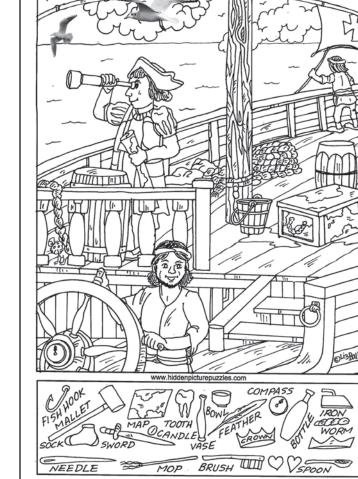
10×1+7×3

5 13 + || - || × || ÷

> Solution for Medium 1 13×2-7-2

13 27 18 + | - | × | ÷

7 × (72 - E1 + 81)



**HIDDEN TREASURES** by Liz Ball www.HiddenPicturePuzzles.com

PINTAENEXPLORE BAHAMASPZUDNNTA Indians Atlantic Indies Azores Isabella Captain

North America Jamaica Journey Longitude Maria Native

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