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CELEBRATING FAITH, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY IN NORTHEAST KANSAS

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See inside back cover!

Do you live in a 'miserable' city?

"the more married couples and more homeownership a community has, the less miserable its inhabitants seem to be"

What makes a city miserable? Do you live in one of the most miserable places in Kansas? The website RoadSnacks organized information from the Census and dug deep.

Recent polls reported in the news say that only a third of Americans say they are truly happy. That's too bad, considering that Americans – especially folks in Kansas – don't really have it



too bad, in the grand scheme of things. But with an economy that continues to struggle and news media that seems to focus only on the negative, it may be no wonder.

So along comes a ranking that tries to make sense of it all.

How do you decide if a city is miserable?

Now while the criteria used did not include spiritual health (which is a great determining factor), it isn't a stretch to assume that happier people

■ Please see MISERABLE CITIES page 3

ROYALS GENERAL MANAGER DAYTON MOORE
EXCITED ABOUT FAITH & FAMILY DAY ON JULY 9

FAITH AND FAMILY RETURNS TO THE K!

Dayton Moore, general manager of the Kansas City Royals, has received national acclaim and numerous awards since rebuilding a struggling small-market team into a World Series champion. However, what excites Moore as much as success on the field is seeing hundreds of people make

life-changing decision during the annual Faith & Family Day at Kauffman Stadium. "This event is crucial, is vital to our city," he said. "I encourage you to make this the greatest event in the history of anything we've done here in Kansas City." This year's event is scheduled for Saturday, July 9, shortly following the Royals' 3:15 p.m. game against the Seattle Mariners. It will feature testimonies by players, perform-

ances by Casting Crowns and KI-52 and remarks by Scott Dawson of Safe at Home. As in the past, Metro Voice is a cosponsor. The objective of Safe at Home is to combine "America's favorite pastime with the greatest story ever told".

■ See ROYALS page 4

Communist powerhouse will eclipse U.S. in number of believers

by **Chad Dou** and **Mark Ellis**

Is China a "Christian" nation?

Within 15 years, China should become the country with the most Christians in the world, according to a study.

Fenggang Yang, of Purdue University, predicts that China will reach 224 million Christians by 2030, as quoted in the UK Financial Times.

"By my calculations, China is destined to become the largest Christian country in the world very soon," said Yang, an expert in sociology and author of Religion in China: Survival and Revival under Communist Rule, in the UK Telegraph. "It is going to be less than a generation. Not many people are prepared for this dramatic change."

The explosion of Christianity in China will upend the traditional Christian powerhouses of the world. In 2010, the U.S. had around 159 million Protestants, and many observers say congregations are in decline.

As part of a possible passing of the baton, China is now sending missionaries – especially to North Korea.

"The number of Christians is



extremely underestimated (in China) intentionally because the increase of religion would reflect negatively on government officials," said Yang.

Currently, there are about 100 million Christians in the world's most populous nation, which eclipses the 86.7 million-strong membership of the ruling Communist party, according to the

Financial Times.

Jin Hongxin, 40, is not interested in the political or missiological implications of Chinese growth. She's just proud to attend the mega-church Liushi in Wenzhou,

the city many outside observers call China's Jerusalem due to its flourishing Christian churches.

"It is a wonderful thing to be a follower of Jesus Christ. It gives us great confidence," she said at an Easter service, as reported by the Telegraph. "If everyone in China believed in Jesus, then we would have no more need for police stations. There would be no more bad people and therefore no more crime."

China's churches started experiencing astronomical growth after the conclusion of the Cultural Revolution in 1976. A successor to Chairman Mao, Deng Xiaoping, reformed politics, liberalized

■ Please see CHINA page 2



newsbriefs



Women face the draft after lawmaker's protest amendment backfires

(WNS)--Before the end of May, the House of Representatives likely will take up the next National Defense Authorization Act and with it a controversial proposal to require women to register for the

draft. The author of the amendment said he expected—even hoped—it would get shot down in committee. Rep. Duncan Hunter, R-Calif., drafted the measure as a kind of protest. He wanted to prod lawmakers into taking congressional action to override the Obama administration's recent decision to remove the combat exclusion for women in the military. "It's our families who we represent who are affected by this, and we should give them a say," Hunter said.

"This should not be a unilateral decision made by the commander-in-chief. This should be our decision."

Families sue government for redefining Title IX

(WNS)--Fifty-one families from the Chicago suburbs are saying "enough" to

the Obama administration forcing schools to let boys and girls who identify as the opposite sex use the restrooms of their choice. The families, represented by Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) and the Thomas More Society, filed a suit against the U.S. Department of Education in federal court May 4. The lawsuit claims the department is "continuing to trample students' privacy and other constitutional and statutory rights" in its enforcement of Title IX, a law that prohibits gender discrimination in federally funded schools.

In April 2014, the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) ruled Title IX protections cover discrimination on the basis of gender identity as well as biological sex. Since then, schools around the country have faced threats of having their federal funding revoked if they don't meet the demands of transgender students.



CHINA

continued from page 1

the economy, and opened China to foreign countries.

Then in 1985, a clause was included in the new constitution that promised freedom of belief to Chinese. But the "neutrality" of the party did not cover public meetings.

In that light, a printing company was set up in Nanjing, financed by charity, and has become the largest Bible publisher in the whole, according to the Financial Times.

However, evangelistic campaigns in public are not permitted, and churches are subject to supervision from government agencies. There have also been a number of churches demolished and prominent crosses removed in many



cities across China.

In 2014, a government campaign was launched that demolished Protestant churches in Wenzhou. Before the demolition, the water, electricity, transportation and even phone coverage were cut off in the entire area by government officials, according to Financial Times.

Yang thinks some in the Communist party overestimated the political threat

from the church. Christianity has brought positive changes to China, he said. "Christianity has been overestimated as a way too severe threat," Yang said.

Others see China like the United States in the 1980s when materialism and a booming market economy brought prosperity and contributed to a sense of angst as people drifted from God.

So far, Christianity has brought a sense of belonging and hope to China. In a published Chinese report based on a survey of religious affairs, 69 percent of the Christians started believing because they or a family member suffered illness, according China's Academy of Social Science.

Christianity — once thought of as a byproduct of colonial invasion and the "opiate of the masses" — is now gradually accepted by not only the uneducated and destitute ones but also by those who are more prosperous. According to Financial Times, a survey shows that half of the most affluent people in China publicly believe in religion, and 18% are followers of Jesus Christ.

The expansion of Christianity in China is foreseeable and inevitable, Yang said. Even during the 10 years of the Cultural Revolution during which churches were forced underground, Christianity grew yearly by 15 percent, according to statistical estimates.

"But immense influence is sure to be made — to China, and the whole world — no matter if people are prepared or not," Yang said.

Life Lessons From a Little One

CHALK ART

by Jessica S. Hosman

It was chalk day at preschool. Each of the children were given a square outside where they could create whatever masterpiece they chose. When I picked up my son, many were eager to show off their work. Some drew family members, others drew houses, flowers, pets and cars. And then there was Zechariah who proudly led me to his square. I examined it and, unsure of what I was seeing, asked him to tell me about his picture. Incredulous that I didn't automatically know, he shared that he had drawn the Holy Spirit.



I haven't pondered what the Holy Spirit looks like so I was a bit stunned as he went on to share the simple contents of his drawing. To him, they were simple; to me, they carried a profound message of hope during the tumultuous times in which we live.

The first component was large ocean waves. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you (Isaiah 43:2). Though we can't see Him, the Presence of God is with us always. Even in those moments when all we can see are the crashing waves and all we can feel are the fierce blows, still He is there and He won't let us drown.

Next was a tall mountain. "One which we'll climb," my son confidently shared. When I'm going through a battle, figuratively wrestling with the fierce ocean waves and feeling worn by their weight, I sure don't feel like climbing a high mountain. But according to scripture, we can and we will. The mountain of the Lord's temple will be established as the highest of the mountains... Many people will

come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord... He will teach us His ways, so that we may walk in His paths' (Isaiah 2:2-3).



Jessica Hosman

What is the ultimate path to which we should walk? I believe it's the path of

Christ that leads to life everlasting and ascends to the heavens. In a five-year old's mind, we get to that path by climbing the mountain and then jumping into a hot air balloon. While I don't find that in scripture, is it not metaphorically

speaking what the Lord longs for us all? To soar on wings like eagles (Isaiah 40:31)? To be raised up with Christ, seated with Him in the heavenly realms (Ephesians 2:6)? Maybe it seems impossible to get to that place when the waves are crashing and the mountain is larger than life. But it's truth and it's God's heart for us all. Which is why the fourth component of the drawing ties everything together so well... a rainbow, because "God keeps His promises" (1 Corinthians 1:9).

God promises to never leave us or forsake us, to love us even when we feel unlovable, to be with us through the storms, trials and waves (Deuteronomy 31:6, Jeremiah 31:3). He is for you and not against you. So let Him help you keep your head above the waves. Draw on His strength to scale whatever mountain you face. Soar with Him and let His Spirit help you arise. Perhaps you can't see Him, but I pray this day you'll see through a child's eyes just how real He is and how present He is in your life.

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MISERABLE CITIES

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might not worry about money, are relatively stress free, and have a stable home life.

They used the Census's American Community Survey 2010-2014 report for the criteria, flipped the list, and it spit out the answers.

The organization threw a lot of criteria at this one in order to get the best, most complete results possible:

- Average commute times
- Cost of living

- Percent of married couples
- Percent of home owners
- Percentage of residents with a college degree
- Poverty rate
- Unemployment rates

An interesting anecdote about the rankings. It appears that the more married couples and more homeownership a community has, the less miserable its inhabitants seem to be. It could be that those are two of the most stable components of modern civilization and are seen as the best environment for raising a family.

After they decided on the criteria, RoadSnacks gathered the data for the 105 places in Kansas with over 2,000 people.

They then ranked each place for each of the seven criteria with a score of one being the most miserable (Any ties were given to the larger place).

Next, they averaged the seven rankings into a Miserable Index for each place.

On the flip side, here are the happiest cities in KS, according to science:

- Most Happy:** Mission Hills
- 2nd Most Happy:** McPherson
- 3rd Most Happy:** Leawood

Where does your city rank?

City	Rank	Population	Home-owners	Married Adults
Kansas City	1	147,588	50.60%	40.70%
Oswatimie	2	4,403	59.90%	36.30%
Emporia	3	24,787	44.50%	40.40%
Independence	4	9,282	51.30%	44.70%
Lawrence	5	90,184	42.20%	35.00%
Garnett	6	3,345	60.60%	48.00%
Atchison	7	10,920	59.40%	37.40%
Kingman	8	3,151	52.70%	47.00%
Coffeyville	9	10,034	51.10%	42.90%
Arkansas City	10	12,316	50.20%	45.40%
Pittsburg	11	20,336	39.60%	35.50%
Topeka	12	127,880	50.90%	43.60%
Great Bend	13	15,942	55.20%	49.00%
Iola	14	5,650	51.00%	41.20%
Concordia	15	5,327	56.30%	39.60%
Wichita	16	385,518	54.20%	47.70%
Parsons	17	10,307	50.80%	45.10%
Manhattan	18	55,112	35.30%	33.80%
Baldwin City	19	4,552	60.50%	42.50%
Goodland	20	4,879	44.00%	50.20%
Ottawa	21	12,548	53.80%	49.20%
Leavenworth	22	35,738	44.20%	47.50%
De Soto	23	5,888	51.60%	51.60%
Galena	24	3,022	59.50%	53.50%
Winfield	25	12,324	55.20%	42.40%
Lyons	26	3,748	57.90%	57.70%
Liberal	27	20,846	58.90%	49.40%
Eudora	28	6,152	56.90%	55.30%
El Dorado	29	12,931	51.90%	46.60%
Dodge City	30	27,950	56.80%	51.40%
Hays	31	20,886	50.10%	40.70%
Junction City	32	24,681	40.80%	56.00%
Chanute	33	9,194	53.60%	47.00%
Augusta	34	9,239	61.20%	52.40%
Eureka	35	2,449	58.20%	48.50%
Columbus	36	3,244	52.40%	56.50%
Mariam	37	11,191	51.20%	45.90%
Hutchinson	38	41,946	55.20%	49.20%
Fredonia	39	2,400	55.80%	47.00%
Girard	40	2,779	52.20%	53.70%
Frontenac	41	3,456	60.40%	55.70%
Edwardsville	42	4,367	66.20%	48.60%
Holton	43	3,298	51.90%	50.10%
Wallington	44	9,028	59.30%	52.30%
Salina	45	47,894	59.40%	47.10%
Fort Scott	46	7,957	47.80%	45.30%
Park City	47	7,194	65.10%	52.60%
Staring	48	2,333	56.30%	49.60%
Baxter Springs	49	4,161	57.60%	53.30%
Fort Riley	50	7,444	0.70%	49.10%
Hazwatha	51	3,144	52.90%	50.10%
Mission	52	9,451	46.30%	41.60%
Bonner Springs	53	7,420	61.70%	53.60%

City	Rank	Population	Home-owners	Married Adults
Garden City	54	26,924	58.80%	51.80%
Oswego	55	2,018	66.30%	53.00%
Newton	56	19,144	59.60%	52.80%
Burlington	57	2,648	56.70%	52.30%
Minneapolis	58	2,160	64.20%	60.10%
Tonganoxie	59	4,802	53.10%	58.90%
Ulysses	60	6,010	68.20%	58.40%
Haysville	61	11,235	67.20%	50.30%
Paola	62	5,589	61.10%	57.20%
Anthony	63	2,340	65.90%	53.10%
Wamego	64	4,401	64.60%	54.50%
Lansing	65	11,535	72.20%	47.80%
Lenexa	66	49,573	58.80%	55.50%
Hugoton	67	3,903	70.50%	65.90%
Phillipsburg	68	2,556	63.80%	51.20%
Larned	69	4,044	54.60%	44.80%
Russell	70	4,513	62.50%	55.50%
Overland Park	71	178,945	60.90%	55.50%
Louisburg	72	4,313	63.90%	61.00%
Pratt	73	6,889	56.60%	51.70%
Spring Hill	74	5,618	72.00%	62.80%
Elkhart	75	2,298	56.50%	48.80%
Gardner	76	20,128	65.60%	61.10%
Maize	77	3,984	73.00%	56.80%
Roseland Park	78	6,799	69.30%	42.60%
Elsworth	79	3,097	65.70%	42.00%
Olathe	80	129,913	68.60%	59.10%
Hillsboro	81	2,940	59.70%	45.30%
Abilene	82	6,729	63.80%	54.70%
Norton	83	2,878	66.50%	49.50%
Lindsborg	84	3,473	59.30%	48.90%
Marysville	85	3,301	56.00%	54.10%
Shawnee	86	63,597	69.20%	57.70%
Scott City	87	3,631	72.40%	71.10%
Valley Center	88	6,449	73.50%	55.00%
Fairway	89	3,946	82.30%	46.80%
Clay Center	90	4,280	62.20%	53.30%
Calby	91	5,411	62.60%	51.30%
Goddard	92	4,583	73.40%	63.50%
Clearwater	93	2,525	66.20%	59.20%
Beloit	94	3,927	57.70%	55.90%
Hesston	95	3,621	68.70%	62.90%
Derby	96	23,419	66.30%	58.20%
Andover	97	12,113	75.00%	58.50%
Mulvane	98	6,000	77.20%	60.40%
Prairie Village	99	21,730	75.80%	56.90%
Basehor	100	4,831	76.60%	62.70%
Bel Aire	101	6,923	82.60%	82.40%
Rose Hill	102	4,009	78.10%	62.80%
Leawood	103	32,842	90.40%	69.70%
McPherson	104	13,205	68.50%	59.20%
Mission Hills	105	3,555	95.50%	72.00%

City Manager Jim Colson to speak at C5Alive Christian Chamber luncheon

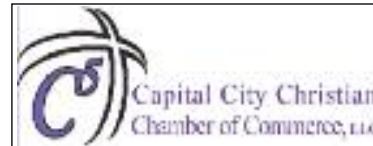
City Manager Jim Colson will be the featured speaker at the C5Alive "POWER" Luncheon June 8, from 11:30 am to 1 pm, at the Gary Clarke Education Center at the Topeka Zoo.

Colson will comment on the status of the community, and his vision for the future. He is expected to elaborate on his previous comments about being in seminary, and his time as a minister before becoming an economic development consultant.

In previous talks, he has discussed the Christian principles he lives by, saying that spirituality is "the most important part" of his life. He has said that he considers his city management employment as a way to serve.

"I'm not in this for me," he said.

The C5Alive luncheon is sponsored by Capital City Christian



Chamber of Commerce (C5).

The cost is \$10 for C5 members and first-time guests who RSVP, and \$12 at the door. Non-members and other guests pay \$15. C5 luncheons

are open to the public and everyone is welcome to attend, organizers said. RSVPs and inquiries can be sent to info@C5Alive.org.

The Capital City Christian Chamber of Commerce (C5) sponsors luncheons on the second Thursday of every month, which are held at different locations around the city. Next month it will be held at the Ramada West, with Barry Feaker of Topeka Rescue Mission as the featured speaker.

C5 members may sponsor luncheons and other events as a way to promote their organizations. For more information go to www.C5Alive.org; C5 can also be found on Facebook: www.facebook.com/C5Alive.

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newsbriefs

Gender is Not a Social Construct

by John Potter | Military Chaplain

I read a story on parenting a few years ago. It was eye opening to say the least.

A mom and a dad wanted to start a family. They wanted to raise their child in a better way than they had experienced. The parents wanted to raise their child to have better choices free from social norms that they considered harmful in our world. This all sounded fine and dandy until I read their plan.

You see, they believe that society imposes certain gender norms on people. And these norms make us



who we are. Biology has nothing to do with it. Boys are wrapped in blue blankets and girls are wrapped in pink blankets at the hospital. We are all hapless victims of circumstance and society after that. Boys play with toy guns and girls play with dolls. This forms us. Boys take wood shop in school while girls take home economics. This determines who you are. All of these social constructs are then forced down on the individual child and that is what makes us a guy or a gal. We become products of our environment and mirror the social norms around us.

The couple has a child and launch out on their parenting plan. From this point on, the story reads more like a strange sociology experiment. They give their child a gender neutral name. They dress their child in neutral clothes, so that it could decide if it wanted to be a boy or girl. They give their child a neutral haircut or hair style, so that it can have the freedom to choose its own gender. You see the parents are just waiting for the child to tell the parents how it wants to be raised, known, and identified. Will the child play with boys or girls on the playground at school? They will stay out of the way until the individual child makes a decision.

This libertine parenting method struck me as very odd. Why would these parents purposefully keep truth from their own child? If there is no truth from mom and dad, what kind of life will this kid endure? What other choices are they leaving up to their child? Why wouldn't they try to help, protect, and actually raise their kid?

A laissez-faire approach to life can only get you so far without dramatic consequences. I am personally grateful that my parents taught me that fire is hot, some snakes are poisonous, and to come in from the rain. That sounds ridiculous, but so is laissez-faire parenting. Perhaps it is best to share the truth with those that we love. Living in the example of Jesus, wouldn't that be a better way?

Part of that truth is that we are made in the image of God. Psalm 139:14 declares, "I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made . . ." Each life is a wonderful masterpiece made by our Creator, the Living God. God does not make garbage. While people may question who they are or why they are here, they always bear the fingerprint of the Master.

God made us male and female. Pointing to Genesis 1:27 is not bigotry, but science. Our DNA is unique from our parents. Gender is determined immediately upon fertilization or when life begins. The 23rd pair of chromosomes will establish the sex of a baby. Biology, not feelings or childhood toys, determines our gender.

We are all called to honor God with our body. This means living in purity. This is accomplished by upholding fidelity in marriage and upholding chastity outside of marriage. We need to be aware of potential temptations and be transparent with those who hold us accountable. This is also where parents need to speak truth to their children. A laissez-faire parenting plan in this arena is reckless and harmful. Teach your kids what is right, don't ignore the truth. Scripture calls us to "present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God" and to be "transformed by the renewing of your minds" Romans 12:1-2. Heaven help us all to live by this standard.

As the bathroom wars of 2016 go on, let us remember to speak the truth to those we love. Let us also remember that parenting is a ministry of the heart that deserves our very best and sharing what we know is never the wrong answer.



China denies violations

(WNS)--Chinese officials are defending their human rights record and lashing out at a U.S. commission that accused the country's communist government of continuing to commit "severe religious freedom violations." The latest annual report from the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) called for China to be re-designated a "country of particular concern."

"During the past year, as in recent years, the central and/or provincial governments continued to forcibly remove crosses and bulldoze churches; implement a discriminatory and at times violent crackdown on Uighur Muslims and Tibetan Buddhists and their rights; and harass, imprison, or otherwise detain Falun Gong practitioners, human rights defenders, and others," USCIRF said of China.

Christian colleges targeted for gender views

(WNS)--Amid pressure from the nation's largest LGBT advocacy group, the

U.S. Department of Education publicly released a list of Christian schools seeking Title IX exemptions over their views on transgenderism (gender confusion). In December, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) issued a report calling for "greater transparency" for religious schools seeking exemptions "under the guise of religious liberty." On April 29, the Obama administration published the results of the



request—placing the spotlight on each college and university seeking to hold true to a biblical worldview on gender and sexuality.

ROYALS

continued from page 1

Moore takes that message to heart, enjoying the team's success without losing sight of what ultimately matters in life.

"The fact that we won the World Series is great," Moore said. "The fact that the attendance numbers at Kauffman Stadium have exploded to an all-time record, that's wonderful. Our TV ratings are the best in all of baseball, in all markets. That's spectacular. We have World Series rings, we have trophies and the world applauds what we have accomplished."

"But what I'm most proud of as general manager of the Royals is this great game, this game that naturally was put inside me, my DNA, the passion to do this the right way. We have seen families united, the joy that it has brought people, the letters and emails that we have received from families that were broken, families that were suffering from hurt and heartache, the generation gap is bridged, the function has begun to be put together because of the success of our team. And that's special."

Moore reflects on how he and the organization have grown since he took over a floundering franchise a decade ago.

"What is special to me as general manager is our entire leadership group," he said. "We began here at an important time, when our families were very young. Our marriages were still very young. It was a high-energy time, personally and professionally. And after 10 years, this group, these families, their marriages are still strong, their kids are doing well. We have had challenges but have persevered because of prayer, because of having things in perspective, because of understanding our No. 1 team is at home."

Baseball can be as much of a mission field and opportunity to share the good news as the pulpit.

"My heroes in this world have always been coaches, teachers, pastors and missionaries," Moore said. "There's no doubt that we have and will continue

to use baseball as a platform to serve, to continue to use our gifts and to try to do our best to glorify God in everything we do. I realize the my importance of my walk with Jesus, and I'm reminded every year how hard it is to be a peacemaker, how challenging it is to be a man of prayer, how difficult it is to be a father and a husband, because I get caught up in the day-to-day grind and the unrealistic expectations I put on myself to be perfect." Baseball was designed to teach humility. Even the best hitters fail two-thirds of the time, and championship teams lose at least one-third of their games. "I am reminded through this game how much I need Jesus of Nazareth," Moore said. "We serve an awesome God; a big God who I know kept me



going. I felt the prayers of the community, and I needed them. I continue to need them."

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Hold on for now

Dear Dave,

My husband was laid off a month ago from a job making \$80,000 a year. We have no debt except our house payment. We owe about \$82,000 on it, but it's valued at approximately \$300,000. We've also got an emergency fund of \$30,000, and I work part-time making about \$2,000 a month while he collects unemployment and looks for another job. Do you think we should sell our home? We've also got a boat that's worth about \$18,000 we could sell.

Sheila

Dear Sheila,

The first thing I want you to do is take a step back and breathe. Yes, you guys just hit a big bump in the road. But the good news is you're in pretty good shape financially to handle things for a while.

At this point, I'd strongly recommend selling the boat over selling the house. Boats are a lot easier to replace than nice homes, and the process isn't nearly as traumatic on the family. You can also dip into your emergency fund a little bit, but for the next little while you need to make sure you're living on a really tight, bare bones budget. I'd love to see you not have to touch the emergency fund, because he's gone out and found at least a part-time position while he's searching for something in his field. I know that's tough to do once you've gotten used to making \$80,000, but there are jobs out there that will help you guys get through this.

As long as he's being diligent in seeking a new job, and you're budgeting and watching what you spend together, I think for now you should keep the house. God bless you both!

—Dave



DAVE RAMSEY
Financial author,
radio host, television
personality, and
motivational speaker

davesays

Refund or better planning

Dear Dave,

Do you recommend having people keep their W2 numbers as close to their tax return numbers as possible, even if they might have to pay at the end of the year or have more taken out? Every year I get a big tax return. But after listening to you I began to think that if I did a better job of planning I would have more money throughout the year.

Charlie

Dear Charlie,

I like your thinking, and you're absolutely right. That's exactly what I recommend people do when it comes to their income taxes. Of course, you don't want to have to pay out a big chunk of cash. But a little number crunching and planning ahead of time can help you avoid those kinds of situations.

You really don't want a big refund, and here's why. If you get a fat tax refund every year, all it means is you've loaned money to the government interest-free for the entire year. Then, at the end of the year they gave it back to you. Some people seem to think Santa Claus has shown up when this happens, and that's completely wrong. You've had too much taken out of your check every payday during the previous year, and then you got it back.

Try to adjust your W2 so that you are hitting within \$100 or so at the end of the year. Then you'll have more of your own money in your own pocket throughout the entire year!

—Dave

Dating and the budget

Dear Dave,

I've been following your plan, and I've finally gotten out of debt and feel I have control of my finances. I'm also single, and I was wondering if you have any tips for how to gracefully mention financial topics and budgeting when you're on a date.

Paula

Dear Paula,

Well, I don't recommend bringing it up on a first date. If I'm a guy on the initial date with a girl and the first thing out of her mouth is about finances and handling money, that's going to be pretty strange.

Now, if the first date turns into another and another and another, then you might start talking about the

deeper things in life and where you both stand. As you start talking about more serious subjects, you'll begin to learn if there's enough of a basis for a real relationship.

But the first date is just sort of an introduction, right? You're both seeing if there's any initial, mutual compatibility. Asking someone how much they make, or where they are on their debt snowball in this scenario is officially weird—even by my standards. In other words, use manners and tact. They may be old fashioned words these days, but in most cases they work well.

—Dave

More of a long-term spending thing

Dear Dave,

I've started my four-year-old on an allowance structure and a chore chart. I also have a mini-envelope system with spending and saving set up, but I'm having trouble helping him distinguish between the two. How can I solve this?

Monica

Dear Monica,

At that age, any type of saving is going to be more of a glorified, long-term spending plan. The point is to teach them to delay gratification when you're first starting out. And when you're only four, two weeks is long term.

The contents of the spending envelope should be kind of spontaneous. Let him take it on trips to the store, and if he wants a pack of gum or whatever, he can get it. The saving envelope, though, stays at home. Then, as he grows and his mind and reasoning develops a little more, you can really start teaching him about long-term goals and how to get there—including giving.

Don't try to force a four-year-old to think five or 10 years into the future. We're just trying to teach lessons here, and it doesn't have to be done perfectly. Just be intentional, and try to find teachable moments as you go along!

—Dave

Don't tithe with credit cards

Dear Dave,

What is your opinion of churches encouraging members to do e-giving with credit cards and debit cards?

Melissa

Dear Melissa,

I'm against debt, so I'm not particularly fond of churches asking people to use a debt vehicle to pay their tithes. I realize that few businesses and organizations distinguish between debit cards and credit cards when accepting payment. However, this practice bothers me a lot when it comes to churches. The Bible mentions debt several times in Scripture, and every time it does, it's always in a negative light. It's not a salvation issue or anything like that, but the Bible basically says debt is a foolish thing.

Now, I think e-giving in itself is fine. But if I were the pastor or on the leadership board, and we had an e-giving process, I would strongly encourage people to use debit cards and not credit cards. There's nothing wrong with a draft or an ACH kind of thing. A lot of people do that and like the ability to give online.

But I don't want a giving situation to your church turn into debt to you. And it does just that when it's a credit card!

—Dave

Don't insure cell phones

Dear Dave,

I just bought a new smartphone. Do you think it would be wise or foolish to get insurance on it?

Lisa

Dear Lisa,

No, I don't insure inexpensive things like smartphones. And if a smartphone is an expensive item to you, then you probably shouldn't have that phone. I mean, there's nothing wrong with having a cell phone if you can afford it. But if you tear up a phone or it breaks down and you can't afford to replace it out of your own pocket, then you've got too much phone!

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How we help: Christian counseling, rehabilitation & support services to establish such individuals in a stable and productive lifestyle; help to find and maintain employment, Bible studies, telephone crisis counseling, and more.

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Daily needs:

- clean clothing items
- non-perishable food items
- paper plates & napkins
- coffee & filters, plastic utensils
- slow cooking liners for soups
- dish soap, aluminum foil
- cleaning items, toilet paper
- 40 gallon trash bags
- stamps

Reconstruction needs:

- double-pane windows
- bathroom remodel
- kitchen remodel & plumbing
- new exit doors
- new carpet
- sidewalk replacement
- driveway repair
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But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream. - Amos 5:24

opinion

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NEW BATHROOM POLICY AN OVERREACH OF REASON...AND TITLE IX



JULIE ROYS

Speaker, freelance journalist and host of radio program *Up For Debate*. She also blogs at www.julieroys.com.

myopinion

Why no school can be forced to follow the transgender bathroom edict

No school has to allow transgender students in the bathrooms of the opposite sex, regardless of what the federal government says. That's according to Matt Sharp, legal counsel with the Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF).

Sharp said President Obama's sweeping directive telling schools they must allow transgender students to use the bathrooms of their choice "violates the clear meaning of Title IX. It also violates Congressional authority, and state authority on this issue. And it violates students' rights to privacy."

Though the president is threatening to withhold federal funding from any school that does not comply with his directive, Sharp said the administration must win its case in court before it can pull funding. However, to date, the administration has lost every court case challenging its transgender directives, except one.

The administration's is attempting to use Title IX as a basis for forcing schools to allow boys in girls' bathrooms and vice-versa. The bottom line is that Title IX explicitly allows schools to "provide separate toilet, locker room, and shower facilities on the basis of sex."

So President Obama's recent directive, and former ones by the Education

Department, clearly contradict the law. Yet, the administration has been trying to re-interpret this law to say something it clearly does not for the past two years.

In April of 2014, the Department of Education issued a document claiming that Title IX's sex discrimination prohibition "extends to claims of discrimination based on gender identity or failure to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity." It then threatened schools with loss of federal funds if they did not conform to the administration's creative interpretation of the law.

However, when these directives have been challenged in court, the Obama administration has lost virtually every time. According to Sharp, there have been six cases in both state and federal courts, which have looked at whether Title IX extends to gender identity. All but one held that it does not.

The one exception involved a transgender teen who sued the Gloucester County School Board in northeast Virginia for denying her access to the boys' bathroom.

A federal appeals court ruled that the Obama administration should be shown deference on its interpretation of Title IX. However, the court did not order the school district to allow the female student to use the male restroom, but instead, sent the case back to the lower court to decide.

So, the issue is far from settled, Sharp says. And, there's no certainty that Obama's decree will withstand the legal challenges it is sure to prompt.

"I think there's still a lot left to be determined on this issue," Sharp said. "And, if you look at what the majority of the courts have held, the clear meaning of what Title IX says, and what a lot of even state attorneys are weighing in on this issue — it's that Title IX means biological sex, not gender identity."

Sharp anticipates that school districts and parents will continue to challenge the Obama administration's directives in



court. One such case is the lawsuit the ADF recently filed against the Department of Education and a suburban Chicago public high school on the behalf of 160 suburban-Chicago parents and students. The lawsuit challenges the decision by the Department of Education and Palatine-based Township High School District 211 to allow a transgender

government," Sharp said. "You can't have an administration going around and completely rewriting the laws on a whim without going through Congress or proper channels."

Eventually, Sharp anticipates that the issue will reach the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS). And, given the court's ruling on several recent cases, he

thinks the court will strike down the Obama administration's mandates concerning transgender students in school bathrooms. In all three of the Obamacare cases, SCOTUS maintained that the administration may not

override existing laws by presidential fiat or creative interpretation, which is precisely what it is trying to do with its transgender directives.

So, rather than capitulating to an overzealous presidential administration, Sharp encourages states, schools and citizens to fight Obama's decree. The law and legal precedent is on your side, not to mention common sense and your children's right to privacy.

— Julie Roys is a speaker, freelance journalist and blogger at www.julieroys.com. She also is the host of a national radio program on the Moody Radio Network called, *Up For Debate*

“There have been six cases in both state and federal courts, which have looked at whether Title IX extends to gender identity. All but one held that it does not.”

student into the girls' locker room. The group contends that the decision "trample(d) students' privacy" rights and created an "intimidating environment." It also claims that the Department of Education's inclusion of gender identity under Title IX is unlawful.

The District 211 case will be decided by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit, a court that Sharp calls "very strong on privacy issues and also on calling the federal government to account" when it oversteps its authority.

"Regardless of what any judge thinks on LGBT issues, they ought to look at this and see this as an overreach of the federal

Still on a journey to being a good father

by Felton Bishop

I had a void in my life when I was born. Although my mother was there and gave me all the affection and love I could want, something was missing. Rather, someone was missing. It was

not apparent to me right away, because I had many people in my daily life who fulfilled my basic needs. As I grew, however, I realized that I did not have a dad around. Eventually, my

mother explained that my father served in the military and was stationed in Panama, where I was born. I was the son of a young woman who entered into a romance with an

American who never intended to get serious. As it turns out, he already had a family.

As a young boy, I felt loved and protected by God. He was always a part of my upbringing as my mother took me to church and taught me right from wrong. I believed God created me, and I felt his presence in my life taking care of me. Even with this knowledge of God, I still struggled inside with this haunting question: Who am I? I spent

a lot of time trying to figure out the answer.

My relationship with God blossomed at age 8. This is when I decided to accept Christ into my heart one



Felton with wife Tamara and son Seth



In Panama, my mother Violeta B. Walker visits with a friend while holding me.

Sunday afternoon at a kid's service at Berean Baptist Church in North Carolina. The interesting thing is that my family attended another church regularly, and I had one of the best Sunday school teachers ever. Mrs.

Ransaw gave me confidence that I could serve the Lord and become whoever I wanted to be. My mother read the Bible with us at home, but it was Mrs. Ransaw who helped me

■ Please see FATHER next page

Teachers Get RAISES, Schools Flourishing After Scott Walker Kicks Out Unions

By Robert Gehl | thefederalistpapers.org

If they care more about students than teachers' unions, every school district in the country needs to pay attention to this:

When Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker gave the boot to teachers' unions, liberals predicted a disaster of apocalyptic proportions: Teachers quitting, slack-jawed, uneducated students meandering down vacant downtowns that closed shop.

It turns out, though, that Walker's "Act 10" may have been the best thing to happen to schools and teachers in decades.

That's because not only is teacher pay up for the best students, but without burdensome union rules, school administrators are empowered to make real changes they need regarding classroom management, EAGNews is reporting.

That means firing bad teachers and rewarding good teachers – precisely what every school across this country should be doing.

In a report done by the Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty, they detail some of the real successes of "Act 10."

One example is the Oak Creek-Franklin School District, where building principals evaluate teachers on "instructional effectiveness, professionalism, and leadership. This has the effect of increasing the pay for the highest performing teachers from \$78,059 to \$88,304," the report said.

When dealing with unions, the collective bargaining agreements contained rules so onerous and odious, it made it difficult to effectively operate a school.

"Before 2011, the rigid collective bargaining agreements made it incredibly hard for superintendents to run their schools how they wanted to, i.e. what teachers to hire or fire, what courses

should be offered to students, size of classrooms, length of the school day, etc.," the report said. "Union collective bargaining agreements also ensured that those teachers with seniority were protected, both with job stability and teaching assignments. And then Act 10 happened. Superintendents could now manage their schools – free of union restrictions."

Free from collective bargaining, school boards are now able to implement much-needed changes.

"In 2011, Oconomowoc School District faced a budget shortfall of almost \$500,000," the report said. "In order to bridge this gap, the district reduced staff by cutting 15 teaching positions by qualification – and not seniority."

"In order to make up for the lost staff, the district offered the remaining teachers a \$14,000 stipend to teach a fourth class. Such a drastic change would have been impossible before Act 10."

Teachers too, are finding an environment where they are given the freedom to respond to concerns and change their teaching style.

"Previously, I did not feel that my individual concerns and needs were important to the union," Michelle Uetz, a teacher in the Prescott district, was quoted as saying in the report. "Now that the path is open for teachers to directly contact administrators, and vice versa, there has been a dramatic increase in teacher input at my school."

"It is important to teachers that we feel heard, and since Act 10, my district more frequently asks for input regarding changes we would like to see in our contracts. It's a more collaborative environment without union politics involved in each detail."

relationships that I have built with other likeminded believers. When I began attending Lee's Summit Community Church, I found a home and got connected. Immediately, God used Pastor Doug Brown and others to demonstrate that men are called to play many roles, and none more important than being a godly husband and father. As I became more involved in the church, I heard about TGIW (Teaching God's Infinite Wisdom) which is a mid-week Bible study to help men grow in their relationship with Christ. Through this ministry, I met men just like me who were in the middle of their own struggles. Not only did they help me, but I was able to minister to their needs.

Another ministry that impacted me greatly is called "Champion Warriors" which was created by Brian "The Bold" Orr. One of the most impactful parts of Champion Warriors is a father/son weekend where the fathers can pour their life into their sons, and help bring healing to anyone experiencing a father wound. This time of affirmation, studying God's word, physical activity and study materials help young Christians grow into warriors. God has put men in my life for accountability, friendship and encouragement. I've reached a point in my life now where I could meet my biological father and be just fine. God can heal all wounds, and I continue learning as I go.

Graham Inspires Thousands; says "No hope for either party"

Evangelist spoke to large crowds at Capitol

Thursday, April 28, 2016, was an historic moment for the Church in Kansas. An estimated 4,300 Christian believers gathered at the south steps of the capitol to noon to hear and pray with Franklin Graham, son of renowned evangelist Billy Graham. It was the nineteenth stop of Rev. Graham's 50-state Decision America Tour 2016. The theme of the tour has been "Pray. Vote. Engage."

Graham proclaimed, "Our nation is in trouble," and said the involvement

"We are more concerned about political correctness than about God's truth and righteousness."

– Franklin Graham

of Christians in politics, at the voting booth, and in prayer is the only hope we have for America. Graham's preaching was enthusiastically received with cheers and applause at many points during the one-hour gathering.

Families with children, businessmen and women, government officials, the elderly—the whole multicultural body of Christ from numerous denominations was represented. Some drove for hours to get there.

Graham led the crowd in praying for forgiveness for national sins, personal sins, and the sins of their fathers. He used Nehemiah's prayer found in the first chapter of the book of Nehemiah as inspiration. He also shared a gospel message and invited listeners to respond by sending a text to his ministry by phone.

Graham said bringing God back into politics is an absolute necessity.

"We are more concerned about political correctness than about God's truth and righteousness," he continued. "America is being stripped of its biblical heritage and God-inspired foundations."

Graham said secularism and communism "are one and the same."

"Secularism is godless. Secularism is taking over our country. Every level of government is secular. It has crept in and taken root," he said.

"The people who do this call themselves 'progressives.' Look at what they stand for and believe. They want to make us a godless country and a godless society," he continued. "If we take God out, He will leave. He blessed us more than any nation on earth, but his hand is being removed and the only thing we can do is pray...and go vote."

Flanked on each side of the capitol steps were dozens of Kansas legislators, though Graham said he was not there to campaign for any candidate except for God. He encouraged the crowd to vote for the best candidate using bibli-



Sunny skies greeted Graham at the Kansas capitol.



Sisters Ruth Williams, Ann DeWitt and Arrie Williams joined the Topeka crowd in praying fervently for America.

cal principles, saying when neither is godly, to "hold your nose," and vote for the lesser of two evils.

After challenging the thousands gathered to pray for America, he asked them to agree to a pledge to honor God at home, in public, and with their vote. The pledge also included a commitment to pray for America, to vote, and to engage in their community.

Many inspiring testimonies have come out of the Decision America Tour stop in Kansas.

Linda Wescott, a rally volunteer said, "During the rally, I felt so much joy fill me, and I have not lost any of it."

Barb Altman was helping to coordinate volunteers that day. She said, "...I have had an irrepensible urge to let others in on the wonderful gift that I now have. I saw that same desire in the Decision America volunteers. The Body of Christ came alive in the shared desire for a revival in Kansas and across the nation!"

Another rally attendee said, "God is calling us to pray and fast and believe Him for transformation. Now is the time to believe that God will do what He has promised."

The weather was pleasant, but with a stiff wind threatening to blow over the backdrop and flags, it was necessary

for two volunteers to stand on each side of the platform. One of these was Sharon Herrmann, a member of Wanamaker Woods Church of the Nazarene. She said from her unique perspective looking over the crowd, "...as Mr. Graham prayed for Kansas... as well as America, it changed the countenance of people's spirit. Eyes were brighter, laughter, hugging of neighbors, handshakes of the crowd. People walked away discussing how to encourage and share the challenge they had heard with others."

Gabriel Alvarado, who pastors Lawrence Life Fellowship in Lawrence, Ks., said he and another pastor would be "ramping up with evangelistic efforts in the near future." He hopes they can be "a model for other churches in Lawrence to partner together in corporate evangelism."

More information about the Decision America Tour and upcoming states is available at DecisionAmericaTour.com. David Epps is the Kansas Field Representative for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and has information on other ministries that are planned as a follow-up to the tour. He may be contacted at 785-221-2788 or depps@billygraham.org.

FATHER

continued from page 6

understand it. God was my Father, and He never let me down. Even when I struggled to follow him wholeheartedly during my teen years, the Lord did not forsake me.

However, even though I had faith in God and had made a decision to follow Christ, I still felt a void in my life. Inner sadness, struggles with anger and poor judgment would arise, even though I was a Christian. I was perplexed. I thought the pain of not having a father around was gone. Those feelings would come to the surface subtly, and the only way that I knew to handle them was to get alone with my thoughts.

God used my mother to tell me it would all work out, but I was learning this was going to be a struggle throughout my life. God began to reveal His plan and purpose for my life; He wanted me a father figure to anyone He would place in my path. Eventually He led me to become a teacher and mentor to young boys. Additionally, I became a father myself, and He gave me the tremendous opportunity to train my own son in the way that he should go with Christ. I am learning that blessing come through the journey as we learn to rely on Him and his unconditional love.

The biggest growth in my spiritual life as a man has come through the



Why Is Summer Camp So Good For Kids?

by **Kevin East**

Summer camp is almost as American as apple pie and baseball. Movies have tried to document the uniqueness of this experience. Unfortunately, I've yet to see one that came close to pinpointing why a healthy week at summer camp is so good for a child.

When I simply take the words "summer" and "camp" and use them in the same sentence, my mind quickly jumps to mosquitos, tents, canoes, smores, and Kumbaya. Sadly, I think most picture the same thing, which falls way short of what a week of summer camp could be.

I realize for many with small kids, the idea of allowing your child to camp can be scary. Over the years, though, I have seen far too many success stories. A child who was scared, fearful or just simply didn't want to be at camp, often turns into the camper who loves it the most. There's a reason for this.

If I had to narrow it down to my top 5 reasons camp is so great for kids, here is what they would be:

1. It's an opportunity to disconnect.

Our culture is loud. I don't mean loud as in volume level. Our culture is loud in that there is all sorts of ambient noise going on all the time. Between school, sports, homework, cell phones, video games, Facebook - to name a few -- kids today can be spread so thin they are ready to break.

When they come to camp, they turn in their cell phones, unplug their music, and begin to breathe deeply again. It is very fun to see kids surprised by a sunset, or in



awe at the sound of crickets at night. Within the first two days at camp, you can begin to see the walls of protection come crashing down.

2. It's a great place to be known.

Most wouldn't admit it, but we all want to be known. When you sleep in the same cabin with 7 or 8 other campers over a period of 6 days, great friendships can be formed. These friendships can become such a support throughout the year as life unfolds.

The relationship with the counselor should be the best one. I continually hear great stories of campers opening up to their counselors and sharing their souls with them. When they do, there is such a sense of relief. They can be known, and loved for who they are.

3. It's a new adventure to be experienced.

Have you ever: played lazer tag in the woods, jumped off a 25

foot high ropes platform, jumped on a "blob" in a pool, or been on the back of horse? Most would say no. These experiences -- done safely -- are priceless. And when a child conquers a new adventure at camp, they quickly store it away as a reminder of their courage.

4. It's a great way to gain confidence.

Even high school students can be scared at the idea of going to camp. I've talked with seniors in high school that were homesick. However, when they get through it and realize they did it, it is great to see what it does to their countenance. When a child does an activity they never thought they would do, they walk taller, as if they've found their new armor.

Being away from their parents, making new friends, trying new activities -- these all help in the child gain confidence as they grow up.

5. They just might be transformed.

This is the main reason why I would want my child to go to camp. I believe God speaks to us through: His creation, His Word, and His people. When a child gets away from home, is surrounded by God's creation, and is taught the Truth of scripture, they could be transformed. I tell the staff of our youngest kids camp quite regularly to take care of our future summer staff.

As a parent, I want to fill my bag full of "tools" to help me

share with my kids who Jesus is. Camp is one of the tools I plan to use.

What do you think? Is summer camp great for kids? Why or why not?

For more blog posts like this on leading, following, parenting, fostering, and family, visit Kevin's blog at www.following-tolead.com.

Kevin East is Executive Director of Ministries, Pine Cove Christian Camps




Cleargold's 8th Annual Worship Dance Camp for ages 5-12
June 27-July 1, 2:30-5:00, 4300 Huntoon
 Cost: \$30. No previous dance training required.

Learn worship dances: expressive & celebratory; dances with streamers, flags, tambourines & more!
 Share with family and friends on the last day of camp!

For more information and enrollment, contact Becky Linquist at belinquist@yahoo.com or (785) 379-9792

"Like us on Facebook at Cleargold Worship Dance"

FREE SPORTS CAMP






Saturday, June 18
9:30 AM-5 PM (ages 3 yrs-6 grade)
 (1/2 day options available)
 Lunch is provided.

*Special appearance by Chief's own "K.C. Wolf"



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 - giving direction for life -

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Members \$100 per week
Non-Members \$115 per week

Dates: May 31-Aug 12
Ages: 7-12

Info and registration packet at www.ymcatopeka.org
 Contact DeeDee Reedy with any questions 785-435-8645




VBS & SUMMER CAMPS

Dare to Dream - Super Kids Super Kamp May 31 - June 3, 8:30 am - 3 pm
Enjoy sports, our trails, and art as we combine them all to have one special week of games and activities, and teach on the life of Joseph!
1st through 6th grade for the 2016-17 school year
Fellowship Bible Church, 10th & Urish. 478-0002

Cave Quest VBS
Cornerstone Community Church, 7620 SW 21st St.
June 6-10, 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.
Register on line at www.cornerstonetopeka.com or call 478-2929.

G-Force - Vacation Bible School - God's Love in Action. June 6th - 10th, 6 - 8:30 pm. Children ages 5-12. A light snack will be served. No charge. High-energy music, interactive Bible fun, super science, cool crafts, delicious food, active games, & more. Call 785-266-6555 or come to the "Big Splash" event on June 4th, 2-4pm. Highland Park United Methodist Church, 2914 SE Michigan Ave

Worship, Arts and Music - or WAM - Camp. 8:30am to noon June 6 to June 10. Susanna Wesley Methodist Church, 7433 S.W. 29th,
For children entering kindergarten through 7th grade. Workshops on bell & vocal music, drama & video production, as well as games, crafts & snacks. \$35. Discounts for families with three or more children. (785) 478-3697 or www.swumc.org/wam-worship-arts-music-camp.html.

"Courageous Faith" vacation Bible school, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, June 13, to Friday, June 17. For children who have finished kindergarten to those who have finished sixth grade. West Side Baptist Church, 1008 S.W. 4th

Kanakuk KampOut! Summer Day Kamp - June 13-17, 8:45 a.m. until 4 p.m. For K-6th grade: Zipline, climbing wall, inflatables and crazy skits!
Other Kamps available for older youth
Topeka Bible Church, 1135 SW College Ave. 417-266-3000
For info or to Register: kanakuk.com/camp-finder.

Vacation Bible School June 13-17 from 6:00 pm until 8:00 pm. Join us as we learn life lessons from Noah. All Divers entering Kindergarten through 6th grade are invited to attend. Register at <https://answersvbs.com/vbs/BETHELBAPTIST-TOPEKA2016/> or call Bethel Baptist at 286.0467. 4011 N Kansas Ave

Free Sports Camp Saturday June 18, 9:30 am - 5 pm (half-day options available)
Ages 3 years - 6th grade • lunch is provided
East Side Baptist Church, 4425 SE 29th St.
Valerie Kampfer: 785-379-9933 • esbcs.org

Submerged Vacation Bible School . Mon, Jun 20 - 24, 6pm - 8pm. For all ages, youth and adults alike. In addition, we will serve dinner each night. To register, call 785-232-5754 between the hours of 9am - 1pm, M-F. This is a free event!
El Shaddai Ministries Community Church, 924 SE Sherman Ave

Egypt Family Experience VBS - June 20 thru June 25, 6:30-8 pm
Dinner available at 5:30 pm; Free family event. Families step back in time at Egypt, exploring the life of Joseph. Kids and adults participate in a memorable Bible-times marketplace. 785-273-2248 - Pre-register at wnaz.org
Wanamaker Woods Nazarene Church, 3501 SW Wanamaker Rd

Cave Quest VBS
June 20 - June 24, 5:15 pm - 8:00 pm; Meal served at 5:15 pm
Faith Lutheran Church, 1716 SW Gage 272-4214

Kids Camp June 20 - 23 at Central Christian College, McPherson
Kids entering 4th - 6th grade in Fall 2016 • Cost \$140
Grace Point Church , 5400 SW Huntoon
(785) 273-4200 or NCOPELAND@GPTOPEKA.ORG

"Jesus Camp" Vacation Bible School from 6 to 8:15pm, June 20 to June 23.
Lowman United Methodist Church, S.W. 15th and Gage
Kids will pick an activity to learn about Jesus: arts & fun, soccer, dance & cheer, and basketball. Pre-kindergarteners to eighth-graders. Call (785) 272-8921

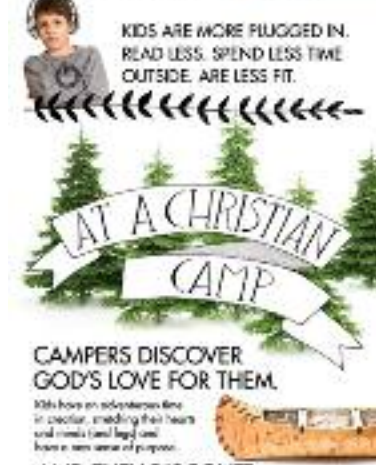
Barnyard Roundup Vacation Bible School July 18-22, 6 to 8:30 p.m.
A light meal will be served. For ages 3 through 5th grade--Join us for fun Bible stories, games, songs and crafts!
Grantville United Methodist Church, 3724 South Street, Grantville, 785-246-3621
www.facebook.com/Grantville-United-Methodist-Church-762787747175075/

Barnyard Roundup VBS; Jesus Gathers Us Together
June 20th - 24th (Monday - Friday) 9:00 am - 12:00 pm
4 years old through those entering 4th Grade
Registration Deadline - June 1st; \$30 Registration Fee
Most Pure Heart of Mary, 3601 SW 17th St. 272-5590; mphm.com

Summer Vacation Bible School - July 29-31
Fun activities for kids on Friday evening and Saturday morning, with a VBS celebration service Sunday morning.
Rolling Hills Christian Church, 4530 NW Hiawatha Place
(US Hwy 75 & NW 46th St.) Phone: 785-286-0601

Topeka Zoo has various summer camps. Call 368-9137

YMCA offers several varieties of summer camps. Call 435-8645



The news and information you want...on-line.
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Why VBS matters

by **Kenneth Conely**

The minds of our kids are so easily distracted by social media, games and Netflix these days. Is there any value in something seemingly as old-fashioned as vacation bible school? When you plan for months and then pour your heart and soul into a week's worth of VBS, you've might sometimes ask yourself, "Is it worth the effort?"

At last year's VBS at my church, I was assigned to work with 5-year-olds, so I started out on Monday morning with nine well-behaved students. But because there was an abundance of 4-year-olds, my class was quickly adjusted.

Five of my 5-year-olds were "promoted" to the kindergarten room, leaving me four of my original students, but then I received 10 more 4-year-olds.

As the week went on, we picked up two more students. Three of the younger boys were pretty rambunctious, and they required constant attention.

With only one other teacher (and an additional one, at times), this did not make for the perfect teaching situation. However, we did have fun, and the kids learned a lot about the Bible and how Jesus takes care of us in all that we do.

But there were still times that I asked myself, "Why am I here?"

The Reason for VBS

VBS is the biggest and best evangelistic outreach event in the life of most churches. Good curriculum is designed so that each day's activities will help girls and boys learn more about God and Jesus. Through Bible stories, VBS encourages children to understand the Bible and apply those Bible truths to their lives, making God's Word both real and meaningful. But VBS also provides many unexpected benefits.

Unexpected Benefits

During VBS, lots of workers are needed, probably more than any other single event at church. Through this one event, teachers and students get to see the church functioning as the body of Christ that it was meant to be. All participants have a different job; all do their job; and in working together, the lives of children are changed.

Men Volunteer

At our church, men who are retired or work alternate shifts are eager to volunteer. This has proven to be a positive thing, especially for our school-aged boys, many of whom do not have positive male role models. Whether teaching, leading crafts, or overseeing recreation, men seem to make an impact on the lives of kids at VBS.

This year, men even organized and ran

our teacher's lounge (where teachers enjoy "snacks" at the same time as their kids, but in a separate location).

New Leaders Discovered

Adults and youth who have never held a leadership role will volunteer for VBS because it is a short-term commitment, and it allows them to work with children on a trial basis. Many excellent Sunday School teachers and leaders of other children's ministries have been discovered through VBS.

New Prospects Discovered

VBS provides an outlet for meeting new children and families in your com-



munity, whether they be unchurched, looking for a new church home, or already church members elsewhere. Every year, it seems that new families are added to our church at the conclusion of VBS. However, follow-up is essential to keep these "jewels" from slipping through your fingers.

People need to know they are needed and feel welcome when they return to your church for other functions.

The Ultimate VBS Benefit

Last year, surveys revealed that over four million children and adult workers participated in VBS across the nation. Hundreds of thousands of children professed faith in Christ. So you see, VBS is not only "worth it," it is essential to the life of a functioning, growing church and community. I came to know and serve Jesus Christ as my personal Savior as a 12-year-old at VBS, so it is extremely important to me.

My prayer is that as long as there are children and summer vacations, there will be VBS and the freedom to attend.

And I thank God for allowing me to do the kind of work I do and partner with Him to change the lives of children now and forever.

"Let the little children come to Me, and don't stop them, because the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I assure you: Whoever does not welcome the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." (Luke 18:16)



Celebrate SUMMERTIME in Downtown Topeka!

Summertime is the perfect time to visit Downtown Topeka! There are many fun places and events to visit, and shopping downtown can also be fun, with all the unique shops and a bit of nostalgia in the air. It might remind you of a time when shopping was more exciting, more personal, and less of a chore. Following are some tidbits from some of your friendly downtown merchants. Why not take a trip downtown and visit them?

Hard to describe...

Have you been in to see Fabtastic Furniture at 628 S. Kansas Avenue? Its an amazing place! It seems owner Renee Herrera always has something new and unique each time we stop in.

It might be something RePurposed, Shabby Chic, Rustic or just something completely amazing. The



store specializes in chalk painting and repurposing, but they also

reupholster and refinish.

The quaint store has both finished and unfinished pieces of furniture. You can pick out the piece you want, she will work with you to design a one of a kind statement piece for your home or office. You can also bring in a piece of your own, or something you have that you never had time to work on yourself and she will finish it for you. Fabtastic Furniture is open Tuesday through Friday 10 am to 5 pm, and Saturday from 11 to 3. Stop in for a fun time. You can also find them on Facebook.

Healthy and Yummy Treats

Shana Cake was born out of the love of the owner for her daughter, Shana, when she had to begin eating a gluten-free diet. As a former high school chemistry teacher, owner Kelly Dempewolf



daughter. After testing the baked goods at the Lawrence Farmer's Market, the family discovered the huge need in the area for not only gluten-free baked goods, but treats and breads that are allergy-friendly in general.

Shana Cake opened the retail location at 435 S Kansas last December and the business has taken off beyond all expectations. The shop has a different selection each day of breads, donuts, cookies, cupcakes and other treats that are free of gluten, dairy, corn, soy, nuts, tree nuts, artificial colors and flavors, preservatives and GMO's. Most of the products can also be made egg-free, which also makes them Vegan, and there are some egg-free/Vegan baked goods each day at the shop. But be sure - you do not need to have special dietary needs to enjoy Shana Cake's baked goods - more and more customers are becoming "regulars" of the bakery even though they have no dietary restrictions simply because the products are delicious and missing all the artificial flavors, colors, preservatives and such!

Special orders, such as cakes, specific flavors of cupcakes or special treats are welcome and orders can be placed online at www.shanacake.com or by calling the shop at 785-408-1272.

knew that it would be important for her daughter to not feel deprived of the delicious things her friends would eat throughout the years.

To keep her from "cheating" and ending up sick, Kelly set out to develop delicious recipes that were safe for her

"Oh my gosh, I had no idea this cool place was here!"

Kymm Ledbetter, owner of Prairie Glass Studio at 110 SE 8th Ave., hears this all the time and is happily surprised when new customers walk through the



doors of her retail and working studio and express their delight.

Kymm would like to invite anyone who has not visited the studio to drop by and experience the summertime magic with hundreds of individually hand-made gifts made out of glass,



especially Kansas-themed gifts. It is also a location for classes if artists are interested in glass work.

A Full-Service Florist, Home Decor & Gift Shop Downtown

Absolute Design by Brenda, 629 S. Kansas Avenue, offers hand-selected flowers and exquisite designs with delivery throughout the Topeka area. They have an expansive line of gifts, jewelry and home decor for all your holiday and year-round needs.

Save \$5.00 by using the coupon on this page!



You can also order or wire flowers 24 hours a day at their website: www.absolutedesignbybrenda.com.

Hair Styling and Day Spa

Irene Redman started Avenue Hair Styling & Day Spa 29 years ago and remains the leader of skilled hair engi-



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SUMMERTIME Memories, Events, & Gift Ideas!

clocks, statues and fine crystal.

"Gifts can start at \$20.00 and go from there," said Mitzi from behind the counter at David's. "We will be glad to help you find that special gift for that special someone."

Antiques and Collectibles

For new and used antiques and collectibles, check out the Downtown Antiques and Collectibles Mall over at 500 SW Harrison.

They have lots of treasures to peruse, and you are sure to find something you've been looking for.

Pancakes and more

Hanover's Pancake House at 1034 S.



Kansas Avenue has been a local favorite since 1969! With a wide variety on the menu, and friendly service, it's a great place to stop for breakfast, lunch or brunch!

Don't stop with this incomplete list! There's plenty more to discover in Downtown Topeka this summer!

Check out these upcoming Downtown Summertime Events!

While you're making your way around the downtown area, check out the progress on both sides of the street -- there are lots of new features! Many of the renovations are well under way or completed. And watch for these downtown events coming up:

NOONTIME BROWN BAG CONCERT - Every Wednesday, Westar Pocket Park, 818 S Kansas, 11am - 1pm.



FIRST FRIDAY COMEDY SHOW "SO U THINK UR FUNNY?" - Jun. 3, 8pm, The Break Room, 911 S Kansas - Take a shot at comedy yourself or just laugh at others! Laugh Lines improv comedy shows pack the house and perform comedy sketches and games based on audience suggestions.

SIDE DISH, GREENS & GRAINS - 3pm to 4:30pm @ Moburt's Spice & More!, 820 S Kansas - Chef Michelle talks lettuce, kale, spinach, quinoa, rice, etc. What makes a salad and how to dress it will be discussed and sampled. Discussions on what to pair with your salad as well. Cost: \$20.00

JOSH GARRETT BAND - Jun. 3 & 4 - doors open 6:30pm; show 8pm @ Uncle Bo's, 420 SE 6th - Louisiana roots and soul!

ART WALK ON FIRST FRIDAYS - Downtown & NOTO arts district. Arts, antiques, fine crafts, many more items.

LIVE TRIVIA DOWNTOWN - Jun. 6, 13, 20, 27 - 6pm to 8pm @ HHB BBQ, 906 S Kansas - Every Monday night at HHB BBQ, teams play for free hoping to get into the finals for prizes. 20 questions (all topics) per night. Public & teams welcome!

CAPITOL MIDWEEK FARMERS MARKET - Every Wed., May 11 thru Oct. 12, 7:30am - 12pm, Corner of 10th & Jackson on the South side of the Capitol Lawn

DOWNTOWN TOPEKA FARMERS MARKET - Saturday's through Nov., 7:30am-noon, 12th & Harrison. The open-air market is full of fresh fruits and vegetables, herbs, arts & crafts, flower, home-baked goods & more.

SOUTH STEPS FRIDAY - May 27, Jun. 10 & 24, 11am-1pm at Kansas Statehouse - Live music courtesy of Reach Out Kansas and the KU School of Music. Enjoy live music and learn about Kansas attractions & organizations.

NOTO BLOCK PARTY - Jun. 3, 5-9pm, 1110 North Kansas Ave. Featuring art displays, live music, food & drinks. Free. Sponsored

by Kaw Valley Bank.

DALE EASTON'S THE DRUNKARD - Jun 10, 11, 17, 18, 24, 25, 7pm, The BreakRoom, 911 S. Kansas. Directed by Karen Hastings. Tickets \$25. BreakRoomDowntown.com

SECOND SATURDAY CONCERT SERIES - Jun. 11, 5:30pm, Downtown Topeka.

TAP GALA 2016 - Jun. 11, 6 - 10pm, Ramada Downtown, 420 SE 6th - This year's theme is superheroes, to commemorate the brave and extraordinary individuals that Topeka Aids Project serve on a daily basis. Enjoy dinner and cocktails, bid on exciting live and silent auction items.

JEREMIAH JOHNSON BAND - Jun. 24, doors open 6:30pm; show 8pm, Uncle Bo's, 420 SE 6th - Bringing some of St. Louis' finest blues/southern rock, Johnson has five albums out currently.

CHINA CIRCUS - Jun. 25, 3pm & 7:30pm, Topeka Performing Arts Center, 214 SE 8th - Award winning Jinan Acrobatic Troupe as seen in Branson, Missouri's, "Incredible! Acrobats of China". Get your family pass for great savings!

CAPITOL MIDWEEK FARMERS MARKET - Every Wed., May 11 thru Oct. 12, 7:30am - 12pm, Corner of 10th & Jackson on the South side of the Capitol Lawn

URBAN SLIDE - July 2, 10am-7pm, 8pm-10, and July 3, 10am-5pm, 9th & Kansas Avenue. A massive water slide event. For info: carnivalguy.com

KANSAS BAND CONCERT - Jul. 2, 7-11:55pm. Downtown Topeka. Free event.

TOPEKA (Downtown) OPTIMIST CLUB - Every Fri., noon, Top of the Tower. Serving the youth of Topeka. Anyone welcome. For info: 272-1099 or fostern60@yahoo.com.

HOLLEY MILITARY MUSEUM - Downtown Ramada Inn. Featuring 5 galleries, named after world leaders. Featuring World War II artifacts, Air Force One exhibit, Kansas War Heroes, Space, Vietnam & more. Cost: Free. 10am-8pm daily.

KANSAS STATE CAPITOL - Mon.-Fri., 8am-5pm, SW 10th & Jackson St. Tours provided. For info: 296-3966 or www.kshs.org/capitol. Dome Tours M-F 10:30am-4:15pm.

neer and spa treatments. Come in for classic haircuts or cutting edge hairstyles. Take a perm to curl your locks or a Brazilian blowout to smooth unruly frizz.

Day Spa services include pedicures, manicures, facials, body wraps and massage. They accommodate individuals and 'girls day' outings. Massages may also accommodate couples. Gift certificates are available. Avenue Hair Styling & Day Spa is located at 630 S. Kansas Avenue.

Diamonds are Forever

You'll find many specials and gift ideas at David's Jewelers, 623 S. Kansas - a family business that has served Topeka for four generations. Diamond rings, pendants and earrings usually top the



list but they also offer vivid colored gemstones in unique settings, watches,

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David's is open Monday - Friday 9-5:30 and Saturday 9-3.
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Many times you will find that dealing with locally-owned businesses will benefit you, as well as the community.

Jim Driggers, owner of The Computer Store, says he offers quick turn-around time on your computer repairs and the most experienced technicians in Topeka.



Most big-box stores send your computer out of town for repairs, and you never even get a chance to talk directly to the technician doing the work on your computer.

"It's the difference between getting your computer back in a few days by us or a few weeks!" Driggers said.

If you need a new computer, The Computer Store will build one for you, with a warrantee, and it will be serviced locally in the store if ever necessary. They have used computers and laptops for sale also.



The Computer Store now also repairs all mobile devices like cell phones, tablets and iPads, including damaged screens. Driggers said the new service is available at a very reasonable price, and has been very well received.

The Computer Store has been in business since 1999, and is located at 21st and Gage in Seabrook Center. You

can reach them by phone at 785-267-3223, or visit their website online at www.thecomputerstoreks.com.

The Computer Store is a member of the Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce, the Capital City Christian Chamber of Commerce and the Topeka Independent Business Association.



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Get Rockstar Detailing without Rockstar Prices

Rockstar Detailing is a family run auto detailing business that was started in 2008 and has been serving the needs of Topekans ever since. At Rockstar Detailing, they make it their business to continually research and find the most effective and beautifying auto detailing products, according to owner Trevon Ewing.

"We will rejuvenate and restore

your car to its original luster and help make you proud of your vehicle," Ewing said. "Whether you have



kids, pets or are planning on some special riding in your car...let Rockstar Detailing in Topeka clean your vehicle to its very best condi-

tion. We promise you will drive away with a smile and come back again!"

Rockstar Detailing is located at Squeaky Clean Car Wash, 2010 SW Ashworth Place, behind Sonic Drive In. You can call them at 554-9302 or visit their website at www.rockstardetailing.com.




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Dolly Parton movie explores faith, family and good music

entertainment

If you're looking for an enjoyable faith-based drama full of heart, love and good music, then you will love Dolly Parton's *Coat of Many Colors*.

Coat of Many Colors tells the story of Parton's big family growing up poor in rural Tennessee, specifically in the summer of 1955, when Parton's mother tragically lost a baby, and the toll that took on Parton and her family.

Sugarland's Jennifer Nettles gives an emotional and profound performance

film411

COAT OF MANY COLORS
STARS: Alyvia Alyn Lind, Jennifer Nettles, Avie Lee Parton, Ricky Schroder, Gerald McRaney, Carson MeyerMiss
WRITER: Stephen Herek
DIRECTOR: Stephen Herek

as Parton's mother, with her father played skillfully by Ricky Schroder. Adorable and talented young actress Alyvia Alyn Lind plays the precocious young Parton. The heartwarming film

is the first in a series of family-oriented projects

Parton signed on to make with NBC based on her life and work.

The next one will center around her iconic hit "Jolene."

Here the classic and inspiring story of how Parton was able to overcome many of the own difficulties and frustrations in her life and continue on to become one of the most well-known country singers of all time. Her story is a pow-



erful and inspiring one, and it makes for an incredible drama, as seen in this made for television film. Alyvia Alyn Lind does a magnificent job in her starring role as Dolly Parton and she helps deliver a sense of authenticity to the film. With the entire production being overseen by Dolly Parton and with her consultation to create an authentic retelling of the true story, it is not a film to miss!

Inspired by Dolly Parton's life growing up in East Tennessee, the movie was released to DVD in May, after its extremely successful original airing on NBC. The program was the No. 1 movie on broadcast television, according to its reported viewership, in six years, with more than 15.9 million total viewers.

The DVD comes with special features, including deleted scenes and a featurette from Parton about the journey of how the song came to life on film and the story behind the tune itself.

Alice Through the Looking Glass

moviereview

By John P. McCarthy

The heroine of "Alice Through the Looking Glass" (Disney) is not Lewis Carroll's curious 7-year-old girl but rather an intrepid sea captain with an entrepreneurial streak.

A young woman who refuses to bend to the will of a patriarchal society, Alice overcomes obstacles in both the real world and the fantasy realm of Underland thanks to her courage, empathy and appetite for risk.

More compelling in theory than in practice, the central figure in this follow-up to Tim Burton's "Alice in Wonderland" (2010), does not contradict Carroll's vision so much as supplant it. Viewed through a decidedly contemporary prism, presumably to satisfy a modern insistence on gender equality, she conforms to present-day social, political and cultural norms.

It's no wonder the resulting picture feels forced and mechanical.

Despite exciting visuals, a talented ensemble, and glittery costume and makeup designs, this 3-D fantasy-adventure is inert -- managing to feel audacious and tediously familiar at the same time. As for its suitability, there are enough frightening action sequences and examples of cruelty to render it inappropriate for young or impressionable children.

In the swashbuckling opening scene, Alice Kingsleigh (Mia Wasikowska) is at

the helm of a ship named "Wonder," racing to elude pirates during a fierce storm. The vessel, we learn, belonged to her late father.

Upon returning to London, however -- the year is 1875 -- Alice learns that her former suitor, Lord Ascot (Leo Bill), owner of the rapacious shipping company for which she's been plying the seas, will evict her mother from their home unless he can take possession of the "Wonder."

After receiving this ultimatum at the Ascot residence, Alice passes through a mirror into Underland, where she reunites with a gaggle of friends that includes the Cheshire Cat, the White Rabbit, as well as Tweedledee and Tweedledum.

Her pals are worried about the Mad Hatter (Johnny Depp), who has grown increasingly despondent over reports that his estranged family was killed by the Jabberwocky. Vowing to help Hatter find out precisely what befell his relations, Alice undertakes a dangerous mission that involves time travel and the pilfering of an essential device, the Chronosphere, from Time himself (Sacha Baron Cohen).

In the course of discovering what happened to the Hatters, Alice learns what caused the rift between the White (Anne Hathaway) and Red (Helena Bonham Carter) Queens. Evidently, the latter's enormous head and volatile temperament resulted from a traumatic brain injury, an event triggered by the surreptitious consumption of tarts.

After completing her task in Underland (and rousing the Hatter from his morbid depression), Alice re-emerges

in Victorian London where she is promptly branded a hysteric and put in an insane asylum. Without the aid of magic, she must find a way to protect her father's legacy and ensure her mother's welfare. When last seen, Alice is embarking on a career that combines seafaring and commerce.

Tim Burton serves as producer but has handed over directorial duties to James Bobin. And so, while the movie has dark shadings, it's not overtly macabre. Nor is it satisfyingly warm and fuzzy, owing in large measure to the two lead performances.

Wasikowska is so adept at projecting stoicism, she keeps sympathy at bay. Alice's limited interaction with the animated creatures -- voiced by the late Alan Rickman, Michael Sheen, Stephen Fry and Toby Jones, among others -- doesn't soften that impression; and she's a formidable presence alongside the seasoned actors playing her live-action adversaries, namely Bonham Carter and Cohen (who, forgive the pun, gets more screen time than his role warrants).

Wasikowska's most significant hurdle is appearing opposite Mr. Depp's distractingly mannered Hatter -- a creepily simpering, elaborately painted, infantile figure. Anyone would come across stone-faced and emotively challenged next to this fey and feckless chap.

Adding to viewer fatigue, Depp keeps recycling the same character, with only minor variations, in film after film -- not even counting his Hatter from this franchise's original.

Screenwriter Linda Woolverton shapes



Anne Hathaway, Johnny Depp and Mia Wasikowska star in a scene from the movie "Alice Through the Looking Glass." The Catholic News Service classification is A-II -- adults and adolescents. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG -- parental guidance suggested. Some material may not be suitable for children. CNS photo

Carroll's diffuse second book into a relatively sophisticated and fairly lucid story, yet doesn't adequately convey Carroll's fascination with logic and wordplay. As much as her script, and other aspects of the production, may gesture toward the bizarre and exotic, moreover, she cannot forgo inserting formulaic epigrams meant to convey salubrious life lessons. It's unclear if they're being offered with any sincerity or conviction.

One has similar suspicions regarding the filmmakers' outlook. Do they think Carroll's foray into surreal fantasy and make-believe is consistent with a Christian worldview?

Could it be that a key image at the cli-

max of "Alice Through The Looking Glass" -- namely, an obvious reference to Michelangelo's "Creation of Adam" on the Sistine Chapel ceiling -- has been included to counteract these niggling doubts? If so, it's unconvincing and only highlights how far this adaptation has drifted from its moorings.

The film contains frequent, moderately intense fantasy action, several instances of cruel behavior, and a couple of mild oaths. The Catholic News Service classification is A-II -- adults and adolescents. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG -- parental guidance suggested. Some material may not be suitable for children.

LECRAE PULLS NO PUNCHES IN BOOK ABOUT UPBRINGING

Lecrae has enjoyed a slow build as one of Christian music's select number of artists that could be considered a household name. His plan—first speaking into the body of believers, then touching the lives of unbelievers, to now, reaching even more minds and hearts with his book, *Unshamed*. This 150-plus page foray into the world of print gives readers an inside and personal look into the life of the hip hop leader in sales, exposure, and influence across all



genre lines. The often private and guarded emcee really opens up in *Unshamed* and paints beautiful picture through a dialogue that almost reads like a movie script.

Lecrae pulls no punches with exposing the harsh realities of his upbringing and masterfully addresses the struggles of being able to maintain his faith and sanity while prayerfully calculating future steps.

Born to a single mother, where his family was often relegated to living on the streets, Lecrae chronicles his experiences with poverty, inner city gangs, drug cul-

ture, violence, abuse, and his own depression. Each story creates context for every song he's written such as, "Outsiders," "Gravity," and "Fear," which come to life through inspirational recollection.

This offering the artist's emotional response to critics and the critical who have accused him of "selling out," turning from God, or changing his music. From the depths of the gutter to the top of the charts, *Unshamed* proves Lecrae is living through and by the Word, and his mission from the start.

— Reviewed by Justin Sarachik

Every child deserves a loving, caring home. A family they can call their own. A place where they belong. With people who will be there for them always.



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Adopt Kansas Kids works to connect foster and approved adoptive families with children throughout Kansas who need adoption. This service is provided by the Kansas Children's Service League through a contract with the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF).

SUMMER IS WARMING UP WITH MUSIC

If you missed Winter Jam earlier this year, and missed the premier of "This Is Winter Jam" in theaters, you can now experience this opportunity, albeit on a smaller scale. "This Is Winter Jam" will be released to DVD June 7. From Word Films, the DVD will feature performances from Skillet, for KING & COUNTRY, Jeremy Camp, Francesca Battistelli, NewSong, Building 429 and Family Force 5.

The film, directed by Nathan Corrona, shows why the tour has been going so strong for over two decades. Going back to the original concert in South Carolina in 1995, with a desire to spread to the Gospel "This Is Winter Jam," follows the history to where the tour is hitting major arenas in more than 50 cities across the country each year.

The film also provides interviews with tour artists, both past and present, fans and crew members.

"This Is Winter Jam" also showcases an exclusive look at "Jam Church," the intimate backstage worship service held each Sunday.

"Beyond the incredible performances from the biggest names in Christian music, this film gives current and new



D.C. Jeanes
Metro Voice
Music Critic

musicscene

fans a compelling glimpse into the lives of the artists backstage, along with the heart and steadfast mission of the tour." - Rod Riley, President & CEO, Word Entertainment.

For more information, visit wordfilms.com or turningpointpr.com.

Skillet has announced details about its newest release, slated for August 5. The album, titled *Unleashed* is available now for pre-order on iTunes, Google Play, and Amazon. The first single, "Feel Invincible," is currently streaming on YouTube, but can also be downloaded with the pre-order of the album.

Casting Crowns has also announced a new album, slated for September 16. The multi-platinum selling and GRAMMY® winning group will be releasing their eighth studio album,



15th release overall, titled *The Very Next Thing*.

"We are all in different stages of 'next.' There's a next step from where you are right now. We all feel like there's a stage that we have to reach to move on to what is next" singer Mark Hall says of the new album title, "but God has you right here right now for your 'next,' and all of these songs touch on that idea."

Chris Tomlin, Newsboys, Passion, Big Daddy Weave, Blanca, The Afters, Building 429 and Jordan Feliz have all been announced as performers 2016 K-LOVE Fan Awards. Presenters for the show will be KING & COUNTRY, Steven Curtis Chapman, World Series Champions Kansas City Royals' GM Dayton Moore, Chicago White Sox First Baseman Adam LaRoche, Matt Maher, Casting Crowns' Mark Hall, comedian Michael Jr., University of

North Carolina Head Women's Basketball Coach Sylvia Hatchell and War Room's Alex Kendrick. The 2016 K-LOVE Fan Awards will premiere live from Nashville's Grand Ole Opry on June 5, hosted by Elisabeth Hasselbeck and Matthew West.

Fans can also get involved in the K-LOVE Fan Awards Ultimate Fan Experience Weekend, which will include the New Faces Showcase, Songwriters Showcase and a Sunday Worship Service with Casting Crowns and Passion. To vote among the latest nominees, visit klovefanawards.com/vote, and for a full list of events for the weekend, visit klovefanawards.com/schedule-events.

Switchfoot and Relient K have announced a joint fall tour, they are calling the Looking For America Tour. In support of Switchfoot's upcoming album *Where The Light Shines*



Through (slated for July 8 release) and Relient K's *Air For Free* (July 22). Switchfoot and Relient K will be performing at the Uptown Theater in Kansas City on Tuesday, September 20, 7:00 PM. Presale tickets and VIP upgrade options are available through switchfoot.com

Twenty One Pilots confounds secular critics, shows Gen-Y & Z a way to faith

Top ten Christian band Twenty One Pilots declared its musical manifesto three years ago in the song "Car Radio," "I will try with every rhyme to come across like I am dying to let you know you need to try to think."

Twenty One Pilots' hit "Stressed Out" is currently played on secular radio stations across the country and in Europe, and the duo is selling out concerts at every venue. Even though they are open about their faith, the band continues to sneak like a hacker through the world's default gospel-rejection mechanism. While the dialectic voice confuses secular reporters, the message of salvation carries through to their listeners.

"When I first listened to their music I was like, I'm not alone. I thought I was the only one," wrote Mattie on a fan site in August 2015. "Twenty One Pilots really did save my life in more ways than one."

Twenty One Pilots is a genre-melding duo composed of vocalist Tyler Joseph and drummer Josh Dun, both 27-year-olds from Ohio. They attended Five 14 Church (as in Matthew 5:14 — "You are the light of the world") in New Albany, just outside Columbus. Josh now lives in Los Angeles.

The band was formed when Tyler ditched basketball in the eleventh grade to become a musician. He tore through learning piano to bass and ukulele.

"I had identity issues. I didn't like being the guy who played sports," he says in a YouTube interview. "So I set up a microphone and a little studio. My mom's trying to do the dishes and she hears her son screaming his head off down in the basement trying to record vocals, and she's gotta be thinking, 'What the heck is going on with him?' So they were really confused."



Tyler's crazy dream is today paying big dividends, not just in terms of downloads and crowds, but also in terms of souls.

Their angst-riddled lyrics are resonating with Gen-Y'ers and Gen-Z'ers, showing them a way to hope and faith.

While "Stressed Out" is an innocuous ditty about young adults yearning for the carefree days of childhood, other songs on their two albums — *Vessel* and *Blurryface* — pack plenty of gospel punch.

The duo signed with a secular label (Fueled by Ramen) and gets played mostly on non-Christian radio. But make no mistake. Though subtle at times, they are unequivocally Christian.

In the "Holding on to You" video, Tyler escapes the clutches of zombies. "I'm taking over my body, back into control. It seems a lot like flesh is all I got. Not any more, flesh out the door. I must've forgot, you can't trust me... You should take my life. You should take my soul."

Sinners who consider suicide when lonely at night are encouraged to "fight it. Take the pain, ignite it. Tie a noose around your mind loose enough to breathe fine. Tie it to a tree, and tell it,

"You belong to me. This noose is just a leash. You must obey me."

The language is just the type of poetry this generation relates to, but it's also unadulterated Bible message. The song hails from Jer. 17:9: "The heart is deceitful about all things and desperately wicked. Who can understand it?"

Tyler is giving a modern voice to Pauline doctrine. The song echoes the Roman longing for freedom from fleshly desires, and Tyler breathes new life into Paul's paradox that death to sin is life in Christ and freedom from sin is obedience to Christ.

In "Heavydirtysoul," Tyler says, "Death inspires me like a dog inspires a rabbit. Can you save my heavy dirty soul?"

And in "Car Radio," the singer exposes how sinners deaden internal pain with meaningless lyrics put to a catchy tune.

"There are things we can do, but from the things that work there are only two. And from the two that we choose to do, peace will win and fear will lose," Tyler sings.

"There's faith and there's sleep. We need to pick one please because faith is to be awake, and to be awake is for us to

think, and for us to think is to be alive. And I will try with every rhyme to come across like I am dying to let you know you need to try to think."

Not every Christian is going to appreciate the poetry. After all, it's not exactly praise and worship.

"Josh and Tyler's music has really had a positive influence on the way I view myself and my depression," Carlynn wrote on a fan site in 2013. "I've never heard songs about mental illness before that are obviously trying to make a change in the listener's life, and listening to their songs make me feel empowered, not more sad. Their music also made me realize I'm not alone."

Interviews with secular media can be misleading when it comes to Twenty One Pilots. Tyler tells reporters that his songs are born from true insecurities, and they take him at face value.

The dark makeup on his hands and neck on his current concert tour, Tyler says, represents the oppressive insecurities he feels. More likely, it represents sin as part of the *Blurryface* persona he's adopted as his Romans 7 alter ego.

"We're always questioning things," Josh told *Rolling Stone*. "But it's safe to say that we're both Christians."

Of the two, Josh came from a stricter Christian household — and he rebelled more as a teenager. "My parents almost sent me to a military school," he told *Rolling Stone*. "They didn't know what to do with me, and I was always in detention. I never got into drugs or alcohol, but I would yell at my parents and just treat them terribly. Everything was an argument. Looking back, they were trying their best."

A turnaround in his relationship with his parents came when he moved out and he shared some time with his

dad. "I said to my dad, 'Are you disappointed that I'm working a minimum-wage job and I didn't go to college?' I'll never forget his response.

He said, 'It's not about how much money you make or what your job is, but it's more about your character. For that, I'm proud of you.' It gave me motivation."

Twenty One Pilots built their fan base by hawking tickets at a Chick-fil-A in the Polaris Mall food court in Columbus, Ohio. Their songs — a catchy mix of rap, reggae, pop and ukelele — confounded radio station formats and originally didn't get much airtime.

This year, *Blurryface* reached #3 in album sales nationwide, and the group nearly sold out two concerts at Madison Square Garden.

Critics are scratching their heads about the band mates. Some have wanted to see a similitude with Eminem's struggle with demons. But Eminem's "Demon Inside" is darker and finds no hope.

When a YouTube interviewer probed if Tyler was being overly self-critical when he called himself "messed up," the young star dipped deep into the reasoning in the Book of Romans.

"I know I'm messed up. I think to myself I should be able to control myself," Tyler responded.

"I look at a lamp and I decide that I'm going to stand up and not hit that lamp. Why can't I make decisions like that about everything in life. I'm not going to get angry at my brother. I want to be the best brother. Why can't I do what I want to do? That's messed up. Something is broken in the way we live. It's proof that something is not right."

The heavy reliance on the Bible was apparently lost on the interviewer. That's okay because the message is connecting with the youth.



How Do I Know If My Parent Needs Home Care?

By Carol Bradley Bursack

Most of us want to take care of our own families, so arriving at a decision to hire a stranger to come into the home to help with the care of a loved one can be difficult.

Still, once people find a good agency and regular caregivers to help provide care, they often wish they'd taken action earlier.

Is this the best option?

It is a logical first step for someone who needs help for a few hours a day or when the family caregiver is at work or otherwise unavailable. It is also a good choice for elderly spouses, when bathing and other heavy work is involved. Helping with the heavy lifting, while the spouse offers emotional support, is generally a workable option that helps people remain in their homes for a longer period of time.

Even the government is getting wise to the benefits that in-home assistance offers. Funding, including VA assistance for veterans, is getting more attention as our aging population needs care. Government agencies are also waking up to the fact that people staying at home longer is cheaper than if they go to a nursing home as soon as they need assistance.

Questions to ask the agency

Here are some questions to ask a potential home care agency:

- Is the agency licensed and bonded? Does it provide insurance for their employees, often known as worker's compensation? These requirements vary by state.

- What services are available? You

may only want bathing and grooming services, or you may want someone for several hours of companionship and help with errands. Everyone is different in their needs. Some agencies only offer specific blocks of time, while others are more flexible.

- Will more than one person come to my loved one's home? Be realistic in your expectations, but the care agency should be able to provide the same people on a rotating basis so you and your loved one can become familiar and comfortable with them.

- What happens when the caregiver doesn't show up? Everyone gets sick and you wouldn't want a sick person coming to the home. Is there backup staff available? This is where rotating with a couple of different people is beneficial.

- Are they specially trained to work with Alzheimer's or dementia patients? While you may find an agency from time to time that specializes in only dementia patients, unfortunately, that is not the norm. However, agencies are increasingly aware that they need to train their employees to work with these patients. You should ask what they offer if you specifically want care for someone with Alzheimer's. You may even want to ask for certification or at least some evidence of this training in the form of references.

What are the costs?

- A big question, of course, is how much do services cost? The rates will be different depending on your community, however the charges will vary depending on the level of care your loved one requires and where they live.

Some agencies may charge different rates for different services. You need to get this information up front.

- What is the screening process for candidates? You want to know the agency does a thorough background check and that the person can be bonded and licensed. This also eliminates the problem of hiring someone who may have a criminal past. An agency should be ready and able to provide this information as well as their certification status. Also ask for references and check them.

- What are the payment options, and is there any financial help available? The agency should be versed in what payment help is available to their clients. Many long-term care insurance policies help pay for these services, although those funds would come from the patient. However, if the patient is on Medicaid, in some areas this program will pay for a specific amount of care. Ask the agency for payment options and help in exploring available subsidies. Knowing what is available in your community is part of their job.

- What if my elderly parent doesn't like a certain aide? This happens, and the agency should be willing to offer different people for you to try. Again, be realistic. Your elder may just be mad about getting outside care and refuse to "like" anyone who comes to help. They may even refuse to let someone in the house. Tell them that help is necessary, but that you are flexible about who is chosen to provide it. However, if there is one specific person who rubs your elder the wrong way, you should check



with the agency and let them know your elder seems to have negative feelings about that person.

- Does the home care agency provide medical services for physical therapy? Most in-home agencies offer what is called "custodial care." Custodial care is non-medical care such as bathing, making snacks, running errands and providing companionship. However, some agencies provide medication services, shots and other nursing duties. For this, they would need a skilled nurse. If your elder needs medical attention from an in-home service, you may want to look specifically for an agency that provides both types of care. Physical therapy in the home would be ideal for many elders. Unfortunately, that is still difficult to find, but not impossible. In-home therapy is a growing field. Depending on your loved

one's needs, you may need to combine agencies.

- What if I want to hire an independent caregiver to come in? That may work well. It does for many people. Be aware that you will assume all employer responsibilities or work on a contractor basis. You should do your own background check unless you know the person you hire very well.

In-home care can be a very satisfactory way to help our elders stay in their own homes longer. Be sure to check independent professionals or agencies carefully. Ask for references and check them. Ask the questions above and any others you may have. You are hiring these people to care for a vulnerable loved one, so choose carefully, keep an eye on things, and enjoy knowing that you don't have to do it all alone.

Medicare Tips for Boomers Turning 65

If you were born in 1951, Harry Truman was President, I Love Lucy premiered on TV and in 2016 you will be turning 65 to become eligible for Medicare. Here are a few things you should know when it comes to Medicare.

1. There is a 7 month window for you to enroll in Medicare Part A and Part B.

- 3 months before you turn 65.
- The month you turn 65.
- And 3 months after

*If your birthday is 08/05/1951 you can sign up starting May 1st and no later than November 30th.

2. You do not have to sign up right now.

- Many people get Part A without any premium if they or a spouse worked and paid taxes.

- Part B has a premium, if you have access to insurance from an

employer or union you may be able to delay getting your Medicare. Speak with a human resources or benefits manager to find out.

3. You have two basic options once on Medicare.

- Option 1: you can get Original Medicare (Part A and Part B) with a stand-alone drug plan and a Medigap plan.

- Option 2: you can get a Medicare Advantage plan (also called part C).

- Original Medicare is run by the government and advantage plans are run by private companies that are contracted with the government to offer you coverage.

- Advantage plans have to provide the same benefits of original Medicare and may include other benefits like Part D

4. Be aware of the gaps.

- Original Medicare does not cover everything. Generally it covers 80% of your medical costs and does not cover prescription drugs.

- If you want drug coverage you may want to consider purchasing a Part D Plan. Some people purchase Medigap plans to help them with the 20% they are responsible for.

- Additional coverage may not be needed or available with an advantage plan

5. Extra Help.

- Many people are eligible for extra help with their Medicare cost and don't even know it.

- Extra help can help lower your medical and prescription costs.

- To see if you are eligible contact your local Social Security office or call 1-800-772-1213. You can also go online at <https://www.ssa.gov/>

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SOCIAL SECURITY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

GENERAL

Question:

I was told I shouldn't be carrying my Social Security card around. Is that true?

Answer:

We encourage you to keep your Social Security card at home in a safe place. Don't carry it with you Even if you're going to new job or to meet someone who needs it, all they really need is your number—not your card. Identity theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in America, and the best way to avoid becoming a victim is to safeguard your card and number. To learn more, visit our Social Security number and card page at www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber.

Question:

My husband and I are both entitled to our own Social Security benefits. Will our combined benefits be reduced because we are married?

Answer:

No. When each member of a married couple works in employment covered under Social Security and both meet all other eligibility requirements to receive retirement benefits,



lifetime earnings are calculated independently to determine the benefit amounts. Therefore, each spouse receives a monthly benefit amount based on his or her own earnings. If one member of the couple earned substantially less than the other or did not earn enough Social Security credits (40) to be insured for retirement benefits, he or she may be eligible to receive benefits as a spouse. To learn more, visit www.socialsecurity.gov/retirement.

RETIREMENT

Question:

How do I return to an online application for retirement benefits that I already started but didn't finish?

Answer:

You should have received a "Re-entry Number" when you initially

started the application. You'll need the "Re-entry Number" to get back into your application.

Follow these steps to return to your application:

- 1) Go back to the online application at socialsecurity.gov/retire/apply.html
- 2) On the first page of the application, click on "Return to Saved Application Process."
- 3) Enter your "Re-entry Number" and Social Security number. You will be able to continue completing your application.

For more information, visit www.socialsecurity.gov.

Question:

What is full retirement age?

Answer:

Full retirement age is the age at which a person may first become entitled to full or unreduced retirement benefits. Your full retirement age depends on your date of birth. For people born before 1938, it's 65. For those born after 1959, it's 67. If your birthday falls between 1938 and 1959, your full retirement age is between 65 and 67. (The age for Medicare eligibility is 65, regardless of when you were born.) For more, go to socialsecurity.gov/planners/retire/retirechart.

html.

DISABILITY

Question:

How long does it take to get a decision after I apply for disability benefits?

Answer:

The time it takes to get a decision on your disability application can vary depending on:

- The nature of your disability;
- How quickly we can get your medical evidence from your doctor or other medical source;
- Whether it is necessary to send you for a medical examination; and
- Whether we review your application for quality purposes.

If you would like to apply for disability benefits, you can use our online application.

Applying online for disability benefits offers several advantages:

- You can start your disability claim immediately. There is no need to wait for an appointment;
- You can apply from the convenience of your home, or on any computer; and
- You can avoid trips to a Social Security office, saving you time and money.

For more information, go to www.socialsecurity.gov/disability.

Question:

Why is there a five-month waiting period for Social Security disability benefits?

Answer:

The law states that Social Security disability benefits begin with the sixth full month after the date your disability began. You're not entitled to benefits for any month prior to that. Learn more at our website: www.socialsecurity.gov/disability.

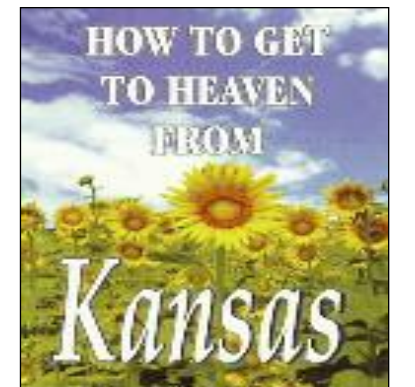
SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME

Question:

My grandfather, who is receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI), will be coming to live with me. Does he have to report the move to Social Security?

Answer:

Yes. An SSI beneficiary must report any change in living arrangements within 10 days after the month the change occurs. If the change is not reported, your grandfather could receive an incorrect payment and have to pay it back, or he may not receive all the money due.



More important than living in KANSAS is where you will live forever. Just as you would look at a map of KANSAS to find your way, so you must look at the Bible to find your way to heaven. The Bible says, "Narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matt. 7:14). Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (Jn. 14:6). Jesus is the only way to Heaven and He gave these directions on getting there.

1. Realize you are a sinner. Everyone starts the same place spiritually. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of god." (Rom. 3:23). Sin's penalty keeps you out of Heaven and condemns you to Hell, separating you from God. Romans 6:23 says, "The wages of sin is death." Sin brings both physical & spiritual death. "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." (Rev. 20:14).

2. Realize Jesus paid the penalty. Jesus Christ's death, burial, and resurrection provided a way for you to go to heaven and restore your relationship with God. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8). Since Jesus, God's Son, was the only One who could pay for our sin, He is the only Way to Heaven.

3. Repent of your sin and receive Jesus as your Savior. In order to go to Heaven from KANSAS, or anywhere else, you must accept Christ by calling on Him in prayer. He tells us in Romans 10:13, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Use the following prayer, or one similar to it, to receive Him now:

Dear Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner. I believe that you died and rose again for me. Please forgive me of my sin, become Lord of my life, and take me to heaven when I die. I am trusting you completely, and in nothing I can do. Thank you Jesus! Amen.

senior news/events briefs

HARVESTER'S PROGRAM FOR SENIOR CITIZENS - every second Saturday, at Christian Lord Ministries, 2421 SE California. Call 266-4979.

VIP LUNCHEON FOR SENIORS – Every Fri., Noon, North Topeka Baptist Church, 123 NW Gordon. FREE lunch with Christian fellowship, devotions & entertainment provided by Topeka North Outreach. For Info: 286-1370.

MEDICARE MONDAYS – First Monday of every month, 1-3pm. Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library (Menninger Room 206), 1515 SW 10th. Senior health insurance counseling. For info: 580-4545 or nhonl@tscpl.org

MEDICARE EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR - Jun. 14 & 28 6:30pm. Learn the basics of Medicare and all of its options. Seminars are designed for those becoming eligible for Medicare as well as those considering making a change during open enrollment. Seminars will be held at Century Health Solutions, a division of Stormont-Vail Healthcare, 2951 SW Woodside Dr. Information: 233-1816 or info@century-health.com. Light snacks & beverages provided.

SENIOR RESOURCE FAIR - May 5, 10-2., Fairlawn Plaza Mall. Meet with professionals to learn about senior living options and care choices. Register to win gift cards. Free. Sponsored by Topeka Area Continuity of Care.

GRANDPARENT/RELATIVE CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP – 3rd Tue., 6:30-8pm, 2nd floor meeting room, St. Francis, 1700 SW 7th. Join for support, information, etc. For info: Sharla, 286-2329; Jennie (English/Spanish) 231-0763

LIFEFEEST – First Thu. of the month, 10am-12:30pm, Covenant Baptist Church, 5440 SW 37th St. Notice: Seniors ministering to seniors – celebrating

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sports



FAITH JOURNEY

by Ben Crane

I grew up in a loving, Christian home and because of my love of the game of golf, it wasn't long before golf became my god. Like most kids who grow up in a Christian home, I began to doubt my faith and experience other things when I got out on my own in college. I knew that God should be more of a factor in my life, but I was busy trying to be a great college golfer and pursuing other things. I soon realized that I could either try to do life on my own strength and abilities or I could live life with God's help and grace. I had seen what going at it alone had done for me, a life full of selfishness, pride, and a feeling of never being satisfied. I was always chasing the next thing that was supposed to make me happy.

I met my future wife, Heather, and as our relationship grew, we decided to start pursuing our faith together. Part of God's perfect plan for my life was placing an amazing man, Pastor Ron Mehl, in my life, who started to mentor and disciple me. During the final years of his life as he was losing his battle with leukemia, he took the time to teach me many important truths that have shaped the man I am today. Pastor Ron showed me the love of

Christ by the way he just deeply cared for and listened to me. He didn't see the flaws in me, he saw the man that I could be, a follower of Jesus that could live a fruitful life that mattered. That's how God sees us through the person of Christ, he sees us for all of our potential.



My golf career took off and I made the PGA TOUR after playing the mini-tours and Nationwide for only 2-1/2 years. As a rookie on the PGA TOUR, I instantly felt accepted by the PGA TOUR bible study, led by Larry Moody, and the other believers on tour. However, things quickly started to unravel for me as the weaknesses in my game became exposed amidst the pressure and competition on the tour. I

missed 5 cuts in a row and finally the last tournament before my wedding to Heather, I focused on a book that Pastor Ron wrote called A Prayer that Moves Heaven, about praising God in the tough times, when your circumstances aren't what you wished them to be and remaining thankful as you stand on God's promises alone. I finished 2nd that last weekend before our wedding and I was very grateful that God chose to bless and encourage me in such a special way, but it also made me realize that God has called me to the PGA TOUR, to teach me and train me and help me to use my gifts to glorify him. God is in it each day, over each shot, He is the one who makes up the difference in my game to allow me to succeed.

I am currently in my 14th year on tour. God has taught me so much, brought me through all the ups and downs. There have been seasons of great success on the course and great struggle, including debilitating back pain where I thought my career was over. Through it all, God always has something to teach me. Looking back, his plan has been perfect. God has blessed me with an incredibly supportive wife and amazing children. We are honored and grateful to have a life filled with so much purpose as we desire to use this platform to be an encouragement to others. So many great friends and leaders in the faith have poured into me, encouraging me along the way. I have learned to live in the present, embrace the day and what lies ahead, and to rely on Jesus and his strength because that is when I am my best. I focus on scripture when I play and the devotional that we created has given me such life on the course. James 4:10 says, "when you bow down and admit your dependence on me, I will lift you up and give you honor." That has really rung true in my life — as my dependence grows on Christ, my strength increases.

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Call 273-4141 for registration form



Small-Scale Home Upgrades with a Big Impact

(Family Features) When it comes to remodeling, there are dozens of ways to improve your home's overall value and appeal without breaking the bank. Opt for projects that are manageable in scale, affordable and deliver benefits in multiple ways, such as aesthetics and energy efficiency.

Outdated or dingy doors, or doors that don't reflect the style of the rest of the home and landscape can drag down your home's appeal. Not only can a new door add character and brighten the overall aesthetic, freshly hung doors – whether at your entry or garage – come with the added benefit of new sealing. That translates into greater energy efficiency and savings on heating and cooling bills.



Take a fresh approach to lighting

Increasing the amount of natural light and fresh air that enters your rooms can transform spaces, making them seem larger, more airy and extra inviting. Skylights are a surprisingly affordable upgrade for the functionality and aesthetic benefits they provide. In areas where wall windows aren't practical or desirable, such as master closets or baths where privacy is paramount, skylights provide an ideal solution.

Give your lighting and home value a boost with an Energy Star-qualified option such as Velux solar-powered fresh-air skylights, which let you adjust natural light and air flow, reducing dependence on artificial lights and fans, with the touch of a programmable remote control. For expanded control over the amount of light and warmth that enters or leaves your rooms, solar-powered skylight blinds are available in designer colors and patterns. Like the skylights, Velux solar-powered blinds are operated with the remote. The solar products and installation costs are also eligible for a 30-percent federal tax credit. Learn more at whyskylights.com.

Expand livable space outdoors

A backyard oasis that expands your property's living area is a smart investment, no matter what climate you call

home. This is one project that can scale up quickly, but it need not grow to extravagant proportions to make a noticeable difference in your home's value and appeal and offer a nice return on investment. Some lush vegetation and cozy seating around a focal point, such as a fire pit, is a simple but effective entry point. As budget allows, additions like outdoor kitchens, water features and more abundant vegetation lend even greater impact.



Whether you're looking to make improvements for your own enjoyment or seeking ways to enhance your home's appeal to potential buyers, there are simple but effective options that allow you to make a meager investment for a great impression.

Ditch uninviting doors

From the curb, doors can have a significant bearing on your home's overall appeal.

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June Clearance Days at Jackson's

Annette's Tip:
 All the recent rain has refilled ponds and lakes, but gardening has been difficult. There is still plenty of time to plant tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, cantalope, squash, watermelon, sweet potatoes, eggplant and more. Bagworms are hatching and ferlome produces both great organic spray and fast acting insecticides as well. If rains continue throughout June, your lawn will need to be treated with ferlome F-Stop to prevent Brown Patch in your lawn. Remember, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!

June Clearance Special

June 1-15: Mix & Match Annual Flat Special - Buy 12 4-paks (48 plants) for just \$19.99! 10 4 1/2" Proven Winner Annuals \$29.99! 15 3 1/2" Premium Annuals \$29.99!

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June 15-30: All Evergreen Trees - Buy One, Get 2nd for Half-Price! Arborvitae, Pines, Spruces

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- 2. CHRISTIAN CAVALRY MINISTRIES INT.**
Pastor Beau Bryant
c/o Seaman Baptist Church
2015 NW Buchanan, Topeka Ks 66608
785-224-5419 • www.church4bikers.org
Sun. School 9:30 am
Sun. Service 10:45 am
Wed. Prayer & Bible Study 7pm
- 3. TOPEKA BIBLE CHURCH**
1101 SW Mulvane St., Topeka
785-234-5545
Worship: 8:00 - 9:30 & 11am
Sunday School & Bible Studies:
9:30 & 11am
www.discovertbc.com
- 4. NORTHLAND CHRISTIAN CHURCH**
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286-1204
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Adult programs
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www.northlandcctopeka.org
- 5. FAIRLAWN CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE**
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- 6. FIRST SOUTHERN BAPTIST**
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- 7. TOPEKA BAPTIST CHURCH**
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- 9. GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH**
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- 10. LORD'S HOUSE CHURCH**
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Questions? kawriverfordshouse@att.net
- 12. BUCK CREEK COUNTRY CHURCH**
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Worship Service - 9:00 a.m.
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Scott Bond 423-0406, Jack Snavelly 760-3513
- 13. WANAMAKER WOODS NAZARENE**
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Wed. 6:30 pm Adult & Teen Life Groups
Wed. 6:30 pm Kids University
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 - 15. OAKLAND UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**
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- 21. HARVEST FAMILY FELLOWSHIP**
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- 22. NEW CITY LIFE CHURCH**
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Pastor Kathy Crofford
- 23. EAST SIDE BAPTIST CHURCH**
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WANTED: VOLUNTEER WRITERS - Metro Voice needs volunteer writers or interns who can serve as area correspondents for church and community news around the metro area. Call 235-3340 or email voice@cox.net. Some perks.

WANTED: DELIVERY PERSON - Metro Voice needs someone to help distribute papers to churches and other locations in Topeka for gas

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NOTO Arts Center is there for you

The NOTO Community Arts Center is here to help provide an artistic learning environment and a place to feel at home as an artist and guest! Classes are held in the large classroom space, a gallery showcases beautiful artwork for different occasions, and the center loves hosting events! Families, children, and adults are all catered too with different class offerings. Come and learn a new technique or practice one that has been years in the making! Call 408-8996 for more information.



Don't forget the First Friday Art Walk, a monthly event where the NOTO arts district enables visitors to enjoy arts, antiques, fine crafts, and flea market items. Entertainment is also available at many of the venues.

North Topeka hosts First Friday like no other place in Topeka! Topeka Arts District has become an attraction to Art Lovers and History Buffs alike with beautiful scenes of art and history. The restaurants, locally owned shops, art galleries and studios have become a favorite art walk destination.

Two blocks of historic buildings are bubbling with artists, arts, crafts and creative items to keep you entertained and wanting to bring a piece of the NOTO Arts District home with you.

Other N. Topeka events upcoming:

NOTO BLOCK PARTY - Jun. 3, 5-9pm, 1110 North Kansas Ave. Featuring art displays, live music, food & drinks. Free. Sponsored by Kaw Valley Bank.

FOLK + AMERICANA - Jun. 3, J&J's Gallery, 917 N. Kansas Ave. Come join us for the First Friday Art walk in NOTO for Folk + Americana. Lorie Jo will be playing an acoustic set of originals and old country covers while you peruse local art and other nknaks.

MOTHER TERESA'S FARMERS MARKET - Saturdays 8:30-11:30am, Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Church 2014 NW 46th St.

SUMMERFEST - May 27, 3-11pm, Most Pure Heart of Mary Catholic Church, 3601 SW 17th St. Carnival games, inflatables, mechanical rides, used book sale, plant & garden sales, bake sale, raffle, food & entertainment, movie on the lawn. For info: 554-7308

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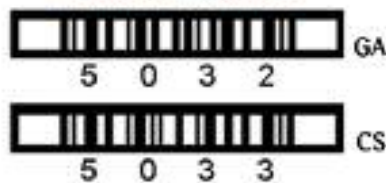
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