

THE EPOCH TIMES

LIFE &

TRADITION

BIBA KAYEWICH

RELATIONSHIPS

It's a Date!

See your date in a new light with these 12 inexpensive, carefree activities



Closeness grows from sharing simple realities such as working or playing together.

By Walker Larson

Dating is an integral part of finding someone to marry. But searching for the right person to spend your life with can also take a toll on the pocketbook.

Even if you're already married, continuing to date your spouse has many advantages, although, at the same time, your budget may be even tighter than before. Consistently dating your spouse is statistically linked to a happier and sturdier marriage, according to a study from the National Marriage Project at the University of Virginia and the Wheatley Institute. Researchers found that there were many benefits as a result of continued dating after tying the knot, including better communication, commitment, de-stressing, and shared novel experiences.

But often, once you're married, the expenses of running a household and raising children leave less money and time for dating.

To help meet this challenge, here are 12 ideas for dates that don't have to take an enormous chunk out of your day or your paycheck. This list is for anyone operating on a budget—whether you're still seeking a spouse or you already have one but wish to foster romance in your relationship.

Just Talk

The essence of human connection is communication—the sharing between souls. But true conversation is more and more a lost art. To help you get started with this date idea, consider using a deck of conversation-starting cards, such as the "Couples" edition of Questions for Humans.

Turn on your favorite music in the background to help create the mood.

Cook Together

For centuries, meals have nourished not just the human body but human connections as well. The closeness of families and couples grows out of the sharing of the simple, sacred daily realities of eating, sleeping, working, playing, and praying together.

Cooking a gourmet meal as a *Continued on Page 2*

ANNIE HOLMQUIST

Viewing History Through the Eye of a Sewing Needle

By Annie Holmquist

Historical interpreter and seamstress Morgan Magnuson brings history to life

It's often noted that those who don't learn history are doomed to repeat it. Unfortunately, with only 11 percent of public high school seniors achieving proficiency in U.S. history today, it seems we're headed toward repeating those not-so-savory historical elements.

Into this world steps 25-year-old Morgan Magnuson, a lover of the 18th century, an historical interpreter, and a seamstress extraordinaire. Unlike many in her generation, Magnuson adores history and the domestic arts, and as such, she seeks to use her needle and thread to bring history alive so that others

might learn the lessons it has to teach.

From 'Liberty's Kids' to Colonial Williamsburg

Born at Fort Benning (now Fort Moore) in Georgia, Magnuson's interest in history began at age 5 while watching "Liberty's Kids" videos in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, where her father was stationed for the military. Living in Europe for the next 10 years of her life only solidified her love of history, as the family's location brought them close to many battlefields from both World Wars.

At age 12, however, a visit to the Victoria and Albert Museum in London,

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Morgan Magnuson models one of her historically accurate, hand-sewn, 18th-century gowns.

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RELATIONSHIPS

It's a Date!

Continued from Page 1

couple will be a gift of nourishment to each other's bodies and hearts alike. The experience will be even more integral and therefore romantic if you caught, grew, or gathered the food with your own hands.

In "The Art of the Commonplace," Wendell Berry wrote:

Only by restoring the broken connections can we be healed. Connection is health. And what our society does its best to disguise from us is how ordinary, how commonly attainable, health is. We lose our health ... by failing to see the direct connections between living and eating, eating and working, working and loving.

Health in this context can apply to our physical health but also our cultural health or even our relationship health.

Have a Poetry Night

Great poetry is for everybody, not just the elite. Poetry isn't meant to sit, dust-entombed on a shelf—it's meant to be spoken, to spark to life in the air, in your breath, to enter into real relationships between real people. Not to mention, many of the greatest poems are love poems. Make it a part of your relationship with your beloved.

Here are a few classics to get you started:

- "Let Me Not to the Marriage of True Minds Admit Impediments"
- "How do I Love Thee?"
- "To Althea, From Prison"
- "To Lucasta, Going to the Wars"
- "Bright Star"
- "A Red, Red Rose"

Visit a Winery or Brewery

Wineries, at least in my part of the country, are often located in picturesque settings with rolling hills lined with twisting grapes. With such a backdrop and glass of wine "cool'd a long age in the deep-delved earth," Tasting of Flora and the country green," good conversation will naturally follow.

Choose a Direction and Drive

A spontaneous car trip with no set destination can enliven a date with a sense of adventure and the unexpected. You don't know what's over the horizon or when you may come to a restaurant, park, cemetery, orchard, or museum you wish to stop at. Put on your favorite songs, and, as you sweep through the constantly changing landscape, side-by-side, it's like being in a music video.

Play the Thrift Store Game

The rules are very simple: Each person receives a small amount of money—say, \$5—to buy the other person a gift from a thrift store. It takes some ingenuity to find something that your date would like from among the eclectic collection of items in a thrift store—especially for so little money.

A spontaneous car trip with no set destination can enliven a date with a sense of adventure and the unexpected.

It forces you to think about your date in a new way—their likes and dislikes, their temperament. And it may result in some odd and humorous purchases. You never know what you might find.

When my wife and I played this, we did pretty well; she found a record I was excited about, and I found her a pair of shoes that were ... decent.

Golf, but Not Golf

If you both have a competitive edge, consider some of the cheaper alternatives to an afternoon on the golf course: mini golf or frisbee golf. Both of these alternatives are pretty inexpensive, but they get you outside and active (well, a bit). The slight ridiculousness of mini-golf will only add to the fun.

Play Pickleball

Exercising with your spouse or boyfriend or girlfriend brings physical benefits while deepening your bond with one another. It's almost guaranteed to be a fun time, since, when you exercise, your body releases endorphins, making you feel happier.

One way to do that is through pickleball, which is the fastest-growing sport in the United States. Pickleball is a sport similar to tennis—you use paddles to hit a plastic ball back and forth over a net—and is accessible to all ages and skill levels.



▲ Morgan Magnuson (L) and friends dressed in World War II U.S. Navy WAVES mail clerk uniforms.

Viewing History Through the Eye of a Sewing Needle

Continued from Page 1

which contains one of the largest collections of historical clothing in the world, honored her historical interests in the fashion arena.

"I walked in there not thinking that historical clothing was all that great," she said, "and I walked out going, 'Oh my goodness, I want to learn how to make every single piece of clothing I saw today.' And I set out to do that!"

Ms. Magnuson's family returned to the United States when she was 16, allowing her to spend the past two years of her homeschool education taking advantage of workshops offered by Burnley

and Trowbridge on making 18th-century clothing. Combined with the self-study and sewing projects she did previously, these workshops gave her a solid foundation when she began attending her dream college, William & Mary, one of the best schools for learning early American history. Part of this education occurred at Colonial Williamsburg itself, particularly in the tailor shop, one of the front-facing stores where visitors can enter to see people at work in a certain trade.

Living History in Daily Life

Thanks in large part to internships, Ms. Magnuson spent roughly two years immersing herself in the streets and shops

If you're just playing casually, you don't have to get a lot of expensive, high-end gear. According to Pickleball University, a starter paddle only costs about \$15, and balls are \$1 per ball. There are plenty of free, public courts around the world, although they may sometimes be crowded.

Getting started is pretty inexpensive. Of course, you can sink more money into the sport if you want to (with high-end gear, private court fees, and so forth), but you wouldn't have to if you're trying to economize.

Visit a Historic House

If you're less sports-inclined and more interested in history, consider taking a tour of a historic mansion. You'll get to see beautiful architecture, period clothing, and furnishings, as well as learn about your local history from the (generally) knowledgeable tour guides. Tour fees will vary, of course, but are usually less than \$20 per person.

Go Geocaching

Another more active option, geocaching involves the use of a GPS to hide or find containers called "caches," which are hidden all around the world. You can use the geocaching app to find and visit caches near you. They could be anywhere: along a park trail, under a tree, in a storm drain, and so forth. Caches often contain various items or "prizes"—books, maps, tickets, trinkets, or jewelry. If you take something, it's expected that you'll leave something too.

In addition to participating in the fun of "the world's biggest treasure hunt," geocaching is a great way to get to know your local terrain better.

Volunteer

Part of the purpose of dating is to learn to see your date with fresh eyes, to wash away the film of familiarity that clouds our vision and prevents us from fully appreciating our loved ones. Dates place you in new situations and contexts to jolt you out of the familiar and see a new or forgotten side of your husband or wife, boyfriend or girlfriend.

While volunteering may not, at first glance, seem as romantic as wine or poetry, it'll certainly break up the familiar routine. In addition to bringing much-needed relief to others, it may show you the kindness and good-heartedness of your loved one in a new way as you watch them interact with others who need their help.

Stargaze

This is a classic for a reason. Take a basket of refreshments, an astronomy



▲ Taking a tour of a local mansion or historical sight is an opportunity to learn about local history.

guide, and set up with a good view of the stars and minimal light pollution. If a telescope is too expensive, don't worry. You can still see a great deal with the naked eye.

"If the stars should appear but one night every thousand years how man would marvel and stare," Ralph Wal-

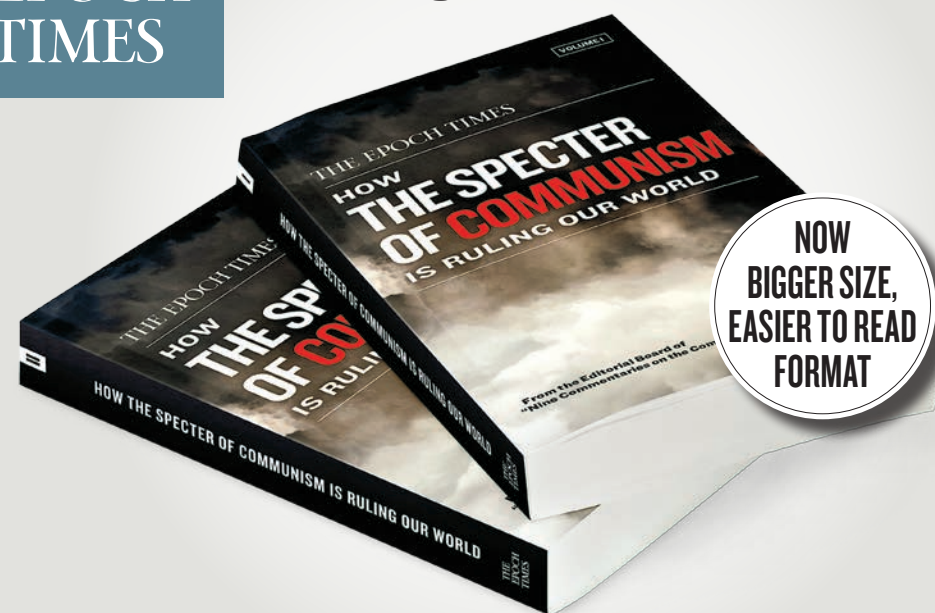
do Emerson wrote.

Although the stars will return every night for age after age, the one there beside you will never be repeated—he or she is unique, irreplaceable, a gleam of light in this moment of history and no other. Treasure him or her as such.

Walker Larson teaches literature at a private academy in Wisconsin, where he resides with his wife and daughter. He holds a Master's in English literature and language, and his writing has appeared in *The Hemingway Review*, *Intellectual Takeout*, and his Substack, "TheHazelnut."

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of Williamsburg and the history they personify. She made clear that her job while in Williamsburg wasn't that of an actor; rather, she was there as a historical interpreter from the 21st century, ready to demonstrate the work of a seamstress and also answer the questions of visitors based on her extensive research and immersion in 18th-century economics, politics, culture, and religion.

As the only female in the tailor shop, visitors commonly questioned whether the layers and corsetry of her 18th-century outfit were hot or uncomfortable. Her response is the opposite of what many assume.

"In some situations, I'm actually cooler than the people that come into the shop wearing shorts and a T-shirt because they're wearing all polyester, and I'm wearing linen, which is meant to work in an environment where there's no central air and no heating," Ms. Magnuson said.

With respect to the handcrafted stays she wore while in the tailor shop, she noted that they were "actually protective, not harmful," contrary to what many assume.

"The actual fact of it is women's corsetry in the past was supportive, like a woman's bra today, mixed with a weightlifter's belt," Ms. Magnuson said. Such support helped women with the strenuous lifting and bending tasks they performed, such as laundry and caring for children.

"It feels like a hug basically at all times," she said, noting that she was "actually

quite comfortable" when wearing such undergarments.

In addition to being an extremely fun place to hang out, Ms. Magnuson found that her internships at Williamsburg taught her a lot about presenting history to the next generation.

"It was mostly teaching me how to talk to people, how to tell people about history in a way that's engaging and a way that will appeal to both the old and the young and everything in between—how to read the room, how to convey as many points as possible, in a short time as possible, without being confusing," she said.

Ms. Magnuson is now seeking to put the things she learned on the job at Williamsburg to good use both by creating accurate historical costumes and educational presentations for all ages—the former for reenactors, other historical interpreters, and those who just enjoy vintage clothing and the latter for kids in homeschool groups, women's groups, and other venues. However, part of doing so requires her to walk the fine line of balance in an area that has become fraught with the emotions of the culture wars.

"History is as much about interpretation as it is about different facts, and that's why you'll have different versions of history," she said, speaking of the conflict that has arisen over "woke" history in recent years.

For example, Ms. Magnuson noted that the women of history she often portrays were working women but that they often worked alongside or near their husbands, enabling them to raise a family far more

easily than the career women of today.

"Most of the time ... the facts do ask you to take the middle road," she said, further noting that "it's kind of a disservice to only talk about the bad in their lives or only talk about the good in their lives, you have to talk about both to balance it out." Doing so is essential to both respect those who lived in the past and remember the lessons that history has to offer those of us in the present.

One way in which Ms. Magnuson is seeking to respect and honor those in the past is by portraying a Donut Dollie from World War II at reenactment events. It's a bit early to reenact the Vietnam period, but she hopes to soon portray a Donut Dollie from that era as well for the sake of the vets.

"I've been to events and seen vets come over to a Vietnam [reenactment] group ... and just break down crying," she said, noting that they appreciated being recognized in the same way they always saw World War II vets recognized.

These vets will often sit and have lengthy talks with Ms. Magnuson and other young women dressed as Donut Dollies, for they recognize that these young ladies know and understand what Vietnam vets went through.

"We should appreciate them because whether it was right or wrong for us to go to Vietnam, they still sacrificed, they still went through horrible things ... and so they should be appreciated and loved," she said.

Eventually, Ms. Magnuson hopes to give that same recognition and appreciation to those who served in the Iraq War. She particularly sees this future portrayal as a good way to honor her father, who died in January, partially because of his exposure to the burn pits he encountered during his own time serving in Iraq.

Until then, however, she expects to be busy with her needle and thread, creating historically accurate clothing through her company, The Rebel Costumer (@TheRebelCostumer on Facebook and Instagram), and traveling around the country teaching others to love U.S. history as much as she does.

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.



▲ Morgan Magnuson (R) and friends dressed in World War II-era civilian clothes.

ALL IMAGES IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN



▲ "Adam and Eve Work Outside the Garden," 1604, by Jan Saenredam and Abraham Bloemaert. Rijksmuseum.

POETRY

The Dignity of Work

Yeats's 'Adam's Curse'

By Marlena Figge

For the whole of human history, man has simultaneously shirked from work, sought respite from it, delighted in it, and found it to be a necessity. Even while seeking to avoid it, he also wouldn't perfectly enjoy a permanent escape from it, for we yearn to achieve something worthwhile and to see that what we have done is good.

William Butler Yeats published his poem "Adam's Curse" in 1903, and from the title, it's immediately apparent that two things are foremost in his thoughts in the poem: work and mortality.

In the book of Genesis, God gives three punishments: one to the serpent, one to

Eve, and one to Adam. The final command consigns Adam to a life of work in which he must till and cultivate the land in order to bring forth his food. The other part of the command states that the ground that's to be his portion in life will also be his resting place in death.

"Adam's Curse," composed of heroic couplets (pairs of rhyming iambic lines), presents us with a scene at the close of summer as the speaker sits with the woman he loves and her sister. As this is an autobiographical poem, the two women are understood to be Maud Gonne and her sister Kathleen.

As Yeats relays their conversation, the group touches upon the important truth that we can't create a thing of beauty without work, and even in the poem's melancholy conclusion, Yeats demonstrates why it's better to work toward beauty than to not pursue it at all.

Stitching and Unstitching

The initial topic of the group's conversation is poetry. Yeats paints an idyllic picture for us in the opening lines as he sets the scene:

We sat together at one summer's end,
That beautiful mild woman,
Your close friend,
And you and I, and talked of poetry.

It becomes immediately evident that while the conversation in the poem is shared primarily with the sister of his beloved, the poem itself is addressed to the one the speaker loves. The remainder of the first stanza is the articulation of his thoughts on poetry:

I said, 'A line will take us hours maybe;

Yet if it does not seem a moment's thought,
Our stitching and unstitching has been naught.

Better go down upon your marrow-bones

And scrub a kitchen pavement,
or break stones

Like an old pauper, in all kinds of weather;

For to articulate sweet sounds together

Is to work harder than all these, and yet

Be thought an idler by the noisy set

Of bankers, schoolmasters, and clergymen

The martyrs call the world.'

The religious undertone of the final line creates a distinction between society and



▲ "The Miseries of Idleness," 1780, by George Morland.

those deemed indolent by the "noisy set" because their work takes on a quieter form or is seen as less important. Yeats instead claims that the work of a poet is all the more difficult because it must seem as though no work has been done at all: The work of hours must seem a moment's thought or else the poet ought to turn his hand to other work.

With the second stanza comes a second voice, and as Kathleen speaks, the topic shifts to beauty in general:

And thereupon

That beautiful mild woman for whose sake

There's many a one shall find out all heartache

On finding that her voice is sweet and low

Replied, "To be born woman is to know—

Although they do not talk of it at school—

That we must labour to be beautiful."

I said, 'It's certain there is no fine thing

Since Adam's fall but needs much labouring.

There have been lovers who thought love should be

So much compounded of high courtesy

That they would sigh and quote with learned looks

Precedents out of beautiful old books;

Yet now it seems an idle trade enough.'

With this stanza, we understand Yeats's idea of a "fine thing" to be a beauty that seems effortless and natural even when it's the product of time and care. A woman's beauty, according to Kathleen, is the result of some degree of work, and yet this can't be mentioned because to do so would break the illusion of it as effortless and unconscious. The same is true of poetry in which a single line of verse is the work of hours but must seem nothing more than a moment's thought.

Yeats mentions two types of work that are perceived as idleness: poetry, which isn't considered work at all, and love, which is viewed as not requiring work in the present day. The hard work that seems a moment's thought turns to the thoughtless work of a moment, and we see that in Yeats's view, what he distinguishes as "the world" is all at once bustling and idle.

For all their noise, as mentioned in the first stanza, those belonging to the world won't direct their energy toward the creation of fine things. The dialogue in the poem closes on a melancholy note, a presentation that love itself is becoming a lost art.

The Story's End

As the summer draws to an end, a sense of finality and lack of time lingers over the company. In the third section, no one speaks at all, as though the final words of the wordsmith have crafted a silence:

We sat grown quiet at the name of love;

We saw the last embers of daylight die,

And in the trembling blue-green of the sky

A moon, worn as if it had been a shell

Washed by time's waters as they rose and fell

About the stars and broke in days and years.

I had a thought for no one's but your ears:
That you were beautiful, and that I strove

To love you in the old high way of love;

That it had all seemed happy, and yet we'd grown

As weary-hearted as that hollow moon.

Work done well confers dignity and brings the reward of rest in the completion of a thing of beauty, in seeing that what you've done is good. Instead, Yeats is left with a sense of weariness rather than restfulness. In the moment when he might rest in recognizing the beauty of his beloved, his thoughts are instead drawn to the awareness that no beauty, no matter how much work is devoted to it, will be able to last forever in this world.

He projects his inner state onto the moon, which seems hollowed out because it now mirrors his sentiments. All of time seems like the ebb and flow of an ocean breaking in waves upon the shore, slowly eroding what has been established and known, loved and valued.

The silence that descends upon the company is the result of the awareness that, to a certain extent, they know the end of their story: to dust they shall return. The two women, as described by Yeats, are both examples of beauty subject to the passing of time.

In the last few lines, the speaker reveals to the reader a thought that he says is for no one to hear except the woman he's addressing. He has sought to love her in the "old high way of love," and yet both he and his beloved are left empty. The melancholy conclusion of the poem isn't because they can't recognize the goodness of their work but because they feel a sense of futility in the impermanence of it.

To Till the Ground

The precedent of love that Yeats gives us, coming out of a beautiful old book, is the example of Adam and Eve. Adam, having fallen after being led into sin by Eve, shares in the exile from the Garden of Eden with her, and they shoulder life's burdens together knowing that their lives will always be tinged with sorrow in the awareness that their life together must come to an end. The curse is that, whatever we choose, we can't successfully avoid activity or mortality; and we can only live in denial that we'll die.

The alternative to pouring our time and effort into loving well is to join the madding crowd, to be assumed into the cacophony of the world as we attempt to numb ourselves to the awareness of our end. Whatever the conclusion of the company after the conversation in the poem, the reader is left with a sense that, despite the freedom to choose the world, there's no true rest apart from work; as Yeats demonstrates, we can't help but be drawn to beauty and to desire to work for it.

The negation of this desire doesn't lead to relaxation but to a frenzied servitude to the vagaries of the world. With this in mind, we forge ahead, combatants against time and the world, conscious that of time there will always be too little but that of our efforts we can never give too much.

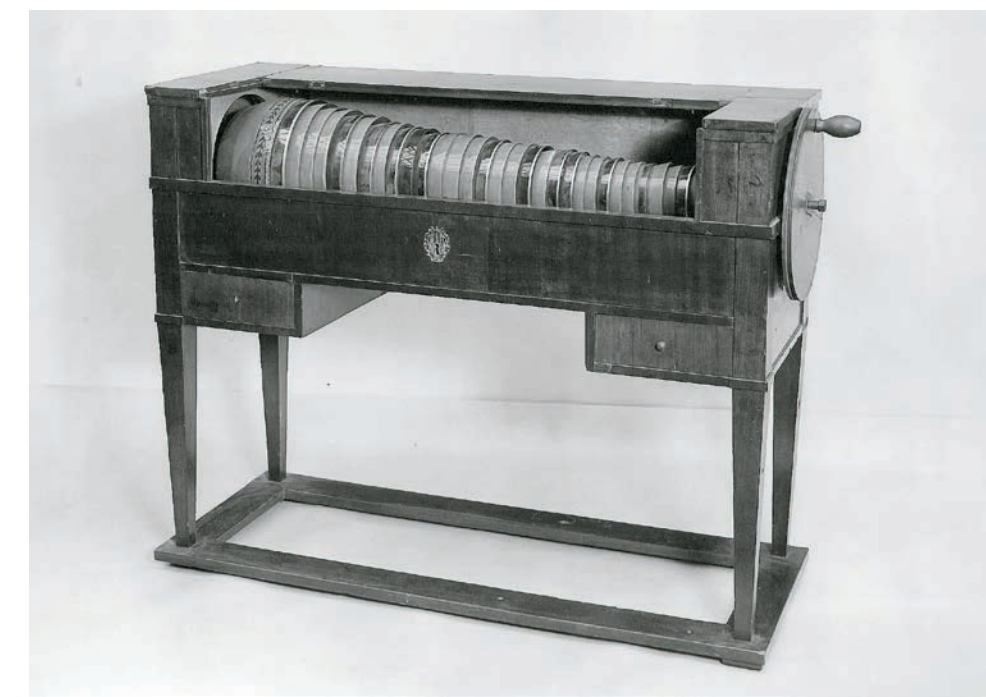
Marlena Figge received her M.A. in Italian Literature from Middlebury College in 2021 and graduated from the University of Dallas in 2020 with a B.A. in Italian and English. She currently has a teaching fellowship and teaches English at a high school in Italy.



▲ Poet W.B. Yeats's poem addresses the importance of work to make life meaningful. W.B. Yeats, date unknown. Library of Congress.



▲ The poem is addressed to the one the speaker loves, who is assumed to be Maude Gonne, shown here circa 1900.



▲ Glass Harmonica, 18th century, by unknown instrument builder. Wood, glass, various materials. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

HISTORY

The Glass Armonica

Benjamin Franklin's favorite invention wasn't electricity!

By Bob Kirchman

Wet your finger and run it around the rim of a wine glass. You get a note! A bored child at a formal dinner with fine crystal will inevitably do it. Further exploration will tell the inquisitive child that if you fill the glass with varying amounts of water, you'll hear different notes. Also, if you have different sizes of crystal glasses, you get a variety of sounds as well. Our ever curious founding father, Benjamin Franklin, undoubtedly had many formal dinners that he was bored at.

In the middle of the 1700s, Franklin made the dinner circuit while serving as a delegate for the American colonies. He spent an awful lot of time in London and Paris where such entertainments might go well into the evening. Biographers wrily note that the man who wrote "Early to bed and early to rise" often slept in the next day, sometimes past ten. That, though, is a story for another day.

The childish art of "playing the glasses" developed into an art form in itself. Amateur musicians often performed on sets of "singing glasses." In fact, one might take up the challenge to play them at just such a dinner function. No doubt our inquisitive founding father took a turn at the musical glasses.

He would develop their art a bit further.

A New Way of Turning Glass

Benjamin Franklin, ever the tinkerer, had a set of glass bowls made of various sizes by a London glassblower. Each had a hole in the bottom. He nested them together on a spindle separated from each other by cork. A treadle, not unlike that of a sewing machine, allowed one to turn the spindle and all of the bowls. Each bowl was the correct size and thickness to give the desired pitch without being filled with water. The device is played with moistened fingers as the musician turns the bowls. Franklin, borrowing the Italian word for harmony, called his device the glass armonica.

The first glass armonica was produced in 1761. It might have remained a musical oddity but Franklin enjoyed taking it on his travels and entertained his hosts with popular Scottish music, and, it is said, even some of his own compositions.

The armonica came to enjoy great popularity in 18th-century Europe. In fact, it was so popular that Ludwig van Beethoven, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, and Gaetano Donizetti all wrote music especially for it. It seemed the armonica would become as much a part of the orchestra as the cello or violin. But early in the 19th century, the armonica was all but forgotten.

Unusual Reactions

According to the Franklin Institute, the armonica became associated with a few troubling events. A number of people who played the instrument "became ill," complaining of "muscle spasms, nervousness, cramps, and dizziness." Listeners as well were not immune to ill effects supposedly linked to the armonica. The instrument's high pitched sounds were thought by some to cause madness—or even summon the spirits of the dead.

A more scientific explanation was that lead from the glass might be absorbed into the musician's fingers, causing the observed ill effects. That wouldn't explain the effect

on the audience, however. When a child died during an armonica performance in Germany, it was actually banned in a number of places.

The instrument fell out of favor and was all but forgotten. It is worth noting that Benjamin Franklin ignored the dire warnings being circulated about it and played the armonica right up until his death, suffering none of the ill effects.

He Gladly Gave the Armonica Away

By the time Franklin died in 1790, over 5,000 of the instruments had been built. His wife Deborah said of the sound that it was "the music of the angels." Unlike inventors of today, who rush to the patent attorney and seek out lucrative licensing agreements, Franklin seemed possessed by a grand vision. He said, "As we enjoy great Advantages from the Inventions of others we should be glad of an opportunity to serve others by any invention of ours, and this we should do freely and generously."

So Franklin never saw a dime, much less a half-dollar, from the armonica—or from any of his inventions for that matter. His inventions were but one more contribution to the prosperity of the nascent republic he had helped to bring into existence.

Benjamin Franklin said of it "Of all my inventions, the glass armonica has given me the greatest personal satisfaction."

Composer William Zeidler plays the armonica in our time. He describes the instrument as a series of "custom blown wine glasses." He wets his fingers and begins to play, turning the spindle

at just the right speed to start a note. Each note, Zeidler explains, needs to be started at its own correct speed. To play more than one note at a time, the musician must start each at its correct speed. Differing volume is achieved by varying finger pressure and spindle speed at the same time. Clearly there is an art to playing the armonica.

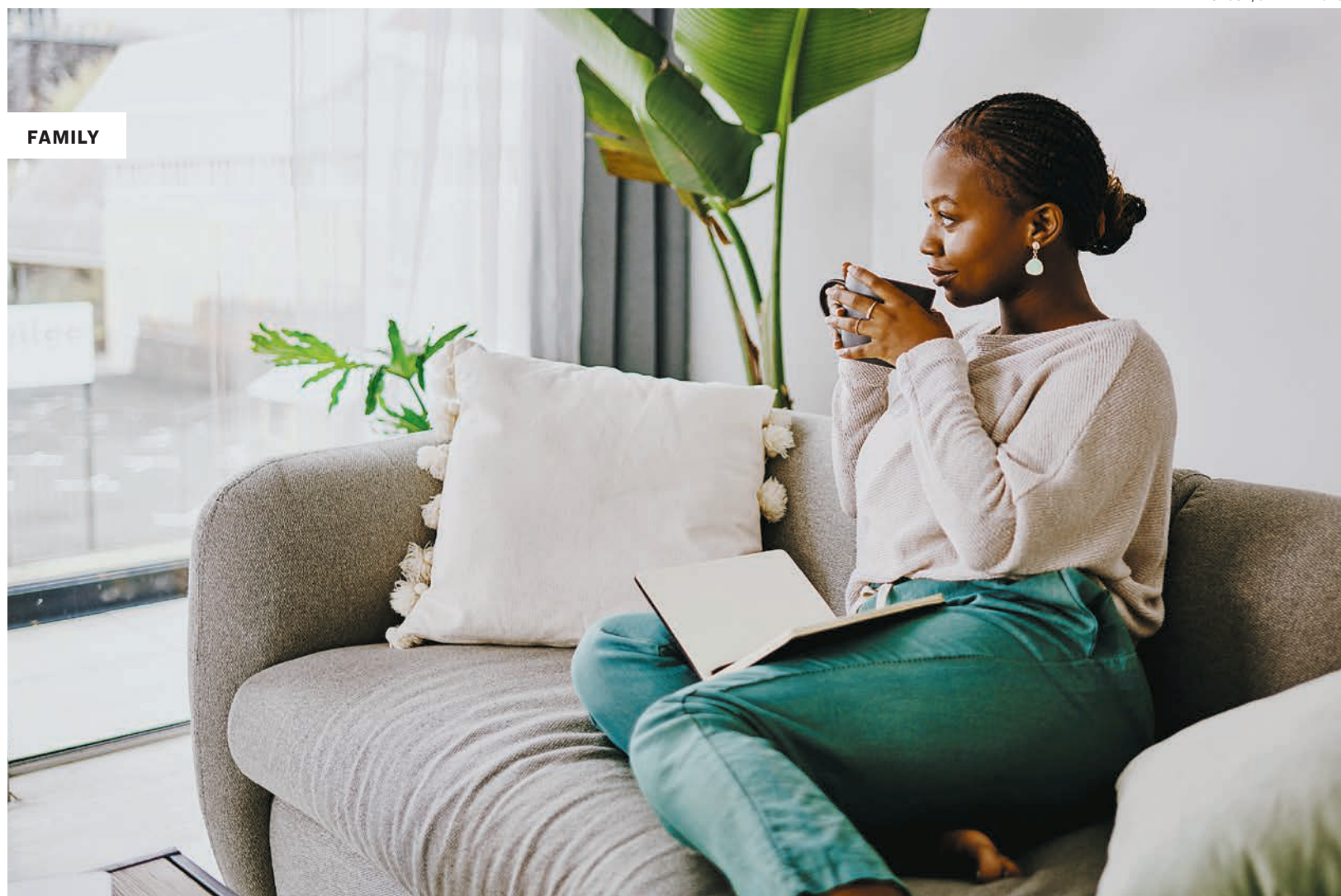
Too much finger pressure will break the glass. Also, an armonica player lives in fear of a stage crew member dropping his beloved instrument with catastrophic results. Zeidler remembers the time his armonica did crash to the floor. As it struck the ground, he mentally did the mathematics of replacing the glass bowls. With some trepidation he opened the case and found all of them had survived!

Thinking of Franklin traveling on the roads of the day with his beloved instrument, one has to be amazed.

Bob Kirchman is an architectural illustrator who lives in Augusta County, Va., with his wife Pam. He teaches studio art to students in the Augusta Christian Educators Homeschool Co-op.



▲ Composer William Zeidler playing the glass armonica.



FAMILY

DELMARINE DONSON/GETTY IMAGES

▲ It's important for parents to find rejuvenating activities to recharge, even if that is simply sitting quietly with a cup of tea or coffee.

A Parent's Guide to Early Morning Routines

Be the best parent you can be by carving out a bit of alone time for yourself

By Barbara Danza

Time to oneself is an essential part of life. In these moments, one can process thoughts and emotions, calm one's heart and mind, pray, envision, dream, study, and rest. These aren't trivial.

It's one thing to carve out time for oneself as a young adult when one is mainly responsible for oneself, but when one becomes a parent, it can feel like a luxury that seems elusive, if not impossible. Even in moments in one's day that used to be mostly private, somehow, the ability to be alone seems hard to come by when little ones come along.

Allowing yourself time to think, sip a cup of coffee, and relax can fuel your ability to be the parent you most want to be.

The irony is that time to oneself becomes ever more valuable when the responsibility of raising children is placed upon one's shoulders. These precious souls need the best of their parents, and that requires alone time.

The good news is that just a little bit of time each day can go a long way. Once you're past the infant stage and back on a decent sleep schedule, it isn't impossible to carve out a little bit of time for yourself if you establish consistent rhythms in your home and do a little planning ahead. Allowing yourself time to think, sip a cup of coffee, and relax can fuel your ability to be the parent you most want to be. Here are a few ways even the busiest parent can find some alone time and make the most of it.

Bedtime Routines

Bedtime routines affect the rhythm of the day like nothing else. The key to establishing solid, enjoyable bedtime routines is consistency and repetition. Aim to go through the same process with your children each and every night. Make it joyful and loving, and begin the process early. Perhaps after dinner, you read aloud together, then go through bath time, then tuck your children in and kiss them goodnight. Repeat the same loving phrases, do things in the same order, and



▲ Set some time aside in the morning for meditation or other activities that center you.

OLEKSI PIDDSONOV/ THE EPOCH TIMES

enjoy these precious moments together. A predictable bedtime routine is a comfort to young children and, after it becomes an established habit, will signal their bodies that it's time to go to sleep. As kids get older, the importance of maintaining solid habits and predictable routines still holds. Adjust as they grow and aim for consistency.

Of course, bedtime isn't just for the kids. Mom and Dad also need to ensure their sleep schedule is regular and fruitful.

Make this a priority in your home. Figure out the routines that not only work for your family but are joyful and loving. Getting this right will, among other benefits, allow you to make time for yourself and have the mental energy to make the most of it when you do.

Wake-Up Strategy

Many parents find that the most plausible time of day to carve out time for themselves is in the early morning hours before anyone else in the house wakes up. When bedtime routines are predictable and reliable, you can, with some confidence, take the time to enjoy the quiet solitude of the early morning.

Making the time you spend alone as enjoyable and rejuvenating as possible will lead you to actually look forward to it and make it easier to wake up earlier than you are perhaps used to.

Put to use wake-up strategies that work for you. Perhaps you program your coffee maker, place your alarm clock across the room so you have to get up to shut it off, avoid screens before bedtime, and head directly into the shower upon waking.

It might sound like drudgery to wake up earlier, but once it's a habit, you may be surprised to find that you truly enjoy it.

Something to Look Forward to

When you do sit down to enjoy the time you've carved out for yourself, be sure to use it wisely. Establish a ritual that you can enjoy and look forward to.

Some activities you may find nourishing and rejuvenating include exercise, meditating, journaling, praying, reading, spending time outside in the sunshine, drinking coffee or tea, or simply sitting in silence.

Screen Free

One activity you'll want to avoid during this time is scrolling through your phone or engaging with screens of any kind. The onslaught of stimuli and messaging these devices deliver saps the mental and emotional energy you're aiming to strengthen during this time. Screens generally aren't at all rejuvenating. Keep this time screen free.

Make It Your Own

As you continue to enjoy daily time to yourself, notice what works best for you. Perhaps you're more of a night owl and would be better off carving out time after everyone goes to bed. Perhaps you find drawing, singing, or painting cathartic and want to incorporate that. Follow your gut and nurture yourself in a way that allows you to show up for your life at your very best.

Back to Homeschool

7 fun ways to kick off a new school year

By Barbara Danza

More and more families continue to opt out of sending their children "back to school" in favor of taking the reins as homeschoolers. If you're a homeschooling family about to kick off a new year, here are seven fun ways to make the start special.

Supplies Surprise

Perhaps, like many other homeschoolers, you tend to gather together at the kitchen table, in the living room around a coffee table, or at the dining room table. Wherever that central location is for your family, decorate it for a celebration the night before your first day, after the kids have gone to bed.

Much like Christmas morning, they'll awaken to a delightful surprise that may include themed plates and decor, fresh school supplies, a new book or two, or even a wrapped present, if you so desire. Include a card or note for each child that lets them know how much you're looking forward to a fun year ahead and how blessed you feel to be able to share these moments together.

Mid-Week Start

Who says the first day has to be a Monday? Take a page from seasoned homeschoolers and start the first week on a Wednesday or Thursday to make the act of starting short and sweet—easy as pie. You'll begin with fun, ease, and a sense of accomplishment and be able to launch into week two ready to roll.

Special Breakfast

Continue the celebration with a breakfast that's more elaborate than usual. Think pancakes, French toast, fresh fruit, or bacon and eggs.

Perhaps you establish a traditional food for breakfast on the first day of each year, such as cinnamon rolls or bagels from your favorite local place. Allow the morning to linger and talk about all that you hope to experience and accomplish this year.

Take a Picture

Don't forget to take those first day of school pictures. Use signs that show either your child's age or grade—if you keep track of grade levels—and share them with friends and family.

Head Out of the House

Experienced homeschoolers know that back-to-school season means fewer crowds at parks, museums, libraries—just about everywhere. Take advantage right out of the gate!

Lace up those sneakers, pack some water and a snack, and head outside for a hike or to the local museum for the first field trip of the year. Wherever you go, make it easy and fun and an inspiring example of the blessings of homeschooling.

Start a Read-Aloud

Before wrapping up the first day, crack open a brand new read-aloud you'll be sharing with your kids this year. Con-

cluding the day immersed in a story you share as a family is a joy. The continuation of the story will be one of many things you and your family look forward to the next day.

Set Up for Success

As that first day progresses and the week goes on, aim to establish a rhythm and any organizational processes you deem important to the smooth running of your homeschool. Review what's expected of your children and introduce them to important schedule and calendar details they'll need to know, all while unwrapping new school supplies and setting up tools and spaces for the new year ahead.



ELIZAVETA GALITCKAIA/SHUTTERSTOCK

▲ Back-to-school season means fewer crowds at attractions like zoos.

FOR KIDS ONLY

THE EPOCH TIMES



Go Forth to Life

By Samuel Longfellow

Go forth to life, O child of earth,
Remembering still thy heavenly birth,
Thou art not here for ease or sin,
But manhood's noble crown to win.

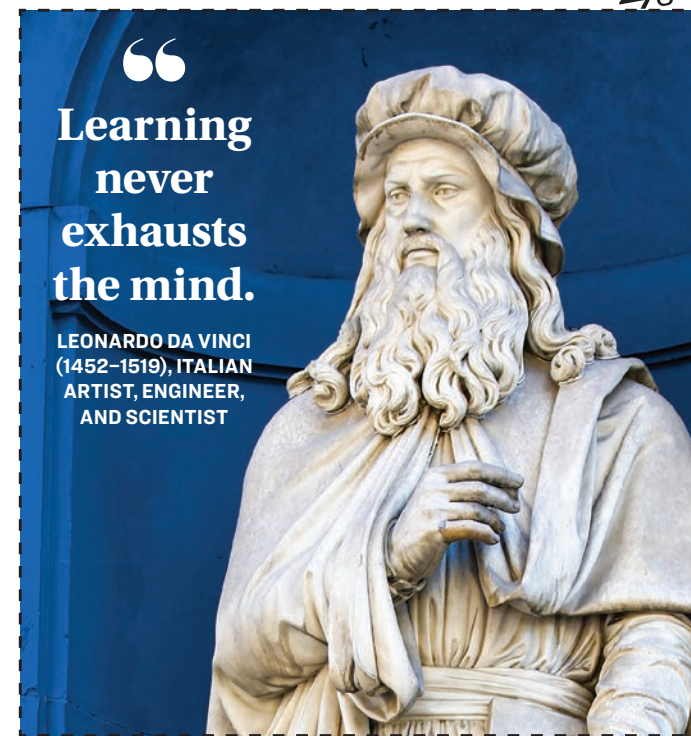
Though passion's fires be in thy soul,
Thy spirit can their flames control;
Though tempters should beset thy way,
Thy spirit is more strong than they.

Go on from innocence of youth
To manly pureness, manly truth;
God's angels still are near to save,
And God himself doth help the brave.

Then forth to life, O child of earth!
Be worthy of thy heavenly birth!
For noble service thou art here;
Thy brothers help, thy God reverse!



SVIATLANA YANKOUSKAYA/SHUTTERSTOCK



“ Learning never exhausts the mind.”

LEONARDO DA VINCI (1452-1519), ITALIAN ARTIST, ENGINEER, AND SCIENTIST



KOLONKO/SHUTTERSTOCK

KING GIVES

HISTORIC SPEECH

On Aug. 28, 1963, on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, Martin Luther King Jr. delivered one of the most famous speeches in U.S. history to approximately 250,000 onlookers.

In what became known as his "I Have a Dream" speech, Mr. King declared:

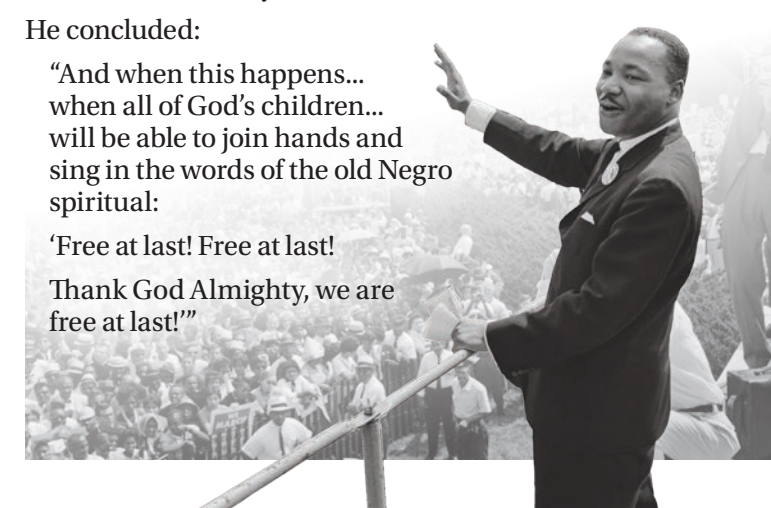
"I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.' ...

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character." ...

He concluded:

"And when this happens... when all of God's children... will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual:

'Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!'"



GETTY IMAGES

By Aidan Danza

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE

THE STARFISH

Starfish are truly fascinating animals. They come in all shapes and sizes, with all manner of variations. Perhaps even more astounding is that they make do with very little in the way of brains, sensory organs, or size, and they are extremely abundant and plentiful in all of the world's oceans.

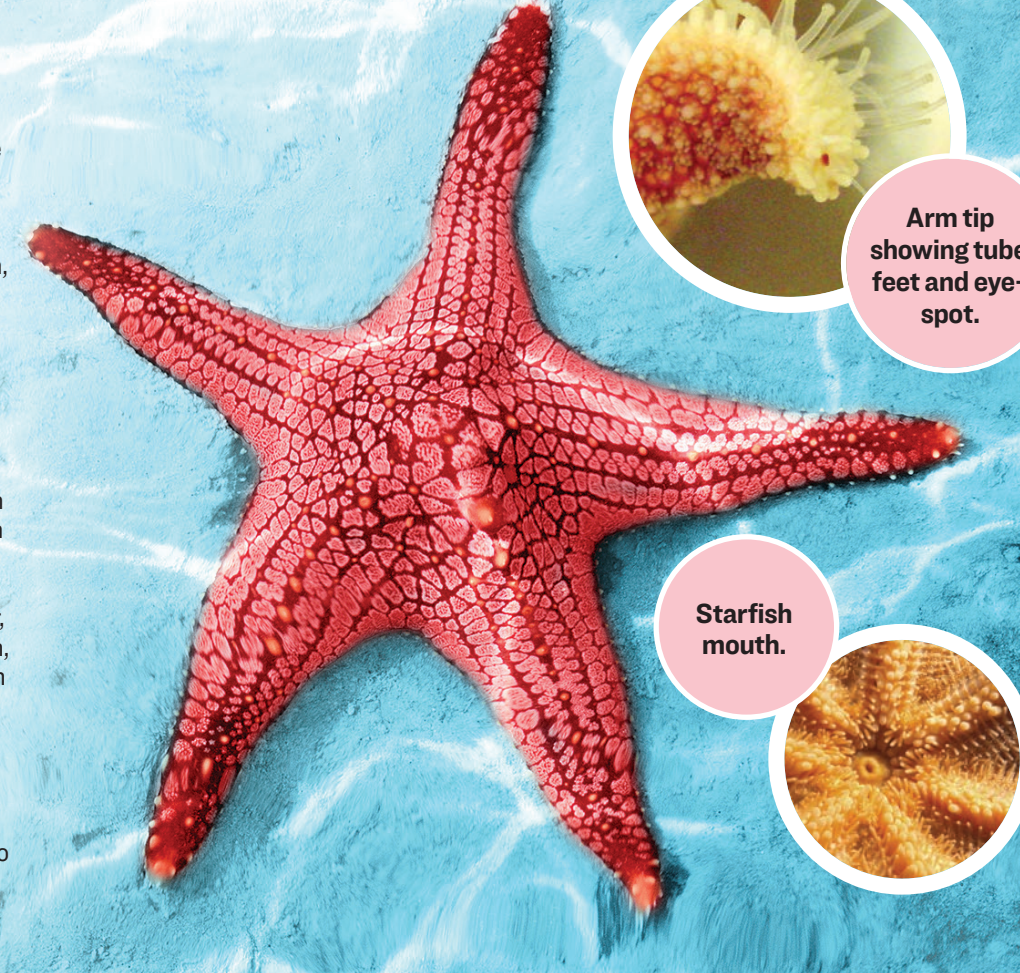
Most starfish have five arms, in the shape of a five-pointed star, though some have more. On the bottom of their bodies, they have a mouth, and on the end of each arm they have a microscopic eye.

They have a rather complex digestive system. Their mouth leads to a short esophagus, which connects to the first stomach, or cardiac stomach. Some species of starfish will actually eject this stomach from their body in order to eat a meal. To do this, they will wrap their bodies around a bivalve animal (clam, oyster, scallop, or mussel), open the shell slightly with the suction cups found on their arms, and slip the stomach into the shell, releasing digestive juices into the animal. The mussel's flesh will dissolve into a soupy substance, which the starfish sucks up with its esophagus, like a straw, and then removes their stomach, leaving behind a shell. However, not all species

use this technique to feed.

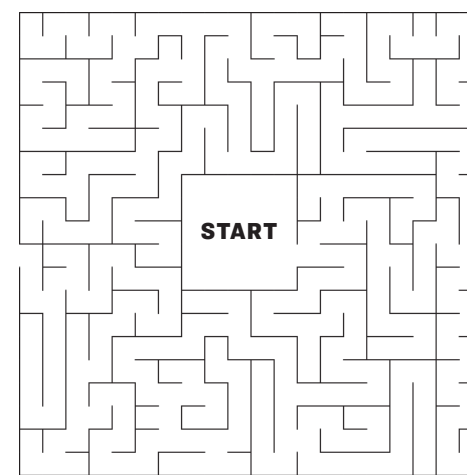
Starfish have as many eyes as they have arms, with an eye at each end that is thought to sense light and darkness. Some also have photoreceptors all over their bodies, which fulfill the same function. They have a rather complex nervous system, with a network of nerves in and just below their skin.

They also have a very interesting water vascular system: a network of tubes and pipes that allow the sea star to propel itself and use suction. Starfish use changes in pressure, much like breathing in and out, to move their tube feet back and forth. The tube feet are almost countless in number, and line the bottom of each arm, so as the water vascular system moves the tube feet back and forth, the starfish can scoot along the ground. The vascular system can also suck, for a long period of time, on a surface, allowing the starfish to attach to rocks or the shells of prey.



GETTY IMAGES/SHUTTERSTOCK

AMAZING ESCAPES!



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

Easy puzzle 1

4	6		
32			
2	6		
+	-	x	÷

Solution For Easy 1
 $2 \times (4 + 6 + 9)$
 $2 \times 9 + 6 \times 9$

Medium puzzle 1

6	14		
20			
5	6		
+	-	x	÷

Solution for Medium 1
 $(5 - 9) \times (9 + 6)$

Hard puzzle 1

18	34		
33			
7	24		
+	-	x	÷

Solution for Hard 1
 $2 - 81 - 92 + 92$



How many hidden objects can you find?

HIDDEN TREASURES by Liz Ball
www.HiddenPicturePuzzles.com

WORD SEARCH: Ready to Go Back to Class?

H	O	C	K	E	Y	S	C	I	E	N	C	E	J	O
C	O	S	P	A	N	I	S	H	T	E	N	N	I	S
I	R	E	M	U	S	B	G	E	O	G	R	A	P	H
N	D	S	R	M	L	Z	I	E	D	K	Q	A	P	
E	A	I	R	O	O	Y	U	C	S	D	B	R	F	H
S	N	C	T	N	G	O	C	B	Y	H	E	P	E	Y
E	C	K	Q	O	B	O	M	R	S	L	T	E	T	S
T	E	A	L	M	S	H	O	T	P	R	G	N	E	I
H	H	O	L	Y	G	T	M	A	T	H	E	C	R	C
T	I	E	F	C	S	L	T	N	V	R	I	S		
B	R	L	A	I	U	S	U	W	A	K	M	L	A	L
L	O	Y	H	T	A	L	G	E	B	R	A	S	Z	A
G	P	A	S	T	E	W	U	N	Q	S	N	S	U	R
T	E	A	C	H	E	R	Z	S	Y	B	A	N	D	T

Algebra	Geography
Art	German
Astronomy	Glue
Band	Golf
Biology	History
Cafeteria	Hockey
Calculus	Home Room
Chinese	Math
Clubs	Music
Dance	Paste
English	Pencils
French	Physics
	Science
	Soccer
	Spanish
	Stapler
	Teacher
	Tennis
	Theater

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF THEGRANDWILMINGTON



▲ Famed 19th-century architect Thomas Dixon was inspired by the design of the Paris Opera House, which shows off a French Second Empire style, an eclectic compilation of different architectural elements from various time periods. At 92 feet, the façade impresses with its various arches, Masonic symbols—especially the eye of providence—as well as Corinthian columns, dental molding, and much more.



▲ The main entryway of the Grand Opera House evokes a bygone era with decorative solid wood doors featuring its name etched into the glass, as well as highly distinct, painted cast-iron double columns.



▲ Once inside the doors, guests are treated to an architectural look that mirrors what was established outside in 1871. The curved box office features faux columns, arched ticket windows, and the same glass-globe brass chandeliers that are present in the main auditorium. Performance posters are featured in glassed, corniced cases.

LARGER THAN LIFE: Art that inspires us through the ages

Delaware's Grand Opera House Glitters and Shines



▲ Artists and fresco painters during the late 1800s, Charles and William Kehrwieler of Philadelphia (known as the Kehrwieler Brothers), completed the original ceiling in the Grand Opera House, but it was eventually traced and repainted in a more fire-resistant manner by Nolan Scenery Studios of Brooklyn, N.Y. Depicted in the art are mythical goddesses who keep a watchful eye on the performers and attendees inside the auditorium. The blue background dome of stars suggests the heavens.

By Deena Bouknight

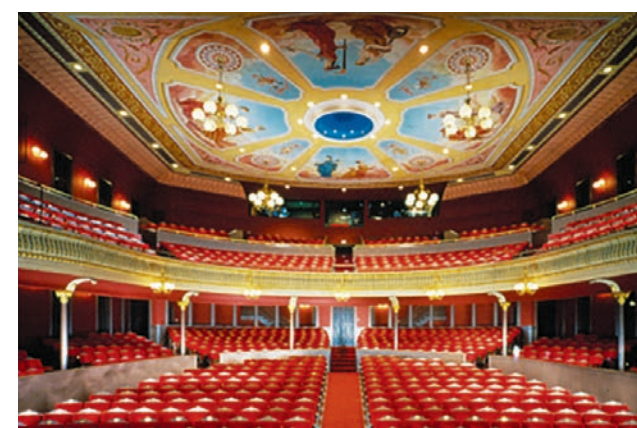
In 1871, the amount needed to build the Grand Opera House was grand indeed—\$100,000. The interior and exterior of the four-story building were nothing like the residents of Wilmington, Delaware, had ever experienced. Baltimore architect Thomas Dixon designed the building to sport a French Second Empire style, while Royer Brothers of Philadelphia (a 19th-century architectural ironworks foundry) erected the ornate, Italianate cast-iron façade.

The Grand Opera House auditorium—seating more than 1,400—was considered the third-largest stage in the United States during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Recently reconfigured to accommodate 1,208 people, the auditorium is accessible after one enters the building's main doors and traverses a narrow hall. Meeting and conference rooms are part of the building's interior, but the auditorium is by far the largest space, with its colorful painted ceiling as the focal point.

Thousands of performers—from Buffalo Bill Cody to John Philip Sousa—have graced the wide stage, and countless patrons over the years have viewed practically every type of entertainment, including operas, symphonies, minstrel shows, and exhibitions. The Grand, as it's also known, became a movie house in 1909 and remained so until the late 1960s, when it was opened again for various performances. It was renovated in the early 1970s, and each year, it schedules as many as 80 shows, which range from music to dance to theater to comedy. Visitors can step back in time and enjoy the grandiosity of the space.

Mythical goddesses on the frescoed ceiling keep a watchful eye on performances.

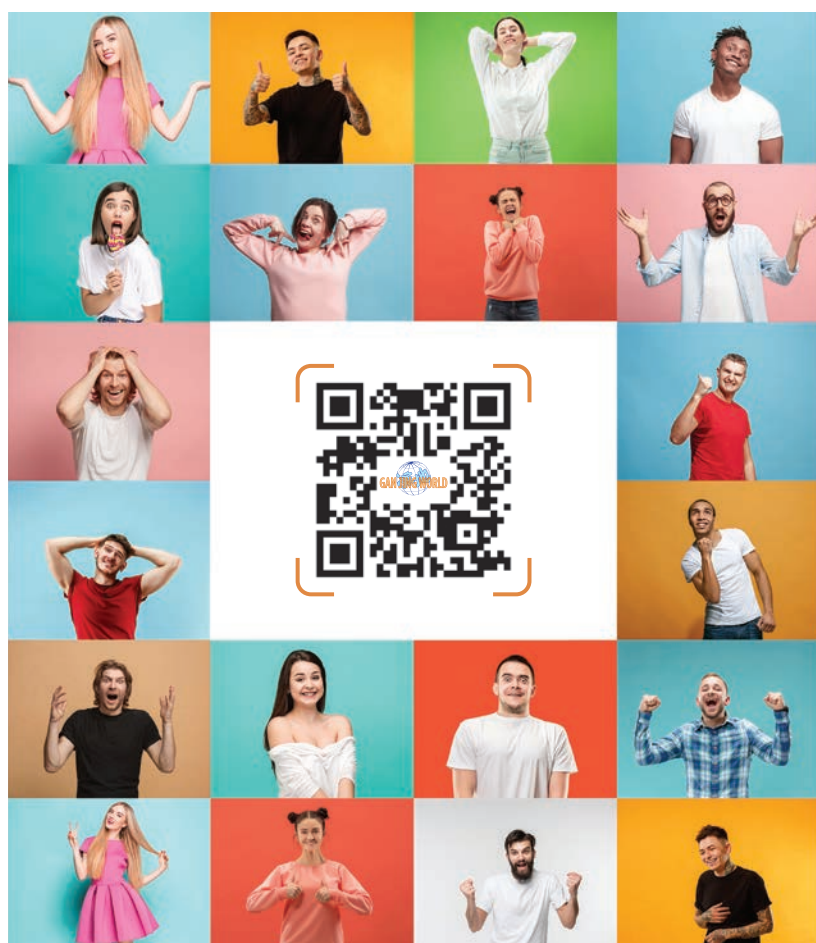
A 30-plus-year writer-journalist, Deena C. Bouknight works from her Western North Carolina mountain cottage and has contributed articles on food culture, travel, people, and more to local, regional, national, and international publications. She has written three novels, including the only historical fiction about the East Coast's worst earthquake. Her website is DeenaBouknightWriting.com



▲ What performers view from the stage is a treat for the eyes: seating for 1,208, slender decorative columns supporting a lavish second-tier railing, and a richly hued and impressively painted ceiling.



▲ Originally, the auditorium was lit by gaslights; these electric glass globe and brass chandeliers are replicas. The curved walnut railings, painted stage frame, and classic red curtain provide guests with a true old-style opera house experience. While two especially large Victorian-style seating boxes once graced either side of the stage (for affluent patrons and dignitaries), they were removed during a 1970s renovation to allow for a more open stage experience.



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