WEEK 31, 2023

THE EPOCH TIMES IFFE & TRADETON

Reality is often different from our romanticized dreams, but it offers us many

Finding the Ideal in

the Real

Reality is even better than we imagine it

By Walker Larson

have a confession: I'm not a very good homesteader. My wife and I moved to a small

acreage with dreams of an idyllic existence among the vegetables and animals: a simpler, more traditional life, gathering most of our food from outside our front door. The back-to-the-land movement that has swelled in this country, particularly among people of my generation, caught hold of us too. More and more, in our techno-industrial society, people grow nostalgic for a natural and traditional way of life—and not without reason. We couldn't resist the poetic appeal of growing our own food, living close to the rhythms of the natural world, and practicing time-enshrined skills—canning, butchering, milking, and the like.

We're now approaching the end of our second year here, and I find that the reality has been somewhat different from the dream. When you envision homesteading, you don't picture the difficulty of watering cows in the recesses of a bitterly cold winter when your hose keeps freezing up. Or the unpleasantness of wading through six inches of liquid manure while trying to castrate a calf who probably should have been castrated a lot sooner. Or the exhaustion and dehydration that comes after a nine-hour day

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The reality of homesteading is that it's both hard work and the stuff of legends.

CULTURE

Why Our Crumbling Culture Still Loves 'The Music Man'

Exploring the enduring appeal of a classic American musical

By Annie Holmquist

I was on my bike the other evening, riding through a local park, when I heard the strains of "Seventy-Six Trombones" wafting out from the pavilion on the lake. A local community theater was producing "The Music Man," one of those old standby musicals that gets pulled out for an airing year after year. Judging from the number of cars covering the area, this classic play of smalltown Americana had drawn a crowd. "What is it about 'The Music Man'

that brings out such a crowd?" I won-

dered to myself as I stood there, catching sideline glimpses of children and adults in early 20th-century hats and dresses as they ran on and off stage. In the chaos of recent years, the simple ideals expressed in "The Music Man" seem almost out of date and something we would be ashamed of—an Americana we're supposed to forget as a relic of the racist patriarchy or something. And yet, everyone was sitting there watching, a willing and eager audience.

Continuing my ride through the park, I began making a mental list of the possible reasons why we still love *Continued on Page 3*



▲ Shirley Jones as Marian Paroo and Robert Preston as Harold Hill in 1962's "The Music Man."

MOVIESTILLSDB



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▲ There's something deeply, integrally good that can be found at the intersection of ideal and real. "American Homestead Spring," circa 1869, by Currier & Ives.

REFLECTIONS

Finding the Ideal in the Real

Continued from Page 1

day of fencing. Or the infestation of Japanese beetles devouring your ripening orchard. Or the panic when the steer makes a show of charging you (he really should have been castrated sooner).

These realities don't appear in the mind when you imagine your peaceful life in the country. The truth is, such difficulties, frustrations, failures, and exhaustions aren't liked dirty hands. I get head aches from the find the ideal in the real. hot sun. I have to rely on outside help more than I would like to admit

And, most of the time, I'm inside at my keyboard or reading a book, hiding from the homestead and its demands, especially when it's very hot or very cold. I'm not a very good homesteader.

Living Up to Reality

It's easy to idealize. It's easy to romanticize. But then the reality strikes me across the face, and I stand there, stunned. At this point, I have a choice. I can either reject the uncommon. And this kind of work just ideal as illusory, a cruel trick. Or I can adjust doesn't come naturally to me. I've never myideal to align with the reality, seeking to

> If I choose the former, I'll likely become more bitter, more disappointed. I'll have

FAMILY

Setting Up Your Finances to Be a Stay-at-Home Mom

Being smart about your finances makes it possible to be a thriving single-income family

By Barbara Danza

Many women dream of being able to stay home with their children rather than work outside the home and outsource their care. The growing popularity of homeschooling has only made this idea more enticing to some mothers.

Financially, being a stay-at-home mom usually calls for some smart strategizing. I asked financial expert and Ramsey personality Jade Warshaw for her advice for moms who want to stay at home and still allow their families to thrive financially. Here's what she said.

The Epoch Times: You've shared publicly that you paid off \$460,000 in debt. How did you do it?

Jade Warshaw: In 2008, we realized we had to draw a line in the sand and deal with our six-figure debt. We started listening to "The Ramsey Show" and followed the "baby steps" to become debt-free. This meant not caring about what other people thought, and doing whatever it took to dig our way out.

The Epoch Times: What have you found to be the greatest benefits of living debt free?

Ms. Warshaw: Knowing that I don't owe anything to anyone. I'm also able to help people every day, and walk alongside them on their debt-free journey, because I've been there. Being able to provide hope in such a toxic money culture is the reason I live the way I do.

The Epoch Times: Many mothers dream of being able to stay at home with their children. Some perceive the world to be set up to require two incomes to manage family life. Do you believe it's possible in this day and age for families to thrive financially if one parent stays home?

Ms. Warshaw: Absolutely, but life is going to look different. You're going to have to change a lot of things about your life that revolve around money. Look at every area of the budget and find ways to cut costs. Things like insurance, cutting back on luxuries, downsizing or refinancing your home, or selling a car. You're going to be preparing more meals at home and cutting back on things like entertainment and vacations. I tell people to really think about being content and not be pressured by what society thinks you should do. Mom-guilt is real no matter what you decide to do.

The Epoch Times: What is the first thing a couple should do if they aim to shift from a dual-income lifestyle to a singleincome one?

reinforced the idea that life lets you down and that dreams can never be fully realized. If I choose the latter, I have a chance to learn, to appreciate, to see things anew. And I can fulfill my ideal by bringing it into accordance with what's real.

We often hear the terms "realist" and "idealist" as if they were opposites, mutually exclusive. But I propose that this is a false dichotomy. It isn't that reality lacks richness, meaning, and fulfillment—the ability to coincide with the dreamer's vision. The problem is that our ideals are so shallow.

We don't include suffering in our ideals. But maybe we should. Why not? What's life without worthwhile pain? What is victory without struggle? The hardship provides the shadows that give life depth and realism and make the joys stand out in greater relief. Is there not something more romantic about a fence that cost you in blood, that

wrought a toll on your body, than a fence that went in as smoothly as a well-oiled consin, where he resides with his wife. sales pitch?

plead, beg, threaten, and grapple with it *appeared in The Hemingway Review*, to make it yield its fruits. We wrestle with Intellectual Takeout, and his Substack reality because it's firm, hard, striking, and "TheHazelnut."

Ms. Warshaw: This is not a sexy date night. But after the kids are in bed, the dishes are done, the laundry is folded, and you've got some one-on-one time, you've got to sit down face-to-face and talk about the budget. To win, you've got to have a game plan. I don't care if it's an old-fashioned legal pad, an Excel spreadsheet, or our free EveryDollar budget app-you've got to visualize how you're going to swing this thing. You can't just hope it all works out. Trust me, it won't. List your income. List your expenses. Subtract your expenses from your income to find out how much margin you have. That's

how you determine your lifestyle and how it has to change. The Epoch Times: What

are some strategies you'd encourage families to consider to be able to succeed financially while one parent stays at home with their children?

Ms. Warshaw: First, remember this is a season. You're doing what's right for your family right now. It's not forever. The bud-

get is going to be tight. I don't need to tell you that the price of everything is through the roof. You have to commit to a budget and stay on it. Every dollar has got to have a job. And I always encourage people to look for side hustles: things you can do at home to bring in extra money, even if it's just grocery money.

The Epoch Times: What are the most common mistakes you see families make when it comes to managing their money? unyielding to our whims-because it's real. And that's a good thing.

The truth is that the reality is better than what we dream up on our own. Harder, but better. It's, in some sense, more ideal than what my limited imagination could generate. Maybe the problem isn't that the real is disappointing but only that I often fail to penetrate into the mystery of the richness of a world that so exceeds my expectations and my limited framework of understanding.

The Simple Stuff of Legend

In J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Two Towers," Aragorn is asked, "Do we walk in legends or on the green earth in the daylight?"

Aragorn answers, "A man may do both. For not we but those who come after will make the legends of our time. The green earth, say you? That is a mighty matter of legend, though you tread it under the light of day!"

It's possible that our simple, daily activities—particularly the frustrating ones are indeed part of an ideal far beyond our reckoning. The grass, the trees, and mending broken fences-these are the stuff of legend.

I still believe in everything I wrote in the introduction regarding the value of homesteading-maybe now more than ever. It isn't that my romanticized vision of country life was false, exactly. Just immature. A seedling. The ideal wasn't a lie, it just needed refinement, growth. It needed to be tempered by reality, like a good steel. Or aged like a good wine.

I look out at the pasture-the one I enclosed with my own hands, the one I watered with blood and sweat-and I see those cows being what they're meant to be, doing what they're meant to do, peacefully wandering the hillside while the great stand of pines sways and murmurs behind them and a royal sky blooms overhead, and I think, there's something deeply, integrally good here. Something ideal. And all the more so because it's real and not merely my romanticized version.

When I pause to reflect instead of growing irritated at the inconvenience of an overturned water barrel or an overgrown garden, I can enter into unity with these remarkable living things that I'm trying, haphazardly, a bit lazily, to care for. I enter into unity with the epochs-old tradition of farming, so entwined with the human experience. And I'm left with a feeling of gratitude-gratitude that I can be a part of this reality, however poorly I fulfill my role.

Walker Larson teaches literature and history at a private academy in Wis-He holds a master's in English literature We struggle with the earth, we coax, *and language, and his writing has*

> Ms. Warshaw: We live in a toxic money culture. Debt has been normalized. We've got to have it now. So I don't think it's so much about "mistakes" people make as it is falling into the mindset that broke is normal. Some of the decisions people make, like buying new cars with outrageous car payments, actually rob families of their future. You've got to stop being normal because normal sucks. Stop believing things like "you can't go to college without borrowing money" and "you're always going to have a car payment." Reject those things. Have a plan to

increase your income, and make a plan for your money.

The Epoch Times: What do you believe are the most important things to do in the long run to become financially free?

Ms. Warshaw: It's simple to say and hard to do. You've got to stop borrowing money. Forever. Get out of debt and stay out of debt. Get on a budget and live on a budget. These things will change your money mindset, and you'll realize doing these things doesn't confine your money; it defines it.

Barbara Danza is a mom of two, a beach lover, and a kid at heart and has an MBA. Here, she dives into the challenges and opportunities of parenting in the modern age. She's particularly interested in the many educational options available to families today, the renewed appreciation of simplicity in kids' lives, the benefits of family travel, and the importance of family life in today's society.



Robert Preston conducts a band recital in the 1962 Warner Bros. musical comedy 'The Music

CULTURE

Why Our Crumbling Culture Still Loves 'The Music Man'

Continued from Page 1

"The Music Man" in this callous and careless age. In short, I realized that we still love it because it speaks to some of the most basic needs and experiences of life, including the following four.

Community

River City, Iowa, where professor Harold Hill sets up camp in "The Music Man," is a classic village where everyone knows everything about everyone else—and maybe even some more they don't want to know. The town's residents are concerned about their children, and they're concerned about their town streets. They don't want trouble on those streets, and they certainly don't want their children to be the ones causing that trouble!

In short, they are a tight-knit group of individuals who do get on each other's nerves—but they're still a group. They have each other, their homes, and a sense of belonging.

Unfortunately, the same can't be said for many Americans today. We don't know our neighbors well enough to greet them by name, let alone gossip about them. With costs so high, those in the younger generations have diffi-

culty purchasing a home, so they drift around renting various apartments, even relocating regularly to different cities, leaving little time to put down roots. And belonging? With families broken and churches shunned, there are few groups in which today's Americans feel they can make friends and discuss things that

matter. Thus, the first reason we are drawn repeatedly to "The Music Man" is likely

that it gives us a vision of the community we have Marian, a pretty, intelligent, many of us don't have but secretly desire.

Patriotism

"The Music Man" shows small-town America at its finest. There are patriotic marches. There are speeches by politicians. There's entertainment provided boy whose past really doesn't give by the town's citizens (even if it isn't very him much hope of landing the type of high quality!). And of course, there is a girl who would make a good wife. Yet willing audience eager to come together and celebrate their nation, even if it's not explicitly stated.

Such celebrations aren't the provincial early years of our nation, namely to remember the founding of our country "with Pomp and Parade, with Shews, Games, Sports, Guns, Bells, Bonfires and Illuminations from one End of this Continent to the other from this Time forward forever more."

The reason Adams gave such an exhortation is simple, and one I discovered

while attending a concert in the park last July Fourth. Namely, hearing the patriotic tunes together in a group brings joy, setting people to smiling, dancing, and cheering. It also brings tears to the eyes and swells the heart with love for those who sacrificed so that we could have freedom.

When we cut out these celebrations, as is so common these days-the mayor of my hometown even 🔺 A 1957 poster for Broadcut the public display of way's "The Music Man."

fireworks for the past few years-it's much easier to forget our heritage and to be disgruntled instead of grateful. For that reason, "The Music Man" serves as a reminder to never forget and to freely engage in celebrating our country and its freedoms.

Work Ethic

If we want to feel

like worthwhile

contributors to

society, then we

must put our

chins up, embrace

what life throws

at us without

complaining, and

roll up our sleeves.

THE SIC MAN

MEDEDITH WILLSON

BARBARA COOK - DAVID BURNS - PERT KELTON 1974 - THE BUFFALO BULS - Han Romano - Bala Rise - Fool of

MUESTIC Theodor and the

A third theme shining throughout "The Music Man" is hard work. In this respect. Marian Paroo and Harold Hill are exact opposites-he works hard to get out of hard work by pulling con jobs, while she works hard to earn a respectable living and support her family through two jobs, one at the library and the other at home teaching piano lessons.

The interesting thing is that Marian is a hard worker who doesn't treat herself as a victim of circumstances. Sure, she'd like it if she didn't have to be the breadwinner of the family, but she accepts the tasks and duties she has been given and works at them doggedly. Hill, on the other hand, grows tired of trying to escape his alleged life of ease, and the end of the play suggests that he settles down to good, honest, useful work.

Such a picture subtly gives us clues about embracing diligence. If, like Marian-and Hill at the

end-we want to feel like worthwhile contributors to society, then we must put our chins up, embrace what life throws at us without complaining, and roll up our sleeves to participate in the longstanding tradition of the good ol' Protestant work ethic America is famous for.

Family

Finally, "The Music Man" gives a lesson on the importance of family. Here

good girl who has apparently missed the boat on love given her librarian (read: spinster) title. Yet her aloof exterior hides the fact that she'd really just like some-

one to love her and start a family with. Hill, on the other hand, is the bad when he finds Marian and reforms, the two overcome the odds, giving us hope that love, home, and family are worthy goals that might not be as unattainable or homely affairs that many assume. In as we think—an encouraging lesson reality, they are a direct response to an in an age when young people seem to exhortation John Adams made in the struggle to find a life partner and start a family.

> So why do we still love "The Music Man" in a day and age when the callous cynicism of the past often wins? I suspect it's because, despite the scorn we dish on traditional values, we still long for the community, patriotism, hard work, and family portraits it pres-

ents. Perhaps it's time we PUBLIC DOMAIN start incorporating those values back into our own lives so they're more than just a nostalgic feeling instigated by the community theater once a year.

> Annie Holmquist is a cultural commentator hailing from America's heartland who loves classic books, architecture, music, and values. Her writings can be found at Annie's Attic on Substack.



Many mothers dream of being able to stay at home with their children, and with some serious financial planning, this can

become a reality.

LSOPHOTO/GETTY IMAGES



🔺 We are but a small part of everything. "Landscape with Two Praying Monks," between 1695 and 1697, by Antonio Francesco Peruzzini. Oil on canvas. Städel Museum, Frankfurt, Germany.

PROFILES IN HISTORY

Eddie Rickenbacker: 'The Great Indestructible'

An ongoing series of lesser known but significant figures who shaped our world

By Dustin Bass

Eddie Rickenbacker (1890–1973) had a knack for danger and an affinity for new technology. He had, according to him, 135 scrapes with death. His passion for speed, whether in cars or in airplanes, was a prime reason for these close encounters.

He was born into poverty to Swiss immigrant parents who were both religious and disciplinarians. As a child, he was a bit of a troublemaker, but when his father died in a construction accident (though there's some suspicion about foul play) when he was 13, he left school and started working to help the family.

He held numerous jobs, including selling newspapers, eggs, and goat's milk, and eventually, after lying about his age



ings Co., then at a beer factory, a bowling alley, and a cemetery monument yard, and later became an apprentice at the Pennsylvania Railroad.

His love of adventure, close scrapes, engines, and technology culminated in order to skirt the child labor laws, land- in the automobile, which he first saw in ed a job at the Federal Glass Factory. He 1905. His life forever changed in 1906 then worked at the Buckeye Steel Cast- when he started working for Lee Frayer,

🔺 1st Lt. Eddie Rickenbacker, 94th Aero Squadron, in his S.XIII plane. **U.S. National Archives and Records Administration.**

a professional race car driver and founder of Frayer-Miller cars built by the Oscar Lear Automobile Co. Rickenbacker soon became Frayer's mechanic during races. Over the ensuing years, his career revolved around cars, ranging from sales-

man to chauffeur of politician William Jennings Bryan as part of Bryan's 1909 speaking tour in Texas. In 1911, he raced in the inaugural Indianapolis 500. By the end of 1916, Rickenbacker was the manager of the Prest-O-Lite Racing Team.

Prest-O-Lite was an automotive headight company formed by the founders of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Although Rickenbacker never won the Indy 500, he did make the record books by breaking the world speed record in 1914

at Daytona, reaching 134 miles per hour. In his final year of racing in 1916, he boarded an aircraft flown by Glenn Martin, an aviation pioneer whose company eventually became Lockheed Martin. Despite his fear of heights, Rickenbacker fell in love with aviation, and with America's entrance into World War I early the following year, he would get his chance at the most daring of flights.

TRADITIONAL CULTURE

Letting Go of Everything We Know

Motivation, roadblocks, and self-transformation

By James Sale

elf-help, personal development, self-improvement, learning and development, education-we have a million and one names for this process, but what they all boil down to is this age-old spiritual idea of self-transformation.

While the concept of religion is far too big to address in an article such as this, one **The Leap of Faith** broad truism that we might draw from the vast corpus is that virtually all the world's religions, Eastern and Western, introspective and exoteric, big and small, revolve From the Desert Fathers of around this idea that human beings need the Fourth Century") that mechanisms to help improve themselves, might help us with this issue. whether these be commandments, ritu- In this scripture, Abbot Lot als, practices, abstinences, worship, or is struggling on his spiritual divine intervention—and not forgetting pathway: faith itself.

There's also something implicit and subtextual in this: Deep down, all healthy human beings want to keep improving and the limit of my ability, I keep transforming.

Motivation and Roadblocks

field of motivation, our role is to help peo- thoughts; what more should I do?" ple enact this self-transformation, much like the spiritual guides of old. The first First, let's commend Father Lot. By any their scales, and know every "accidental hurdle is following through on that desire for change. We have a word for this desire for change: motivation, which is a form of energy (not thought), as intelvery different things.

might want to be famous but might not lute best already. be particularly motivated by some of the activities that can lead us to fame, such as ry, it's worth taking the time to reflect on content creation or networking.

conclude that if we want to get what we complaint). What would you say? want, we have to start aligning what we want with our motivators (and, strangely elder [man] rose up in reply, and stretched enough, this also works in reverse: align- out his hands to heaven, and his fingers ing our motivators with what we want). became like ten lamps of fire. He said This bidirectional process, with our mo- 'Why not be utterly changed into fire?'" astonishing progress.

when we hit a roadblock. As a coach my-practical advice. self, I've observed that, sometimes, the But first, for the sake of thoroughness, easier it is to support and help them. To tual level. use fitness as an example, it's easier to

get someone who runs half-marathons ments-the law-the very rules and reg-than try to force ourselves to change with regularly to win Olympic gold. As Patrick McKeown highlighted in his

book "The Oxygen Advantage: Simple, Scientifically Proven Breathing Techniques to Help You Become Healthier, Slimmer, Faster, and Fitter," the difference in performance between elite athletes is often a margin of 1 percent or less.

So it's paradoxically the people who are doing all the right things who sometimes struggle to change and, therefore, can't transform their selves.

There's a wonderful story in the "Sayings of the Desert Fathers" (from Thomas Merton's "The Wisdom of the Desert: Sayings

"Abbot Lot came to Abbot Joseph and said, 'Father, to my little rule, my little fast,

my prayer, meditation and contemplative silence; and to the limit of in his very being. For myself and other authorities in the my ability, I work to cleanse my heart of

standard, he's clearly an extremely disciplined person. Yet he senses that although he's going through the external motions the rituals of fasting, prayer, meditation, I do?"—is relevant to us all in our odyssey While our motivations are partly aligned through life. And I'm sure you can see how Self-Transformation with our desires—for our motivations de- difficult it is to answer, given the fact that The final step of self-transformation at recent poetry collection is "StairWell." scribe the direction(s) of our energy—we Abbot Lot is doing so much right. Indeed, drive to reach them. For example, we "limit of [his] ability." He's doing his abso-

Before I share the conclusion of the stowhat your answer or approach would be If we study motivation, we have to to Abbot Lot (or a person with a similar

Abbot Joseph's reply is revealing: "The

tivators influencing our desires or end While the imagery is incredibly stargoal and vice versa, can lead us to make tling, this may seem impenetrably symbolic or obscure to modern readers. However, even if we're able to make this What does it mean? Beneath the spiritual progress, often, there comes a moment symbolism, we also find some strangely

more serious the issues people face, the let's unpack the symbolism on a spiri-

Abbot Joseph's 10 fingers glow like get someone who has never done a day "lamps of fire." The number 10 is highly

him to heaven.

In a more esoteric sense, the fingers could also refer to the 10 spheres or ema- don't realize it at the outset of our journey. nations upon the Tree of Life in Jewish Kabbalah. These 10 spheres (called Sephia map or blueprint of the universe itself. Again, this correlates with ideas of order and structure, the rigid framework around which Abbot Lot has oriented his life.

But seen through Abbot Joseph's startling

rules can only take us so far. transformation. Eventually, we have to burn

memorize the 24 key signatures, practice what we must do! (a sharp or flat) that makes up these signatures. But a master can simply play and find harmony and beauty without rigidly following a particular pattern. They've internallectually wanting something and having and silence—he isn't reaching the deeper ized the "laws" that make up this universe for the 2022 poetry Pushcart Prize, won the motivation to do something are two levels. His question—"What more should of sound and thus can interpret them freely.

the highest level, therefore, is to forget For more information about the author, can of course desire things without the Abbot Lot specifically refers twice to the everything we knew before; to allow the and about his Dante project, visit transformation to occur; to let go, rather EnglishCantos.home.blog

ulations that Abbot Lot is consumed by rules or practices. This is concurrent with following and that he believes will bring the most profound forms of Buddhism, in which the paradox of enlightenment is that we're all already enlightened-we simply

In Indian philosophy, the "jiva" or "ego" distorts our sense of reality and convinces roth in Hebrew) reflect the tenfold nature us that we're individual human lives and of God's mind or true essence, forming identities rather than part of a greater whole. We see this in Abbot Lot, who continually refers to the "limit of my ability."

First, his ability has no limit, something Abbot Joseph clearly perceives. And second, there's no "my" or "I" with which to transformation, these laws aren't static. even experience this limitation! Philoso-They're aflame! And indeed, that's Abbot pher and author Jason Gregory described Joseph's advice to Lot: "Why not be utterly this as "the cosmic joke" one reaches changed into fire?" In other after enlightenment, a term that might words, there comes a point remind us of Dante's "Divine Comedy," where the old tradition and which is, of course, another story of self-

Ultimately, self-transformation is never them up and go beyond them an easy road—nor does it have a definitive (but also, paradoxically, em- end-point. For even when we advance far body them). The difference along the path like Abbot Lot, we often between Lot and Joseph is discover that there's so much further to that Lot is following rules, go. But by bearing in mind this story, we whereas Joseph has the rules can look out for these key moments when at his very fingertips, burning we, or a client we're helping, feel blocked, and ask ourselves, "What more could I be The best analogy I might give is drawn doing?" If the answer comes, "Why not be from music. A diligent student might well utterly changed into fire?" then we know

> James Sale has had over 50 books published, most recently, "Mapping Motivation for Top Performing Teams" (Routledge, 2021). He has been nominated first prize in The Society of Classical Poets 2017 annual competition, performing in New York in 2019. His most



of exercise in his or her life to the point significant, not just representing his lit- 🔺 Humans have a seemingly innate desire to rise above darkness. "Meditation of where they can run a mile than it is to eral 10 fingers but also the 10 command- Ophelia," 1850, by Jozef Israels. Dordrechts Museum in Dordrechts, Netherlands.

was made a sergeant first class (in the Army in 1919 with the rank of major. large part due to his popularity), and though he preferred to be referred to as was sent to Europe as a chauffeur. His assignment of driving around Col. Wil- war ended, he was awarded the Medal of liam "Billy" Mitchell, considered to be Honor for his actions near Billy, France. the father of the U.S. Air Force, opened the door for him to become a pilot. Of his work in automobiles and aircraft. course, Rickenbacker had to massage For the Flanders-Smith Co., he created the truth a bit. He was 27 at the time, a tandem flywheel that reduced vibratwo years older than the maximum age tions on the vehicle. The car was named to enlist in the pilot training program. The Rickenbacker Six and was sold from So he claimed to be 25.

joined the 94th Aero Squadron near Toul, chase the Indianapolis Motor Speed-France. It would become the first all- way, which he operated for 14 years. American air unit to experience combat. His sixth victory came two days later.

flown 300 combat hours (the most of any and 11 passengers were killed. Rickenobservation balloons, and was dubbed by the press as America's "Ace of Aces." valier) and two Croix de Guerres, with was wrong, ran up the hospital stairs gressional Medal of Honor.

Rickenbacker quickly volunteered, Palm. He was honorably discharged from "Captain Eddie." Twelve years after the

Through the 1920s, he maintained 1922 to 1926. In 1927, he raised \$700,000 He graduated as a first lieutenant and over the course of one month to pur-

Over the years, he flew throughout the He flew Nieuport 28s and Spad XIIIs and country to give speeches about aviation had his first confirmed victory on April and how it would positively impact so-29, 1918. By May 28, he was an ace, having ciety. During these years, he survived shot down a total of five German planes. several crashes literally unscathed. In 1938, he became owner of Eastern His successes continued and the U.S. Air Lines, but his luck nearly ran out in Army took notice, promoting him to February 1941 when one of his planes, captain and making him commander a DC-3, crashed into trees while makof the 94th. By the end of the war, he had ing its approach in Atlanta. Both pilots American pilot), had 27 confirmed victo-backer's injuries were so severe that the ries (also the most), had shot down five press reported him dead. Somehow, he survived after several months of recuperating in the hospital. Even during He was awarded eight Distinguished his recuperation, he nearly suffocated Service Crosses and was also awarded when his oxygen tent malfunctioned. by France with the Legion of Honor (che- His wife, Adelaide, sensing something

By the end of World War I, he had flown 300 combat hoursthe most of any American pilot.



enbacker wearing the Con-

to find the attendant asleep outside the room and Rickenbacker struggling to breathe. It would be the first of two times that Adelaide would save his life.

The second time was during World War II, when he was sent by Secretary of War Henry Stimson to inspect the equipment and personnel in the Pacific. When the pilot of the B-17 got lost and the plane ran out of fuel, the eight passengers had to bail out. After several weeks, the U.S. Army planned to end the search for survivors, but Adelaide implored and demanded that it continue. Found days later, seven of the eight passengers survived. Upon hearing of Rickenbacker's survival, The Boston Globe heralded him as "The Great Indestructible."

Rickenbacker quickly recuperated and returned to completing "civilian" missions in China, India, and the Soviet Union, from which he shared his information with the U.S. War Department and Britain's Winston Churchill.

After the war, he would continue his work in and promotion of aviation. At Rickenbacker's funeral, Gen. James "Jimmy" Doolittle, of the famed "Doolittle Raid," gave the eulogy.

Dustin Bass is an author and co-host of The Sons of History podcast.

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sometimes struggle to change.

Paradoxically. people doing all the right things

EDUCATION

6 Things to Do Before Starting a New Homeschool Year

It doesn't take much to start the year off right

By Barbara Danza

he beginning of a new homeschool year is an exciting time for families. If you're a homeschooling parent, here are six things to put on your summer to-do list to ensure you start the year off feeling prepared, energized, and optimistic.

Clean Out

cast away the clutter from the year inspiring read. One non-homeschooling excited about planning for you just completed. Take the time to but very applicable book I dive into again go through your children's finished and again is "Atomic Habits: An Easy work, your curriculum, your resourc- & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & es, your supplies, your tools—any and Break Bad Ones," by James Clear. all homeschool-related items that you keep at home.

As you go, carefully store away sentimental items, bravely dispose of or other sources that can help you mandonate things that are no longer need- age this undertaking with wisdom and ed, and deep clean the spaces in your creativity. Summer is a great time to behome in which you tend to focus your come the student instead of the teacher. homeschooling activities.

This process will allow you to assess what you already have that can be used in the coming year, relieve you of clutter, and begin the year with a clean, blank slate. It's the fresh start the whole family needs.

Rest and Rejuvenate Amid all of the wonderful opportunities for fun and adventure this summer, don't neglect to allow yourself time to rest. Homeschooling requires significant effort, and homeschooling parents need to allow themselves time to recharge from time to time. Rest isn't laziness or neglect, but an investment in the year ahead. What-

ever allows you to slow down and re- coming year. As you do, begin to gather charge-do it.

Study 3 Successful homeschooling parents know that studying is not new folders, pens, and supplies that just for the kids. Seek out inspiration and excite them. Gradually get yourself new insights by studying the experts, prepared for the year ahead. within homeschooling and outside.

For example, one homeschooling book I refer to at the beginning of each year is "Teaching from Rest: A Homeschooler's First things first. To make way Guide to Unshakable Peace," by Sarah for a bright, new, shiny year, Mackenzie—a short but beautiful and

Find guidance and inspiration from homeschoolers you know, those producing content online and off, and from

Map Out the Calendar Take a look at the calendar year 4 ahead. Use summertime to envi-

sion holiday celebrations, vacations, field trips, and seasonal activities you don't want to miss. Take note of obligations and important dates that loom on the horizon. Begin to identify the times you might be schooling and those you won't. Before the year gets going, map out

your calendar—keeping in mind, of course, that you're homeschoolers, so it can always be flexible.

5 As summer presses on, you'll summer! Happy gain clarity on your plans for the homeschooling!

THE CHILDREN'S BOOKSHELF

your family. ahead will be better off because you've continued to foster deep

Gather

From Playtime to Persistence: **Teaching Hard Work Through** Children's Literature

Kids and adults can learn the value of hard work through these inspiring stories

By Arianna Rudorf

Working hard or hardly working? That witty phrase is more likely to be re- he needs to get a job. Coincidentally, his ceived with annovance than to leave listeners suddenly motivated to work over her deceased husband's 300-tree harder. The following books show char- apple orchard for a year. If he makes acters who do work hard and who are more than \$8,000, then he'll get whatrewarded for their efforts with inspir- ever money is left over and possibly the ing—or tasty—results, as in the case of deed to the land. Although Jackson is the "Little Red Hen."

'The Little Red Hen' by Diane Muldrow (Editor) and J.P. Miller (Illustrator) One day, the Little Red Hen finds something unusual: Instead of a tasty worm, she has stumbled upon a grain of wheat. Although she attempts to rally the help of the other farm animals, they are too lazy to take part in the planting, har-

industrious Hen takes it upon herself to carry out these tasks and eventually edge his father and uncle have acquired is treated to a loaf of tasty homemade from years of fixing broken-down cars, bread, which the other animals don't and the reluctantly shared wisdom of his get to share.

Countless versions of this classic story unexpected obstacles with determination can be found, all contrasting the fruits and resourcefulness. of hard work with the disappointment of the lazy animals. This Little Golden the impressive agricultural feat in such a Books edition teaches the importance way that readers will feel that with enough of helping others through delightful and effort and determination they could also colorful illustrations. This picture book accomplish such a task. Written with a is perfect to share with young children humorous tone, this book is perfect for ages 2 to 5.

'The Year Money Grew on Trees' by Aaron Hawkins

Jackson's dad tells him that this summer elderly neighbor suggests that he take suspicious of what he might be getting himself into, his alternative is spending his summer at the scrap yard, working alongside the school bully. He agrees.

> lowing months of hard work. Jackson convinces his siblings and cousins to work alongside him, and the six kids, ranging in age from 8 to 14, tackle pruning the trees, irrigating, shoveling manure, and finally picking the apples. Working

vesting, and milling of the wheat. The off of some notes he made over a book about apple trees, the scattered knowl-Sunday school teacher, Jackson tackles

A personal favorite, this story describes middle schoolers and handles topics in-



the tools and resources you plan to use.

Make a fun outing of a back-to-

school shopping day with the kids

Enjoy Summer

With Your

Family

Homeschooling parents

can sometimes get really

the year ahead. That's

great, but be sure not

to miss out on enjoy-

and preparation.

ing the present season

in the name of planning

Enjoy summer with

your family. Recognize

that true homeschool-

ing never really stops.

See the learning and

growing that happens

in more relaxed sea-

sons such as sum-

mertime. Share

moments and

The home-

school year

connections with your

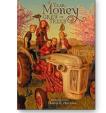
loved ones. Happy

make memo-

ries with

6

RED HEN' By Diane Muldrow and J.P. Miller Golden Books 2001 Hardcover



24 pages

'THE YEAR MONEY GREW ON TREES' By Aaron Hawkins HMH Books for Young Readers

2010 Hardcover 304 pages



'THE BOY WHO HARNESSED THE WIND: CREATING CURRENTS OF ELECTRICITY AND HOPE' **By William** Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer William Morrow 2010 Hardcover 320 pages

LSOPHOTO/GETTY IMAGES

cluding family, growing up, and, of course, the value of hard work.

'The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind: Creating Currents of Electricity and Hope' by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer "If you want to make it, all you have to do is try" is the final line of this non-fiction work, and this message is clearly demonstrated throughout the pages of "The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind." William Kamkwamba writes about his experiences growing up in the African country of Malawi. It is a story of incredible ingenuity and perseverance as he works toward the goal of making the lives of his family easier by

bringing electricity to their family farm. Kamkwamba brings the reader into his world by beginning the book with the legends and folklore that surrounded him as a young boy. He describes his family's agricultural life and how the growing seasons dictate the patterns of daily life. When he is 13, famine and sickness strike the country. Dinners dwindle, and neighbors begin eating diets of grain and grasses fit for livestock. Young William is forced to drop out of school because without successful crops, his father can't pay for tuition.

After a year of near starvation, William begins making trips to the local school's library, hoping to be able to make up for the time he has lost in his studies. He discovers a textbook with a picture of a wind turbine on the cover. A childhood interest in building toy trucks and fixing broken radios resurfaces with the realization that providing electricity to his family would be a first step toward protecting them from ever experiencing the pain of starvation again. William dedicates his time to this project, scavenging in metal scrap yards and facing ridicule from incredulous neighbors.

This inspiring story brings to life a world that likely not all readers are familiar with through Kamkwamba's conversational storytelling. Teenagers with an interest in how things work will be fascinated by Kamkwamba's detailed descriptions of circuitry, motors, and energy.

Arianna Rudorf is a graduate of the University of Dallas. Although originally from Illinois, she now lives in the Dallas area, where she teaches high school level English.

Homeschooling never really stops; there's plenty of time r learning and growing throughout the summer months.

so that they can pick out some fun

This delightful novel details the fol-

Written with a humorous tone, this book is perfect for middle schoolers and handles topics including family, growing up, and, of course, the value of hard work.



he gyrfalcon is the largest falcon in the world, but is

rarely seen. In the United States, it's quite a rarity, as it lives mostly in the arctic tundra, rarely venturing below 60 degrees of northern latitude, which reaches just south of the Alaskan coastline and crosses the Hudson Bay further east in Canada.

This means that the gyrfalcon can tolerate very, very cold temperaturestemperatures so cold that even trees can't grow. The falcon is forced to make its nest in cliffs, instead of trees, like many other raptors.

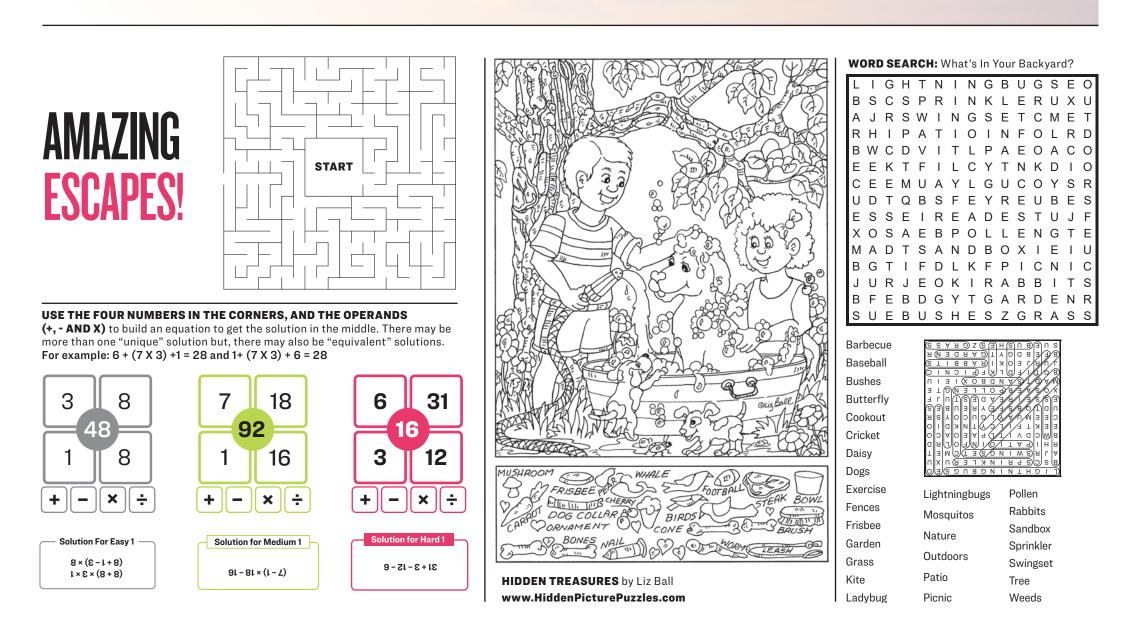
Because of its northern habitat, there is still a lot scientists don't know about the gyrfalcon's breeding habits. It appears that they mate for life and defend a

territory within a mile's radius of the nest. To maintain the territory, they will call aggressively to mark the territory and, upon encountering trespassers, will not hesitate to attack. Sometimes, they lock talons with intruders, sometimes falling to the ground to their deaths still locked together.

Gyrfalcon eggs hatch after five weeks.

sized depression in the ground with no lining of feathers. They also may use an abandoned raven's nest to raise their young. The same nest is used every year, and guano and prey remains accumulate slowly around the nest over the years. After the pair establish (or re-establish) their territory, the female will lay 1 to 5 eggs

The nest is usually a gyrfalcon- and will incubate them almost entirely on her own, with the male on hunting duty. Then, after five weeks, they hatch. Ten days later, both parents must leave the chicks unattended in order to hunt for food, leaving the chicks to fend for themselves in the freezing temperatures. About four weeks after that, the chicks fledge, leaving the nest to make a new life for themselves in the arctic tundra.



ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK



▲ Elegantly set on an island in the river Indre (Loire Valley), the Château of Azay-le-Rideau is considered to be one of the earliest buildings designed in the French Renaissance style. The famous water mirror dates from the 20th century, when the river branch expanded to border the château's foundation. Ever since then, the château's glorious façade has been reflected in a water mirror and continues to charm visitors.



LARGER THAN LIFE: Art that inspires us through the ages

A Gem of the French Loire Valley

The Château of Azay-le-Rideau

By Ariane Triebswetter

rench writer Honoré de Balzac described the Château of Azay-le-Rideau as "a faceted diamond set in the Indre." A gem among the numerous châteaux of the Loire Valley, it's also one of the earliest examples of French Renaissance architecture. The primary structure was built between 1518 and 1528 by Gilles Berthelot, a financier of King Francis I. This exceptional site conveys all the charm of the early Renaissance, blending both French tradition and innovative Italian decor. It soon became representative of a new way of building structures in the Loire Valley, a favored place of residence for the French court. Financiers of the crown such as Berthelot started to build magnificent homes to establish their social status, incorporating Italian architectural innovations (influenced by their military campaigns in Italy) with the French Renaissance style. The Château of Azay-le-Rideau represents this transition, and the grand

central staircase is a key element of this shift. It's decorated with Italian Renaissance features such as half columns, pillars, pilasters, carved shells, and a coffered vault featuring profile medallions. Another highlight is the building's façade, with its turrets and sharply pointed roofs, reminiscent of the Gothic style.



▲ The château is famous for its staircase, to the right of the main building. Although its architect is unknown, the grand staircase is the most innovative element of Azay-le-Rideau, demonstrating the importance of Italian influences in 16th-century France. Up until then, French châteaux had spiral staircases, while this one is straight with banisters on either side. Other key elements of this monumental staircase include the open bay windows and carved portraits of kings and queens of France.

In the 19th century, the Biencourt family restored the property in the Neo-Renaissance style. Unfortunately, Berthelot couldn't complete his project, as Francis I confiscated the château in 1535 after Berthelot's exile. Some architects believe that Berthelot originally planned to add a wing to form a symmetrical U-shaped floor plan following Italian designs, instead of the current L-shaped floor plan.

In the 19th century, the Biencourt family restored the property in the Neo-Renaissance style. Today, the château is classified as a historical monument, and a recent restoration project restored it to its former glory, renovating both its exterior and interior with original Renaissance furnishings.

Ariane Triebswetter is an international freelance journalist, with a background in modern literature and classical music.

The stately apartments are richly decorated in the Neo-Renaissance style, a 19th century architectural style revival of the Renaissance. Here, the Biencourt Salon illustrates the taste of the Biencourt family for the château's past style. The large fireplace is the centerpiece of this room, along with the wooden paneling. As for the walls, they are covered in leather-patterned wallpaper and portraits from the Renaissance, acquired by the Biencourt family in the spirit of authenticity. Overall, the luxurious yet comfortable atmosphere was faithfully reproduced, with original furniture from Mobilier National.

ΝΠ

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