American Satisfaction

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Thirty-eight percent of Americans are satisfied with the way things are going in the United States today, similar to last month's 37% satisfaction rate but marking the numerical high since a 39% reading in September 2005. It is higher than at any time during President Obama's term, when it plunged to single digit levels.

The satisfaction rate, which Gallup has measured at least monthly since 2001, has now topped 35% three times this year — a level reached only three times in the previous 12 years (once in 2006, 2009 and 2016).

After a January 2006 reading of 36%, satisfaction failed to surpass 35% the rest of that year, and with the economic calamities that followed over the next few years, it descended into single digits in two 2008 polls and stayed mostly below 30% under Obama.

The rise in satisfaction over the past two months comes amid a flood of positive economic news — including the shrinking of the unemployment rate to levels not seen in a generation and an economic expansion not seen since the heady days of the 1960s. Black unemployment is the lowest it has ever been and the Hispanic community has also seen unemployment drop to historic levels.

This all occurred while prominent national news stories have included independent counsel Robert Mueller's investigation of Russian interference in the 2016 election, the shutdown of the government and so-called ‘shutdown_genius’ Chuck Schumer, and the shrinking of the Senate majority.

Americans’ Satisfaction with Country’s Direction Reaches 12-Year High

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Miss Kansas 2018 is passionate about awareness and help for mental illness

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“Absolutely shocked and overwhelmed, and excited and so grateful,” the Arkansas City native said of being crowned Miss Kansas. “I’ve always wanted to be the girl others look up to as Miss Kansas. This is a dream come true.”

With a great smile and calm demeanor, Klaassen tap-danced her way into the hearts of the audience in preliminary and finals competitions, and it was no accident that she seemed to have no trouble with nerves.

“I’ve been dancing since I was three years old, and I have always loved tap-dancing,” Klaassen said. “Whenver I am nervous I start tapping my toes so I knew it was a perfect talent for me to use at Miss Kansas. Tap dancing really helps with nerve control.”

Klaassen chose to tap dance to a song from the movie “The Greatest Showman.”

“I saw that show twice and just loved it,” she said. “This song pumps me up every time, so it was a great choice.”

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Life Lessons From a Little One

KNOWING HIM

By Jessica S. Hosman

I long for greater nearness with Jesus every day of my life. From the very beginning of my adult conversion I’ve recognized that there is so much He’s delivered and rescued me from that I can’t help but want to give back… to please Him, follow Him, love Him and know Him. My desire is the same for my son. That he would never have only head knowledge about the Lord, but that it would be coupled with a lifestyle of what relationship with Christ looks like in its most intimate form.

I remember, as a child, going to a Christian camp that held the theme: That I may know Him. (Philippians 3:10 the theme’s derivative) was spoken of much throughout the week, but I never really understood how I could “know” Him, not just learn more about Him. This is a small thought, but it must also be combined with the understanding of what real relationship with Him looks like. He is real, near and close enough to touch.

I was tucking Zechariah into bed recently with a routine that has not changed for years: prayer, Bible reading, snuggles and then lights out with quiet worship music playing and one final, “good night.” When I got to the door, he softly called me back over to his bedside. Without moving and speaking in nearly a whisper, he said, “Mommy, I feel like Jesus is snuggling with me right now.” He closed his eyes, let out a small sigh of contentment and a delicate smile formed on his lips. My heart smiled and my mind immediately went to my heart’s desire for my son, and all those I come in contact with that we may know Him. To know His Presence, the warmth of His love and the feel of His embrace, all wrapped up in a snuggle. We don’t have to be perfect or understand every Word written about Him to know Him. We just need to slow down enough to rest, be still and willing to receive the embrace.

My prayer hasn’t changed – I still desperately want more of Jesus. But now I have a beautiful picture forever engraved into my mind of how simple that can really be. We don’t have to stress or strive, we simply must be. It’s there well receive and begin the process of understanding what knowing Him really means.

Satisfaction

continued from page 1

investigation; President Donald Trump’s decision to withdraw the United States from President Obama’s Iran nuclear deal; and Trump’s negotiations with North Korea that culminated in his historic meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

Polls indicate that even with 90% of the news coverage of President Trump being negatively tilted against him, Republicans and Independents are focusing on the large liberal cities are far more supportive of the president than their urban cousins. President Trump won the election, in part, by support of rural, small town and suburban Democrats. Their support remains strong and is growing, much to the concern of Democrat leaders.

Differences by place of residence, age, gender and education are mostly not as large as by party identification, and the amount of change from March-April to May-June was fairly uniform within the former groups. Democrats were the only major demographic group to show no increase in satisfaction. Those in groups that tend to have more Democrats than Republicans, such as adults aged 18 to 44, city dwellers, women and those with postgraduate work — are least likely to be satisfied, but satisfaction levels rose for all of these groups in the May-June aggregate.

BOTTOM LINE

Though the vast majority of Americans have restored pride in their country in polls stretching back more than 30 years, their pride has not meant they were satisfied with the way things were going. This has been especially true during times of economic downturn — though measuring the public’s satisfaction with the nation encompasses far more than economics.

Now, at the midpoint of 2018, as the United States continues to enjoy an historic economic expansion since the 2016 election, the number of Americans finding satisfaction in the country’s direction is on the rise. This reflects more than a growing comfort with Donald Trump as president; growth in satisfaction has outstripped growth in Trump’s approval rating. When presented with specific policy directions, previous polls have found record approval. When many of those being polled, including young voters and democrats, are told the policy is actually that of the Republican administration, their support immediately drops low, even though they agreed with the policy.

But the success of many policies doesn’t just stop at economics. The percentage satisfied has risen more over the past two months than the percentage who think the economy is in good shape or the percentage who think it’s a good time to find a quality job.

As the nation moves toward November’s midterm elections, as the Mueller investigation continues to unfold, as Trump continues to surprise friends and foes with political moves, there are a multitude of possibilities for news that could affect satisfaction significantly in either direction.

The news is not good for Democrats. President Trump’s approval rating is now higher than that of Presidents Reagan and Obama during the midpoints of their first terms in office. They both won a second term by record margins.

Today, the Annie E. Casey Foundation released its 2018 KIDS COUNT Data Book. The most recent report shows a Kansas in strong position with the state ranking 13th in the nation in overall child well-being. This is a significant improvement from last year’s overall ranking of 15th.

Of the 16 child-well-being indicators analyzed for the report, Kansas has improved in 11 key areas, among them, importantly, childhood poverty. The report demonstrates that more high school students are graduating on time, more children have access to health insurance, and more parents are working while taking their families out of a cycle of government dependency and into self-sufficiency.

“This KIDS COUNT data clearly demonstrates that Kansas has made great strides for its youth and the Kansas Annie E. Casey Foundation notes that communities of color are not achieving the same outcomes of well-being as other communities.”

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) collaborates with DCF to ensure childhood health and safety. KDHE promotes optimal health for Kansas women and infants, children and adolescents through system development activities and grants to local communities.

“We are pleased to see efforts to develop the health and well-being of Kansas children are working,” said KDHE Secretary Jeff Anderson. “KDHE offers a wide range of programs and services to promote healthy living among all age groups. And we continue to see Kansas staying ahead of national trends with regard to positive health outcomes.”

To learn more about either of these agencies visit www.ckdhks.gov/ or www.kdhks.gov. If you would like to read the 2017 KIDS COUNT Data Book, visit www.aecf.org/.
Free Nicotine Replacement Therapy Available for Limited Time

TOPEKA – The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE)’s Bureau of Health Promotion is encouraging Kansas residents who want to quit using tobacco products to take advantage of the opportunity to get free nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). The NRT will be shipped directly to their homes by calling the Kansas Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669). In conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)’s Tips from Former Smokers campaign that began in April, the Kansas Tobacco Quitline is offering a free two-week supply of NRT to all callers who register, while supplies last.

About one in six (17.2 percent) Kansas adults, age 18 years and older, are current cigarette smokers. And more than half of them have tried to quit smoking at least once in the past year.

“Quitting smoking not only benefits the health of the smoker, but also helps to protect their loved ones from the harmful effects of secondhand smoke exposure,” said Dr. Greg Lakin, KDHE Chief Medical Officer.

The Kansas Tobacco Quitline is a free, 24/7 resource available to Kansas residents to help them quit smoking. The Quitline provides help, such as counseling, personalized Quit Plan and quitting support by phone and through online services. The Quitline can be reached by calling 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) or visiting www.KSQuit.org.

“We want people to know that although quitting tobacco is hard, they can do it,” said Matthew Schrock, KDHE Tobacco Cessation Program Coordinator. “Smokers often need to make several quit attempts before succeeding, but proven treatments and services are available that can improve your chances to quit for good.”

The Kansas Tobacco Quitline is supported by KDHE. For more information on the Kansas Tobacco Use Prevention Program, visit www.kdhksa.gov/tobacco.

The next monthly C5Alive “POWER Luncheon” will be held July 12, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and will feature a surprise speaker. For details, stay tuned to the C5Alive facebook page and website: www.C5Alive.org

Upcoming luncheons will feature Barry Feaker, Cody Foster and Lamar Hunt, Jr.

The cost to attend the luncheon is $10 for C5Alive 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.

Next month’s luncheon will be held August 9, 11:30am – 1 pm at Avondale East, 455 SE golf Park Dr. Featured speaker at the luncheon will be Rev. Barry Feaker.

The Sep. 13 POWER Luncheon will feature Cody Foster of Advisors Excel, who will also host the event at their facility at 29th & Fairlawn.

The annual “Pastors Appreciation Luncheon” will be held Oct. 11 at Great Overland Station. Members and guests are invited to bring their pastors. All pastors are welcome and will be prayed over, as well as treated to lunch and a gift bag of items donated by C5 members.

C5Alive is an organization founded in 2009, dedicated to developing Christian Leadership in the community, involving busi- nesses, non-profits and churches.

In addition to monthly “POWER” luncheons held on the second Thursday of each month, C5 also hosts periodic business fairs and other events, including the annual Easter Parade and Family Fun Fest, held on N. Kansas Avenue and in Garfield Park on the day before Easter.

C5 members may also sponsor luncheons and other events as a way to pro- mote their organizations. For more information about C5, go to C5Alive.org, facebook.com/C5Alive, or call 785-640-6399.
8 Report on Injured in Eureka Tornado, 2 critically

An EF-3 tornado struck the community of Eureka in Greenwood County, 60 miles east of Wichita, at approximately 7:21 p.m. Tuesday evening, June 26, leaving eight people with injuries, two critical. It is reported to be a ‘direct hit,’ and search and rescue efforts are underway. Local officials are conducting damage assessments at this time. The preliminary assessment shows damage to more than 100 blocks because of the tornado.

The Shawnee County Fair Will Feature Fun and Activities for The Whole Family

The Shawnee County Fair starts with the 4-H Horse Show on July 21st and 22nd, and continues with public exhibits and programs from the 26th through the 29th. The Fair will be at the Kansas Expocentre in Topeka. There will be vendors, food, concerts, exhibits and a whole lot more. Admission and parking at the fair are free.

The 4-H Horse Show takes place in the Dorner Livestock Facility on the 21st and 22nd. 4-H members involved with the 4-H Horse project perform various activities to demonstrate their skills and earn a place at the State Fair in September.

The Fair opens on the 26th, with all booths open through the 29th. Livestock exhibits and programs take place in Dorner, while other projects and displays are in Landon Arena and Exhibition Hall. There will be a wide variety of exhibits, vendors, and other activities throughout all four days of the fair, including a Community Blood Center donation event, the Helping Hands Humane Society Mobile Adoption Unit, the Topeka Model Railroaders and N-Scale Modelers, the 4-H County Dog Show, a Quilt Show and much more.

Friday the 27th will be Kid’s Day at the Fair. Jim “Mr. Stinky Feet” Cosgrove, a talented entertainer for the young and young-at-heart, will perform in the morning as part of Kid’s Day. There will be a free concert that evening, featuring Rachel Louise Taylor, a Shawnee Heights graduate, at 6:30 p.m., followed by Rusty Rierson and the Forever Young Band with Ernie Rodina at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday will feature a Pancake Feed and Pedal Tractor Pull. Sunday will feature the 4-H King and Queen Announcement and a Fashion Review.

The Fair is open to the public from 8 a.m. - 10 p.m. on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday and 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. on Sunday.

For more information, check out the website at www.shawneeCountyFair.org or check out Shawnee County Fair on Facebook.

MISS KANSAS

Music has always been important in Klaassen's life, something she credits after God, family and friends for her success. She participated in drama and theater productions at Ark Valley High School, including leading roles in "Annie" and "All Shook Up."

A sophomore Presidential Scholar at Tabor College in Hillsboro, Kansas, she also participated in music at the college level as a freshman member of the concert choir and part of a small a cappella group called TFX.

PROMOTING HER PLATFORM

The daughter of Dr. Paul and Lisa Klaassen, Hannah entered the pageant with a platform of supporting mental health.

“I have had two very close friends and a grandmother who have struggled with different mental illnesses over the past few years, and I’ve been able to see how this affects their daily lives in many different ways,” she said.

“I want to support those who struggle with a mental illness and encourage them to get the help they need, while also helping them know that they are so much more than an illness — they are worthy of love and acceptance and respect, just like every other human being, and their mental health should not diminish their quality of life.”

Klaassen said her leadership classes at Tabor College helped prepare her for the interview portion of the Miss Kansas pageant and fellow students and teachers asked her questions and listened to her speeches.

One of those speeches, given on her pageant platform subject "The Mind Matters: lessening the stigma of mental illness," helped her see how much the information she has researched is needed in today’s college climate, as well as other levels of education for youth and adults.

“I just want to let people know that help is there for those who need it,” she said. “I had two friends in high school who suffered from severe anxiety and depression and I have watched my Granny deal with bi-polar mental illness. After one speech at college, I had a young man come up afterwards and ask me where he could get help. We need to do better at connecting resources with the young people who need them, and make it an acceptable thing to ask for that help.”

Klaassen is studying psychology with a goal to earn a master’s degree and a doctorate so that she might pursue a career in teaching at the college level.

“With my interest in dance and movement therapy, it all comes together with my platform. Music and dance can help those battling mental illnesses and we need education at a young level about what mental illness is and how we can help each other.”

Klaassen was asked how education could be improved. Her answer to that was simple.

“We need to pay teachers more,” she said. “We need more funding for mental illness education and we need quality teachers.”

Klaassen said tragedies like school shootings could be prevented by better mental health care.

“Nobody would shoot others if they were mentally sound,” she said.

KLAASSEN FAMILY SUPPORT

Klaassen credited her family with providing her with support during this entire process.

“They have been so supportive over the past year, and even though Heidi is getting married in July, she has been so wonderful in loving and supporting me through Miss Kansas while also planning her wedding.”

“My siblings really helped me prepare for both my local and the state pageant through encouraging me to be healthy, and helping me relax by playing games and watching movies with me. I could not have gotten where I am without Mom and Dad this year.”

At home with her family, Klaassen is a keen Mario Cart video game competitor with her younger brother, Pierce, and her older sister, Heidi. She plays tennis and took up running recently, hitting the treadmill for two or so miles per day while watching Netflix.

Klaassen, who started attending Miss Kansas pageants when she was 13, said she looks forward to traveling and working with school children during her reign as Miss Kansas.

PAGENET BEGINNINGS

It has been a long road to the Miss Kansas title for Klaassen.

“I got involved in the Miss Kansas Outstanding Teen organization when I was 16, and after deciding I wanted to do more to change/serve my community and the world, the Miss Kansas organization was my first choice to give me the platform to do so,” she said.

From there, Klaassen was crowned Miss South Central Kansas earlier this year. It was that competition that led her to last week’s festivities.

“I’m so passionate about mental health and wellness, and through Miss Kansas, I can promote this platform, as well the Miss America platform of Children’s Miracle Network hospitals,” she said.

“I knew I could also earn amazing scholarships and have the opportunity to be a positive role model for children everywhere. These things all really drew me to the organization.”

The Miss Kansas pageant is a state preliminary to the Miss America Contest.

MISS KANSAS DUTIES

Although it is a great honor, being named Miss Kansas is just the first step in Klaassen’s next journey toward competing at the national level.

“Earning the title of Miss Kansas means I now have a full-time job,” she said.

“My life was completely changed in the moment I was crowned, and that was both humbling and thrilling. My first big event will be competing in Miss America in September. After that, I begin to make appearances daily.”

Those appearances will take place at schools, meetings, clubs, hospitals, parades and many more venues.

Last year, Miss Kansas 2017 made nearly 600 such appearances.

- pratttribune.com, acldailybytes.com and other wire services contributed to this report
Dear Dave,

I bring home $4,100 a month in military disability pay and Social Security combined. My wife brings home an additional $2,000 each month. Should we base our emergency fund level on her income only, since mine is guaranteed?

Lew

Dear Lew,

Your emergency fund shouldn’t be based on income. I recommend folks have three to six months of household expenses set aside in an emergency fund. What would it take to operate your household for that length of time if one or both of your incomes disappeared?

I don’t anticipate your income stopping, Lewis. But income loss isn’t the only thing you’re guarding against with an emergency fund. You’re also guarding against things like an illness in the family, if the transmission in the car goes out, or your home’s heating and cooling unit needs to be replaced. There are many more crises that can come upon a family other than a loss of income.

I don’t mind if you two lean toward the three-month side of expenses, since your income is pretty stable. But always remember, an emergency fund should contain three to six months of expenses, not income.

Thank you for your service, sir.

—Dave

What happens to the debt?

Dear Dave,

I’ve started your personal finance course in high school, so I’m asking this for the entire class. What happens to your debt if you pass away with no relatives or heirs to take responsibility for what you owed?

Elizabeth

Dear Elizabeth,

In many cases it simply does not get paid. Relatives or heirs of the deceased are not responsible for a friend or family member’s debt, except in cases where they have been a co-signer on that debt.

Let’s say someone’s parents died, and at the time of their death they had $100,000 in debt in their names only. The only way that debt will be paid is if they owned the house — if they had enough in the way of assets — to pay the debt. If they owned a $200,000 home, the house would have to be sold in order to pay the debts. Their estate would be the only thing standing good for the debt. If they owned nothing, and had no co-signers on any of the debt, the creditor would not get paid. The bank lost their money.

Elisabeth, I hope that helped. Please tell your teacher I said thank you for leading the class!

—Dave

Stand up to them

Dear Dave,

A debt collection agency started calling my office a few weeks ago. I gave them an initial payment, and made an agreement to pay off the debt in monthly installments. This morning, they started calling me at my office again wanting payment. Can I legally demand they not call me at my place of employment? James

Dear James,

Absolutely! You have a legal and moral obligation to pay your debts, and I’m glad this is something you recognize. But collectors have rules they must follow. They’re governed by law just like everyone else.

Be certain to keep your end of the agreement. Make your payments on time, or early whenever possible. Then, if they call you at work again, remind them of your initial payment and the terms of the agreement already in place. Be polite, but firm, and demand that they never call you at your office again.

—Dave

Laptop dilemma

Dear Dave,

My husband and I are just starting Baby Step 1 of your plan. Prior to this, we told our two nephews we would buy them laptop computers for college. They don’t get a lot of encouragement or support from their immediate family, so we try to help them when we can. Should we go ahead and honor this commitment, postpone getting our starter emergency fund, and possibly take on a little more debt, or bow out of the agreement? Lisa

Dear Lisa,

Well, it’s difficult to be generous when you’re broke. You don’t even have $1,000 to your names, and you’re going to buy two laptops! I don’t know how much debt you have, or what your household income is, but I do know neither of you have managed your money very well in the past.

If you make $50,000 a year, and you have $70,000 in debt, you should sincerely and apologetically bow out. Explain that you made a big mistake, and just be honest about why you can’t provide the laptops. If you make $200,000 a year, but you’ve just been incredibly silly and lazy with your money, you should buy the laptops and then get serious about growing up and getting control of your finances.

Don’t make promises, financial or otherwise, you can’t keep. I know this is a tough, embarrassing situation, but it’s what I would do if I were in your shoes.

—Dave

First, lay a solid foundation

Dear Dave,

When is it okay to have a little fun, and buy things you want, when you’re following the Baby Steps plan? Katlin

Dear Katlin,

The time for a little fun is after you’ve completed the first three Baby Steps. Baby Step 1 is saving $1,000 for a beginner emergency fund. Baby Step 2 is paying off all debt, except for your home. And Baby Step 3 means you go back and add to your emergency fund until you have three to six months of expenses set aside. Once you’re debt-free except for your home — and you have your emergency fund completed — you’ve laid a solid, financial foundation for your life. That’s when you can have a little fun and spend some money on a vacation, new furniture, or something like that.

Children think about their immediate wants and do what feels good. Adults, on the other hand, devise smart, logical plans, and stick to them. I want you to have a great life, but you have to put in some hard work and say “no” to yourself sometimes in order to attain that great life.

—Dave

Beware of IRS impersonation scams

Peggy Beasterfield
Owner, Peggy’s Tax and Accounting Service

With tax season completed, the Internal Revenue Service has warned taxpayers to remain vigilant for phishing emails and telephone scams. Summertime tends to be a favorable period for scammers because many taxpayers have recently filed a return and may be waiting for a response from the IRS.

Telltale signs of a scam

The IRS (and its authorized private collection agencies) will never:

• Call to demand immediate payment using a specific payment method such as a prepaid debit card, gift card or wire transfer. The IRS does not use these methods for tax payments.

• Threaten to immediately bring in local police or other law-enforcement groups to have the taxpayer arrested for not paying.

• Demand that taxes be paid without giving the taxpayer the opportunity to question or appeal the amount owed.

• Ask for your credit or debit card numbers over the phone.

For anyone who doesn’t owe taxes and has no reason to think they do:

• Do not give out any information. Hang up immediately.

• Contact the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration to report the call. Use their IRS Impersonation Scam Reporting web page.

• Report the caller ID and/or callback number to the IRS by sending it to phishing@irs.gov (Subject: IRS Phone Scam Report).

• Report it to the Federal Trade Commission. Use the FTC Complaint Assistant on FTC.gov. Add “IRS Telephone Scam” in the notes.
The church has the answer to America’s growing loneliness crisis

**viewpoint**

ERIC METAXAS
Radio host and author

Do you feel lonely? Join the crowd. Loneliness has reached pandemic levels—but there is hope.

It’s become a truism: Never have we been more “connected” as Americans—and never have we felt lonelier.

According to a nationwide study of 20,000 people by the Cigna health insurance company, nearly half of respondents say they feel alone or left out always or some of the time. Reporting on the research, National Public Radio states, “Fifty-six percent reported they sometimes or always felt as if the people around them ‘are not necessarily with them.’ Forty percent said, “they lack companionship,” and their “relationships aren’t meaningful,” and that they experience feelings of isolation.

Using the UCLA Loneliness Scale, Cigna found that “most Americans are considered lonely.” The average score on this scale is 44, with higher numbers indicating more loneliness; but this social malady isn’t distributed evenly across the age groups.

Somewhat counter-intuitively, it seems that the younger you are, the lonelier you feel.

The so-called “Greatest Generation”—those aged 72 and older—is the least lonely group, scoring an average of 38.6 on the Loneliness Scale, followed by Baby Boomers, then Millennials. The loneliest group is also the youngest—Generation Z, those born in the mid-1990s to early 2000s, with an average score of 48.3.

Now it’s easy for us older folks to point the finger at social media for the rise in loneliness, and we may have a point. Back in 2017, psychologist Jean Twenge of San Diego State University suggested that increased screen and social media time may have caused a jump in depression and suicide among American young people. There’s a world of difference, after all, between a virtual community and a real one.

Writing in Christianity Today, Women, Enuma Okoro observes that “the false sense of intimacy created in the virtual world fails to satisfy people’s real needs for knowing others and being known by others.” She adds, “After all, being lonely is not necessarily about a-lone-ness, but about lack of intimate, meaningful connection.”

Loneliness quite literally is hazardous to your health, leading to increased levels of depression, drug addiction, and suicide. Which is why, as my colleague John Stonestreet has mentioned on “The Point,” the British government has now established a “minister of loneliness.”

Starting in the Garden, we human beings were created for community under God’s loving care, and when we don’t get it, bad things happen. We’ll attempt to fill our restless, lonely hearts with whatever is nearest at hand. As Augustine of Hippo stated so perceptively, “Sin comes when we take a perfectly natural desire or longing or ambition and try desperately to fulfill it without God.”

One lesson for the church is obvious: We must remember we are one Body in Jesus Christ. No member goes it alone. In a culture in which everyone seems “connected” doesn’t even know their next-door neighbors, Christians are members one of another. When one member suffers, all suffer. When one rejoices, we all rejoice. As the Bible says, “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Gal. 6:2). That is our calling.

Do we always experience this kind of soul-satisfying fellowship? Sadly, no. The good news is that we can help one another grow in this holy task. Okoro says, “As Christians, we’re called to train one another in the theological virtue of caritas, as understood by Thomas Aquinas as friendship with God that ultimately leads to deeper friendship with one another – [cultivating] more genuine depths of safe intimacy with one another not merely for our own sakes but for the sake of the one who first called us friends and never sent his disciples out alone.”

And when we do, our Christian faith can become very attractive indeed to our lonely neighbors, young and old alike.

**Eric Metaxas is the host of the “Eric Metaxas Show,” a co-host of “BreakPoint” radio and a New York Times #1 best-selling author. His most recent book is “Martin Luther: The Man Who Rediscovered God and Changed the World.”**

**WHAT IS AMERICA’S FUTURE?**

CLINT DECKER
President and Evangelist with Great Awakenings, Inc.

President Abraham Lincoln once said, “Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man’s character, give him power.” An ancient prayer from the Bible says, “Two things I lack of you . . . give me neither poverty nor riches feed me with the food that is needful for me, lest I be full and deny you and say, ‘Who is the Lord?’ or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God” (Proverbs 30:7–9).

The idea conveyed is having little or much can affect the character of a person – and a nation. The United States has seen both. In her early years she had little, while in modern times she has had much. Today, the U.S. is the leader in innovation, has the greatest university system, the world’s most powerful military, the largest economy and provides unequalled human freedoms.

Since the late 1800s, which began the industrial age, America has seen incredible growth. The success has changed America’s character. Her pride has grown into arrogance. Her increased knowledge has questioned the need for God. Her advancements in technology have made her like a god and her hi-tech weapons have replaced God.

The principle of abundance leading to a denial of God is a predictable pattern. When riches, power and success mount there is a quiet shift in the heart of a nation, that when left unchecked, can lead to its downfall.

Who is America’s greatest enemy? Some other nation, terrorists or a glorification of cyber warriors? Our greatest enemy is – we the people.

The lure of money and power is becoming our Great Destroyer. Its deceptive appeal has caused us to think too highly of ourselves. It has created a false sense of security bringing us to believe we are a nation that is indestructible and indispensable to the world. We have been willingly seduced by prosperity giving birth to the children of ease, complacency and immorality.

Let us learn from the downfall of ancient kingdoms like Rome, Egypt, Greece and the once vast British Empire. Mere common sense says if we continue down the path we are on, America will eventually implode.

Despite the growing number of atheists within our borders, the Lord God exists and He is our only hope. Not political parties, legislation or changes in the economy. Let us examine our ways and do something about it. We must humble ourselves and stop our power hunger, corrupt and immoral practices. We must make peace with God and with one another. This cannot be done through multi-faith efforts or by starting an organization. This turn around can only be done through our faith in the Creator God, and His only Son. We plead for Him to pour out a heaven-sent spiritual revival to sweep border to border.

A prayer for you to pray—Lord God, I see evil and lawlessness across our land. We desperately need you to send a move of your Spirit upon us. I admit my own wrong doings and how I have contributed to the condition of our country. Forgive me Lord for what I have done. Oh God, come upon our land. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Listen to Clint Decker’s radio broadcast, The Unbreakable Truth, at 2:50am & 7:50am on Upper Room Radio, KFGB 97.7 FM, Topeka’s one Christian radio station. He can be reached at cdecker@greatawakenings.org

Got an Opinion? Share it with the Metro Voice! go to facebook/MetroVoiceNews, or email Voice@cox.net
The Power of Propaganda

by George Ismael Felii Jr.

If you google “propaganda defined” you get this definition: derogatory information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote or publicize a particular political cause or point of view. You go to Webster and you see two more things: the spreading of ideas, information, or rumor for the purpose of helping or injuring an institution, a cause, or a person; and ideas, facts (not truth), or allegations spread deliberately to further one’s cause or to damage an opposing cause.

Propaganda uses words, visuals, and speech to invoke an emotional response or sway someone’s opinion. It is a dangerous thing. In a free society, propaganda must be allowed to an extent otherwise we lose freedom; but unchecked by truth, it can destroy a person, a family, a cause, and even a nation. The lawful term for this crime is libel or slander.

Our Founding Fathers understood this and had placed one of their few hopes upon an unbiased media to dig out the truth in order to keep the public informed so that truth and justice remained supreme in our land. How would this media go about this? They needed to answer all the necessary questions to find the truth: who, what, where, when, why, and how.

In the old days of the media, no news would be published without at least two credible sources which did not include anyone with a personal vendetta against someone. The reporters had facts they needed to prove was truth. Anything was fiction or in today’s world propaganda. When the media became corrupted into a propaganda tool is a subject that can be debated by a more scholarly article, but media corruption can be traced back to at least the Antebellum South and probably further back. This is about the power of propaganda.

Drug cartels often use these people as drug mules. To protect the kids from the bad guys, some do need to be separated in order to validate truth from the lies.

First look at the who. These are people who come to these country illegally. That makes them criminals. Their children are taken away from them because they broke the law just like every other criminal in our great country.

Why? In 1997, Bill Clinton signed a law that made it so. The reasoning was they hoped that it would deter illegal immigration because of a law that allowed children not from Mexico to come to our country and be allowed to stay therefore anchoring them for the rest of their family to come to our country. It didn’t. In fact, it got worse. Under G.W. Bush another law was passed to go along with the Clinton bill in order to stop human traffickers from using these children to get into the U.S. The human traffickers once inside would use or sell these children as slave labor and other more abhorrent things. Something that became very apparent under the Obama administration as thousands of children were let loose in America in the hands of human traffickers (source NY Magazine a liberal publication). The law got its teeth the chances of the truth guiding people became slim to none. Propaganda trumps truth.

As in all things published by the media, I don’t react. I sit back and figure out the truth which tends to come out slowly after the fury of people’s emotions has come to a boil. People from both sides of the aisle cry out something must be done for the children. People like Paul Ryan and Glen Beck shout out solutions which may or may not work only to be shut down by the other side because all that they want is to cast blame. Solutions would end the crises and according to Saul Alinsky, “Never let a crisis go to waste.”

Drug cartels often use these people as drug mules. To protect the kids from the bad guys, some do need to be separated in order to validate truth from the lies.

They are the Christians who hate Trump. Let’s call it for what it is hate. It is their hate—strange for a professed Christian—that dulls their ability to see the inaccuracy of their comments and their myopic views.

One sanctimonious ranting Christian said, “there’s nothing Biblical about Trump.” Actually, there’s nothing Biblical about that statement. The prophet Daniel served Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel recognized the role a pagan king played in God’s unfolding drama. The church’s ability to work with Trump is totally Biblical.

Now I must clarify, lest I incur the wrath of Trump supporters. I am not calling Trump a pagan king—I’m sure he is much more moral than his enemies know—I am saying that if Daniel could work with Nebuch, how much more we can work with the Don.

I tried hard to figure out believers who hate Trump. Our side won a long overdue and miraculous victory and they choose to aid and abet the other side. Is it because their favorite “Christian” didn’t win and they are sour grapes?

And why didn’t these conservative Christians hold Reagan to the same standard? They adored him even while Nancy was studying horoscopes in the White House.

They didn’t require any president to be a squeaky clean pastor until Trump.

Yeah, his tweets can be a bit much. And, obviously, president Trump is not as smooth as Reagan—but, maybe we don’t need smooth right now.

But there is something else that is really strange, (hypocritical is more like it) why didn’t these guardians of morality speak out against Obama? T.D. Jakes is a friend of Franklin Graham for question-

Obama’s Christian Faith. Told him not to judge a brother. Hold that thought as we explore another question…

How could you not question Obama’s Christianity? Obama begged the question by dropping the Christian card whenever it suited him (something Trump never does). Meanwhile, Barack fought for same sex marriage, late term abortion, and was the most Biblically hostile presi-
dent in our history.

Click on this link to see the list of his acts of hostility toward Christians https://wpmc.io/3prp-30Q

Back to Jake’s. So why do so many Christian leaders—who said it was wrong to judge Obama—judge Trump? Trump is not a pastor. He is a business-

man who loves America. As far as his faith? I am not qualified to determine his spiritual depth since I’ve never had the chance to meet the man.

He is like Hitler and the church is being fooled” said another comment. Please remove your tinfoil hats and listen. Hitler never had 98% of the media against him. Trump has never called for a new constitution. Hitler never tried to protect Israel. I could go on and on.

Maybe if Trump had been the first presi-
dent to address the march for life. Maybe if he had chosen an on fire born-again vice president. Maybe if he had rescinded exec-
utive orders that banned federal funds from Christian organizations. Maybe if he overruled the Johnson Amendment that banned the free speech of pastors. Maybe if he had moved the American Embassy to Jerusalem. Maybe if he had put someone on the Supreme Court who helped Christian bakers practice freedom of reli-

Hi friends. Over the years I’ve been asked how someone can hear God’s voice. The problem that most people have is that they are too busy and don’t take the time to slow down their life and just listen.

a. You see, God wants a daily rela-
tionship with you. In a relationship, you must listen with your ears, brain and heart.

b. While it is true that sometimes

God can be heard in the jingle of a spurt, the thunder of hooves and the bawl of a newborn calf.

c. The true reality is that God can be heard every day, if you would just take the time to be quiet.

d. There is truth that since we have one mouth and two ears, we are to listen twice as much as we talk. Have you listened today? Be Encouraged!

Be Encouraged, Scott Perkins

The Country Parson

The Country Parson Radio show is about to come back to radio shortly. Stay Tuned!
Summer camp opportunities abound across area

Across the region there are great summer camp offerings and other resources for families and children of all ages.

Summer camps and programs are a perfect way for kids to connect with their faith and make more friends at the same time.

There are many types of camps to choose from: traditional away-camps a distance from home requiring 2-3 days to two week stays, day camps where the child returns home each evening, to longer camps that offer opportunities for training to return as a camp counselor when older.

The focus of each camp can vary as well. Some camps are denominational in nature and bring students from their church and other churches in their denomination together. The camps are them-based and bring students from a variety of denominational backgrounds. Either type of camp may focus on spirituality and are often centered around outdoor activities.

While this can be true for local opportunities, Day Camps may also be either denominational in nature or open to all children with faith backgrounds. These may also have themes around the fine arts, science, exploration other topics.

Camp a great way to unplug

For today’s tweens and teens, technology is part of the fabric of everyday life. They’re watching TV on lots of devices and using smartphones and tablets to maximum advantage - texting, researching, sharing, connecting -- and generally causing lots of hand-wringing among parents who don’t know how much is too much.

While going to camp has always seemed like a good way for kids to spend their summers, recent studies make camp sound not just good but essential for our youngsters—especially in the age of constantly being “plugged in.”

It’s not your imagination – media use is off the charts. Teens use an average of nine hours of entertainment media per day, and tweens use an average of six hours, plus several more hours spent using media.

That’s well over one-third of our kids’ waking hours!

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that an American child is six times more likely to play a video game on any given day than ride a bike.

What better way to unplug than a week or two at summer camp? Wanda DeWaard, Section Executive for the American Camp Association, agrees.

“Being plugged in is so isolating for children,” DeWaard said. “And going to camp is a great way to make sure that they get a balanced life experience.”

In fact, one thing that most camp programs share is the rule that tech devices stay at home.

Whether it’s a theater camp, an art camp, a soccer camp or a traditional outdoor experience camp, most require that cell phones and video games stay at home or buried deep in the backpack, only to surface when it’s time for Mom and Dad to pick up campers.

DeWaard applauds this policy, saying, “Cell phones encourage homesickness.” What summer camp encourages are all the things that entertainment media can’t provide.

DeWaard sums it up this way, “Camp is all about experiencing life directly rather than virtually.”

HERO CENTRAL VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL - July 9 – Thursday, July 12. Light supper at 5:30pm. Activities begin at 6:00pm. Ages 3 yrs. to completed 5th grade. For information contact Tracy Roesch at 272-5302, roeschtracy@gmail.com or www.ilstlutherantopeka.org

BABYLON: DANIEL’S COURAGE IN CAPTIVITY - July 9th to 13th, from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m., Hosted by First Lutheran Church, Trinity Lutheran and Our Savior Lutheran. A light meal will be served beforehand. Ages 1 year through 5th grade. For information contact Tracy Roesch at 272-5302, roeschtracy@gmail.com or www.ilstlutherantopeka.org

SHIPWRECKED VACATION BIBLE CAMP - July 15 - 19. 6:15pm to 8:30pm. Energizing, fun music; interactive Bible fun; cool crafts and science projects, games, videos, and a light evening meal Mon-Thur. (3 yrs. old through entering 5th grade as of 7/1/18) Enrollm ent is $15. Susanna Wesley UMC, 7433 SW 29th St. Contact Jaym ie Genovese at 478-3697 or go to http://www.swancc.org/vacation-bible-camp.html.

SHIPWRECKED VACATION BIBLE CAMP - Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 3625 S.W. Wanamaker, vacation Bible school from 9 a.m. to noon Monday, July 16, to Friday, July 20. For more information or to register, visit www.princeofpeacetopeka.org or call (785) 271-0808.

GAME ON! VBS 6 to 8 p.m. Monday, July 16, to Friday, July 20, for children ages fifth grade and younger. A light meal will be provided. Grantville United Methodist Church, 3724 South St., in Granville.

FREE FUN FIELD DAY & ART CAMP TOO - July 21, 9:30 a.m. until 3 p.m. Lunch will be provided along with energized worship, outdoor games, Bible lessons and art projects. K - 6th grade are invited. East Side Baptist Church, 4425 SE 29th St

GAME ON! VBS July 22-27 @ 6 pm. A class for all ages including adults starting Sunday through Thursday. Friday is parent night and fun events! Northern Hills Southern Baptist Church, 920 NW 62nd St

CAGE GYMNASTICS CAMP – various dates in June and July. 785-266-4151. Cagegymnastics.com

BALLET & TAP CAMP – July 30- August 3. Kansas Ballet is currently enrolling for our July 30- August 3. Class size is limited and students will be accepted on a first come, first serve basis. www.kansascballet.com

ROLLING RIVER RAMPA GE VBS - Monday-Friday, July 23-27, 6:30-8 p.m. at Auburn Christian Church, 1351 N. Washington, Auburn. Children 3 years through 6th Grade. It’s free for all youngsters. To register visit www.auburnchristian.net or call Ginger at 785-969-4285.

VBS & SUMMER CAMPS
Summer afternoons in Kansas can be 55–105 degrees – you just never know. But even the hottest days should not keep you from the abundance of activities you can enjoy this summer in Topeka and surrounding communities.

Here’s some of our favorites:

Ice Cream. A favorite family summer tradition is at the end the day make a quick trip to get an ice cream cone. Nothing says summer like the art of making the cone last as long as it can in the sweltering heat. We like to check out the month’s flavor at Dairy Queen or Baskin Robins.

Outdoor movies. Churches, parks, recreation departments, and hotels invite you to bring a blanket and enjoy a movie with others in the community. You might want to bring the bug spray!

Music Festivals. Topka has many music festivals all summer long. One or more is sure to feature your favorite style of music. If you enjoy the guitar, mandolin, banjo, fiddle, autoharp and both hammer and mountain dulcimers; you will want to journey to the Walnut Festival at Winfield, Kan. It is one of Kansas’ best kept secrets for Summer music and fun.

Drive-In Movies. In the age of Netflix and cineplexes, there is something wonderful about cramming the family into a car to watching a first run movie on a huge screen on a warm night under the stars. We are fortunate to have two in nearby Kansas City, the I-70 Drive In and the Twin Drive In. It is a great way to conclude the day after mowing and honey do’s.

County Fairs. One of the oldest traditions of summer is the fun and entertainment to be found at county fairs! From the livestock to music to crafts and demonstrations, there is something for everyone at the county fair!

Baseball and more. Even if you’re not a baseball fan, who doesn’t love eating a stadium hotdog and people-watching? On July 7, the Kansas City Royals will host their annual Faith & Family Night. The evening will conclude with a several players speaking, Scott Dawson of Safe at Home, and a concert by Michael W. Smith. You can also check out the many local games of various sports right here in Topeka.

Picnicking. Many churches love to celebrate summer with a picnic at a local park. The kids are always happy playing on the playground equipment and Mom gets a break. The same idea works for just your own family on a moment’s notice.

Museums and art. Experiencing learning first hand through a field trip or camp experience is a wonderful tool for homeschool families. Many museums are free or inexpensive. At a young age, children can learn by describing and verbalizing about the exhibits and asking questions. The younger the child, the shorter the attention span, so looking at a variety of historical paintings and displays can be a delightful and memorable experience for the whole family. Children can learn history, art and culture simultaneously.

There are also several art camps and Vacation Bible Schools in Topeka that would fit the bill. NOTO Arts Center also offers various art classes during the summer for children as well as adults.

Parades. Americans love parades! From Memorial Day to Independence Day to Veterans Day and everything in between, a parade is a great chance to get outdoors with your neighbors and enjoy the day.

Be original. What is your favorite way to enjoy summer?

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Welcome to the Shawnee County Fair!

Kansas Expocentre, Topeka • “Around the World at the Fair” • www.shawneecountyfair.org

2018 Free Concert

Rusty Rierson With Ernie Rodina from Better Horses Radio

Rachel Louise Taylor 6:30 PM

Friday, July 27th, 2018
Kansas Expocentre - Landon Arena
Topeka, Kansas

Forever Young Band 7:30 PM

July 26-29th - 4H Exhibits, Vendors & Shows! Free Parking - Free Admission!
July 21-22 - Horse Show • July 27 - Kid’s Concert: Mr. Stinky Feet - 10:00 AM • July 27 & 28 - Dog Show
July 28 - Pancake Feed 7-12; Topeka Acappella Unlimited Chorus 10 AM; Pedal Tractor Pull 1 PM
Friday - Sunday: Topeka Model RailRoader’s & N’Scalers Railroaders; HHHS Adoption Event
Celebrate **Summer Time** 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.

There have been many improvements to the downtown area in the last couple of years! You can check out the many new street statues and other art on the downtown sidewalks. You might also run across some street musicians and sidewalk vendors at various times and places.

Whether you are in the mood for shopping, eating or looking at art, you will most likely find what pleases you in downtown Topeka! Don’t forget to check the list of downtown events - there is always something going on, and you wouldn’t want to miss it!

Following are some tidbits from some of your friendly downtown merchants. Why not take a trip downtown and visit them? They are waiting to serve you!

### One of a kind

For an eclectic selection of new and used items, check out Trails Market & Gallery at 109 S. Kansas Ave. Jeff Hisey has assembled a large selection on two floors, where artists and traders can come together, create and share their ideas and passions with others and provide a unique experience and gifts for everyone. A wide variety of items, many of which are one-of-a-kind! You owe it to yourself to check it out!

### 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](http://www.absolutedesignbybrenda.com).

### If you’re hungry, stop in for a sub

You can’t go wrong taking a lunch break at Jersey Mike’s, 718 S. Kansas Avenue, with their fresh ingredients and bread baked fresh every morning.

Jersey Mike’s, a fast-casual sub sandwich franchise with more than 1,000 locations open and under development nationwide, also has a long history of community involvement and support. Started at the Jersey Shore in 1956, Jersey Mike’s serves authentic East Coast-style subs on fresh baked bread – the same recipe from 60 years ago!

You can stay up to date with Jersey Mike’s latest promotions and deals, as well as get a free sub + drink on your birthday when you sign up for the Jersey Mike’s Subs Email Club. You can do that as well as place your order, at [www.jerseymikes.com](http://www.jerseymikes.com).

### 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! They are also famous for the pork tenderloin sandwich, and it is huge!

With the friendly service and generous portions, you won’t go away hungry!

They also offer vivid colored gemstones in unique settings, watches, clocks, statues and fine crystal, as well as many other gift items, whether for yourself or someone else.

“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.”

There are so many other unique shops downtown you won’t believe it! Don’t stop with this incomplete list! There’s plenty more to discover in Downtown Topeka this summer!

Bring a friend, or the family, and re-discover the joy of hanging out downtown!
SUMMERTIME Memories, Events, & Gift Ideas!

Check out these upcoming Summertime Events & Activities Downtown!

While you’re making your way around the downtown area, check out the new things to look at on both sides of the street -- there are lots of new features! And watch for these downtown events coming up:

FREEDOM FESTIVAL – June 30, 11am-10pm. Art, music, activities, entertainment, food trucks, beer garden, kids corner. Reenactments at Constitution Hall. Downtown Topeka. Free. For info: 249-3464

TOPEKA SWING SOCIAL DANCE - June 30, 7pm. Jayhawk Theatre, 720 Jackson Ave. All ages and ability levels welcome. Admission is free, but a cash donation toward the restoration of the Jayhawk Theatre is encouraged. Wear shoes that will allow you to slide, rather than stick to the floor.

NOONTIME BROWN BAG CONCERT - Wednesdays 11-1 at Westar Pocket Den, kids corner. Reenactments at Constitution Hall. Downtown Topeka. Free. For info: 249-3464

COMMUNITY INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION - July 4, 10-11am, Grace Cathedral, 701 SW 8th Ave. It is a “red, white & blue” extravaganza with brass, drums, piano, organ, winds, choirs, & soloists. (785) 235-3457

ART WALK ON FIRST FRIDAYS – Downtown & NOTO arts district. Arts, antiques, fine crafts, many more items. Free shuttle will run from 5pm to 9pm. The stops are at the NOTO Arts Center, 8th and Kansas, 7th and Jackson. It runs every third Saturday for Line Dancing!! Cost: Free-will donation!! 50% of your donation will be applied to the renovation of the Jayhawk Theatre.

SLIDERDAYS – 12-1pm, Jayhawk Theatre, 720 SW Jackson. Join us every third Saturday for Line Dancing!! Cost: Free-will donation!! 50% of your donation will be applied to the renovation of the Jayhawk Theatre.

SAY WHAT SAY WIZ - July 21, TPAC. Come on a musical and dance adventure to an urban re-imagination of The Wizard of Oz.

For Breakfast and Lunch it’s...

1034 S. Kansas Avenue - (785) 232-1111
www.hanoverpancakehouse.com

Hanover Pancake House...need I say more?

For info visit www.KansasBallet.com or call 785-383-7918 or email information@kansasballet.com


Serving Downtown Topeka since 1968, David’s Jewelers still considers quality to be a family tradition. They offer custom designed jewelry because each customer is one of a kind. They also offer in-store jewelry, watch and clock repair.

“Welcome to ‘help you find that special gift, from $20 and up!”

David’s is open Monday – Friday 9-5:30 and Saturday 9-3. Call for information at 785-234-4808 or 785-234-3771

(785) 234-4808 • davidsjewelerstopekas.com
Restaurant adds Pizza to Bagels, Sandwiches & Espresso

Pizagel’s is the name of the restaurant – an amalgamation of two of the main items on their bill of fare: pizza and bagels. But, Pizagel’s Pizza & Bakery is about so much more.

You see, Pizagel’s opens at 6:00 AM every day except Sunday, when they open at 7:00 AM, to start your day off with a tasty breakfast. Besides various flavors of bagels and delicious cream cheeses, you can get an egg and cheese croissant or English muffin with your choice of meats and veggies. There are also fresh pastries, breads, muffins and new cresnuts with a large variety of toppings to go along with them. Owner Jim Burgardt says, “Our baked goods are made fresh from scratch every day.” Because everything is baked fresh each day, it would be a good idea to call Pizagel’s a day or two ahead of time if you need a large order.

Pizagel’s also opens every day until 9:00 PM so you can get a delightful lunch or dinner. They serve all sorts of sandwiches made with their fresh baked breads, croissants and bagels. Add a bowl of soup and smoothie or espresso drink and you have a great meal.

Since it is in the name you would expect Pizagel’s to offer a great selection of Pizza’s – and you will not be disappointed. Pizagel’s offers pizza by the slice for lunch, personal sized mini-pizzas and small to extra-large pies in many different combinations, such as: Supreme, Meat-Lovers, Taco, Chicken Alfredo, Buffalo Chicken, Philly Cheese Steak and Southwestern to name a few. Pair one of these pies with a cold beer or glass of wine for a delicious dining experience.

The bottom line is that everything you eat at Pizagel’s Pizza & Bakery is fresh made daily with the best ingredients at a locally owned, family restaurant. Stop by 2830 SW Fairlawn Road, order online at www.pizagels.com or call them at (785) 273-7070 and see for yourself what Pizagel’s is all about.

Make the Most of the Summer at CAGE Gymnastics

The management team at CAGE Gymnastics is there because they love the sport of gymnastics. Love the athletes and are thrilled to pass on their knowledge and passion to the next generation of future coaches and athletes. CAGE is now offering a variety of Summer Camps for ages 3 to 10 years old, for all skill levels.

CAGE Gymnastics offers programs designed to promote age-appropriate skill development in a fun and safe environment. Your child will be able to build an athletic foundation for all sports through the strength, flexibility, and coordination that only the challenge of gymnastics can offer. As your child progresses, CAGE seeks to develop such principles as goal setting, time management, sportsmanship, dedication and discipline – all of which are important life-skills taught in each and every one of their programs. All of these aspects of learning contribute to a positive self-image and personal success.

From beginners to advanced students, the friendly staff will help you find the class or activity to meet you and your children’s goals.

CAGE Gymnastics preschool classes and lesson plans were designed with the developmental milestones of your preschooler in mind. All of their preschool gymnastics classes are taught in their “tots” room with some introduction into the main gym which will allow your child to feel more secure and to better maintain focus. Your child will participate in age-appropriate activities designed to enhance coordination, strength, flexibility, hand-eye coordination and exploration while learning gymnastics on specially-designed equipment just their size.

Once your child enters Kindergarten, they will be part of CAGE Gymnastics’ recreational program. All of their carefully thought-out classes are designed to foster your child’s love of physical fitness and gymnastics in a fun, challenging environment. Emphasis is placed on body awareness, speed, agility, flexibility and strength. The athletes will train on all four gymnastics apparatuses every week & be evaluated on their progress 4 times per year as they move up through our program.

If you are looking for a way to get your child to engage with others in a fun, physically active environment, then CAGE Gymnastics is the answer for you. Call them now at 785-266-4151.
CONCERTS
TOPEKA MUSIC ENSEMBLE – First Sat. of ea. month, 7-3pm, Potwin Presbyterian Church (207 S.W. Washburn). For info, contact S. Bennett, 382-4760 or sbennett@coh.org.
SPIRITUAL PAUSE – Every Wed., 12-12:30pm, Carlee Chapel at Washburn Univ. Infor. worship service. 783-23-3844

FREE WEEKLY COMMUNITY PANCAKE BREAKFAST – Saturday at 7am sharp. Of Oakland Church of the Nazarene. 900 block of NE Oakland. Followed by church services at 10am with Pastor John Kenwrick – which is in turn followed by an evnt at The Hope House FREE Community Food & Clothing Bank.

FIRST WEDNESDAY WESLEY CAFE – First Wed., 10:30am, Sycamore Wesley UMC. 1333-333 S.W. A worship service will follow at 11am. 785-478-3639 or www.kcwc.org

FIRST SATURDAY BREAKFAST BUFFET – 7:30 AM – 10:00 AM, Shawnee Heights United Methodist Church, 6020 S.W. 4th St.

BIBLICAL WOMANHOOD WORKSHOP – July 7, 9:30am-noon. Calvary Baptist Church, 433 S.W. Harrison. The morning session will be Don Simpson, from the Church of the Epiphany Baptist Church in Kansas City, Kan. The registration fee for the workshop is $10.

“SO WOMEN EVERY CHRISTIAN SHOULD KNOW” DISCUSSION – July 9, 6:30, Room 200, Manhattan College. Dr. Deborah Allsopp. The English Women’s group of Kansas Wesley UMC is sponsoring a reading program through the summer and fall. For more information, please call the Rev. Linda Holmquist at 785-463-7462.

SENIOR FIT & FUN PROGRAM – First Sat. of ea. month, 7-9pm, Bemerton Baptist Church. Bring snacks, have fun! For info, contact K. Cameron, 636-260-8320.

KANSAS PRairie PItCkERS – Fourth Sun. of ea. month, 1pm, Auburn Community-Valle Center. For info, contact C. Nelson, 357-8200.

SENIOR FIT & FUN PROGRAM – First Sat. of ea. month, 7-9pm, Bemerton Baptist Church. Bring snacks, have fun! For info, contact K. Cameron, 636-260-8320.

FREE MOVIE NIGHT – June 30, 6:30pm, Highland Heights Christian Church, 2930 SE Tecumseh Dr. Movie will be a family friendly and created by Kirk Cameron. It follows the ups and downs of a father of four trying to save his business from bankruptcy while his son struggles to succeed on his little league team. This well-written story shows how a family comes together in the midst of trying circumstances and stands strong for one another. Doors open at 6pm. Free movie snacks. 783-364-56. 

SPIRIT OF KANSAS INDEPENDENCE DAY & BLESSED FESTIVAL – July 4 & 5, 11am-7pm, Lake Shawnee, 1102 SE Tamarin Cir. Pony Rides, vendors, music & fireworks. Attendees may bring shade tents (they will be designated areas), coolers, blankets and chairs. Free event.

KINGDOM PLANS 4TH OF JULY PARADE – July 4, 11am, 12th Annual. Free Hot dog lunch in the park after the parade. Provided by Westview Presbyterian Church.

COLLINS PARK 4TH OF JULY PARADE – July 4, 11am. Collins Park neighborhood front yards and lane barbecues. Small bands perform before and after the parade, and others enjoy picnicking in the park that day. • There are parties all day long in the neighborhood.

FREEDOM WEEKEND – July 4, 9:30am.

TOPEKA SWING SOCIAL DANCE – June 30, 7pm. Jayhawk Theatre, 720 Jackson Ave. All ages and ability levels welcome. Admission is free, but a cash donation to the restoration of the Jayhawk Theatre is encouraged. Tickets allow you to slide, rather than stick to the floor.


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SHAWNEE SWINGERS SQUARE DANCE – Wednesdays, 6-9pm. 725 S.W. Washburn. For info, call 785-364-6001.


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CHRISTMAS IN JULY, CRAFT AND VENDOR FAIR

- July 27, 11-2pm. Expocentre. All the usual fare, plus pancake feed, 9:30pm. Downtown Topeka. Vendors, entertainment. Find out how many high-flipping pros. also a bake sale and bazaar, with many wonderful item available. Find out how many high-flipping pros. also a bake sale and bazaar, with many wonderful item available. Find out how many high-flipping pros. also a bake sale and bazaar, with many wonderful item available.

PARK WITHOUT LIMITS

– July 12, 11-2pm. Moose Bar & Grill, 11:30 A.M. on the third Thu & Fri & Saturday 7pm. $34-0467. Support for the most needy students. Sponsored by Topeka North Moose Bar & Grill.

SAFE STREETS MEETING

– Every Fri., Noon, Northland Christian Church, 3102 NW Topeka Blvd. Serving the youth of Topeka. For info: 286-0467.

TOPEKA PRAYER GROUP – Every Wed., 6:30pm, 360 Buchanan Blvd. Do you believe God hears and answers prayers? Do you believe Jesus wants to lead your life? Come join us in prayer as we seek His face for answers and directions. 785-232-2484, luke@winkeglobal.net.

WALK FOR APRAXIA

- July 21, 8-11am. Topeka Zoo on the south side of the river. $15; Child Registration (Under 18): $10. You can participate even if you are unable to be at the Walk by sponsoring a first come, first serve basis. www.kansasballet.com or email Information@kansasballet.com.

TOPEKA TREASURE HUNTER CLUB – 3rd Sun. of each month except May, Sep., & Dec. Tamarisk Landing Senior Center, 675 NW Partridge Rd. Memberships includes children & grandchildren up to 18. A place to meet friends to discuss all aspects of Metal Detecting, club business, plus socializing & entertainment.

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Merry-go-round, the Ferris Wheel and roller coaster at the nightly carnival beginning at 6 pm. Authentic Mexican clothing, jewelry, souvenirs and more. Free admission, www.dynasty222carnecas.com.

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Every Mon., 4-5pm : 12 Week Adult Group for Recent
200 SW Frazier Circle
Ongoing Adult Group       1st and 3rd Thu., 5:30pm :
Good for Others: Knitting & Crocheting for Local Char-
For All Groups: Call for start dates and info packet.
Group and individual grief support available upon
request. For info: 785-232-2044 ext.341
for women & men who suffer from Post-Abortion
come. Anne, 272-9249 or kittens812@sbcglobal.net
BIBLE QUIZZING
PURSUIT FOR SEXUAL PURITY
fun with area Christian youth age 9-19. YFC/YEA style
accountability group uses the Pure Desire book by Ted
Roberts. For info: 249-9509. All inquiries confidential.
business owners are invited to a Breakfast
WILLIAMSTOWN ASSEMBLY OF GOD, 1225 Oak St.,
For info: 235-2376.
COMMUNITY CENTER - second Sat., 10 am, Capital Building
SUPPORT GROUPS
MIDLAND CARE GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS: Building A,
200 SW Frazer Circle
Every Mon. - 4pm. 12 Week Adult Group for Recent
Lost, 1722 SW 30th St. 1st Sat. 7pm & 2nd Sat. 6pm
Ongoing Adult Group 1st and 3rd Thu., 5:30pm
Young Adult Group (18-35) Fri., 6pm - 8:30pm
For All Groups: Call for start dates and info packet.
Group and individual grief support available upon
request. For info: 751-2044 ext.44.
ABORTION RECOVERY SUPPORT - Providing services for
women & men who suffer from Post-Abortion Syndrome... can help heal a broken heart. For info:
Kay Lynn at KCHeartOnHeel.com.
AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS - for friends & families of alcoholics - info: 785-409-3072 or
topkeakansanonline.org.
PURSUIT FOR SEXUAL PURITY - Men struggling with
pornography & sexual addiction. This bible study accountable group uses the Pure Desire book by Ted
Roberts. For info: 284-3650. All inquiries confidential.
ALZHEIMER’S SUPPORT GROUPS - Monthly support group
meetings for caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer’s disease or a related dementia. For info:
Alzheimer’s Association, Heart of America Chapter, 275-2394 or email cindy.miller@alz.org.
“WE CARE” support group/bible study – Sun-
days 6-8pm. For women whose husbands struggle with pornography addiction or have had affairs. Video &
Game nights will give you hope for your marriage & emotional healing. For info: Janet Mitchell, 633-4294.
BICKERS AGAINST CHILD ABUSE – NC Kansas Chapter (IN ACA) 3rd Sun. 4pm, St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church, 101.
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MOB’S IN TOUCH PRAYER GROUP - Every Wed., 2:30-
3:30pm, Library at CarPause Lutheran School. Monthly support group for caregivers of special needs
students. For info: 751-2357.
JAYHAWK AREA AGENCY ON AGING – 4th Thu., 3pm,
Reedville Place Clubhouse. Monthly support group for
videocassette recorders.
DIVORCECARE PROGRAMS - For updates check
www.divorcecare.org) locations and times.
Call for info: 751-5901.
Jurassic World revives old plot lines, not just dinosaurs

Claire Dearing is different now. She’s had a change of heart. Whereas she used to be all about the business of managing the dinosaurs at the theme park Jurassic World, she’s now much more invested in protecting the endangered creatures that once populated that mega-vacation attraction.

All it took was watching the place be destroyed. And seeing thousands of panicked, screaming people run for their lives from raging dinosaurs. And … nearly being ripped apart by those prehistoric beasts herself.

Now, you’d sorta think she might be ready to see those massive deadly monsters returned to the “extinct” side of the ledger after all that. But Claire has actually discovered a humane side to herself that she didn’t know was there. So when one of the men who created the original Jurassic Park—a billionaire named Benjamin Lockwood—offers his help in saving the creatures, she’s more than willing to become a part of that rescue endeavor.

Lockwood is offering a vast new island home for Tyrannosaurus, Pachycephalosaurus and 10 other dino species. It’s an isolated place where they’ll be free to roam with no fences, cages or tourists. Claire just has to join a party that’s going back to the devastated Jurassic World park and gather up as many dinosaurs as possible. With her help, they can unlock the resort’s security systems and transport the creatures to safety before a newly active volcano destroys everything. (As if catching dinosaurs wasn’t a big enough challenge already!)

Of course, to capture the incredibly intelligent raptor named Blue—an advanced velociraptor that surely deserves more study—they’ll also need one Owen Grady as part of the rescue effort. He was key to Blue’s training. He was also pretty sweet on Claire. So it all sorts out well.

What Claire, Owen even Mr. Lockwood don’t know, however, is that not everyone involved with Lockwood’s supposed rescue effort is on the up-and-up. In fact, some still see those resurrected reptiles as a means to making a fortune.

There’s even one individual who’s reequipped an old lab site and started a new program to create aggressive hybrid dinosaurs that wealthy madmen and world despots will pay handsomely for.

All that guy needs is the right blend of dinosaur DNA. And Benjamin Lockwood is going to unwittingly finance all of the DNA-gathering that this hidden agent’s plan requires.

Sure, mixing nefarious money-making schemes with ferocious three-story-high deadly creatures crafted from excavated dinosaur DNA—there’s nothing new or right about that. Besides, you’re an adult. Not a big enough challenge already?)

But what if the guy is right? What if the ethics of recreating or exterminating dangerously aggressive hybrid dinosaurs are worth a shot on a rainy Tuesday? D irected by Steven Spielberg. Joe toys, while Season 2—which recently debuted on Netflix—examines Star Trek, Transformers, LEGO and Hello Kitty toys. Each episode spans about 43 minutes and examines the little-known history of the toys of our youth: Such as how Kenner—a little-known toy manufacturer of the 1970s—landed the Star Wars contract. Or how LEGO nearly went bankrupt before it became the huge corporation of today. Or how Barbie’s creator drew inspiration from a German toy.

It’s not a dry documentary, though. It’s fast-paced and sometimes quirky “trip back in time” that will leave you wanting more. But, please, don’t start collecting toys again.

The Bible (Matthew 6:19-21) has something to say about that. Besides, you’re an adult. Each episode is rated TV-14, and there is only occasional language.

Sick of the programing his former employer continues to make for young viewers, producer Butch Hartman has announced he will launch a 24/7 streaming platform where families will be able to watch safe content.

Hartman, a former producer for Nickelodeon where he worked for 20 years, says he has formed a new company known as Oaxis Entertainment. His television credits include some of Nickelodeon’s biggest animated series including “The Fairly Odd Parents,” “Danny Phantom,” “T.U.F.F. Puppy and Bursert.”

He’s hoping to raise $250,000 in the next 30 days in order to hire the staff to create original content and to acquire content that is on the same par with Oaxis’ family-focused objectives.

The producer says his company will be a safe place where families and their children can be entertained without being “immersed with exploitative or violent content.”

“I’ve been in the entertainment industry for forty years. I’ve seen the good, the bad and the ugly. Now, it’s time to bring back the magic of our youth and make sure there is only occassional language.”
**Mister Rogers Neighborhood**

**leads July's family-friendly spotlight**

By Michael Foust

There was a time I enjoyed watching the news, perusing Twitter, and scanning Facebook. No longer.

Those days are long gone due to a culture that has forgotten how to disagree without being disagreeable. Friendly dialogue has been replaced on those platforms with a cesspool of shouting and endless arguments—and it's affecting every part of our culture.

Perhaps we need to go back to the basics, beginning with how to have conversations and make friends. Perhaps a visit to Mister Rogers' Neighborhood would help.

The man behind the iconic show -- Fred Rogers -- would have been 90 this year. He passed away in 2003 but is being remembered in 2018 with a theatrical documentary (Won’t You Be My Neighbor?). Additionally, Tom Hanks is playing Rogers in an upcoming movie.

But did you know that more than 100 episodes of Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood are already streaming on Amazon Prime? It’s a much-needed television for our children, but it’s helpful TV for adults, too.

Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood fills the No. 1 position on this month’s edition of “5 Family-Friendly Things.”

In what other television show can you learn how to forgive others, how to make orange juice, and how to tie your shoes, too?

Rogers did not discuss his faith explicitly on his program but nevertheless wanted it to be his “ministry” to the country. He was an ordained Presbyterian minister and graduated in the 1960s from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Shortly thereafter, he launched his TV program.

Also worth watching this month:

**2. America’s Got Talent**

Moderate-day talent shows spotlight singers. NBC’s America’s Got Talent — in its 12th season — gives everyone the stage. Illusionists, dancers, comicentors, and yes, singers too. Occasionally the acts upend the norm. Illusionists, dancers, contortionists play the television. (Beyond The Circle, #1), by Ted Dekker, and Charles Martin’s Send Down the Rain.

If you read the Circle books which consisted of Black, White, Red and Green, then you will be excited to once again read his latest book which ties in with some of the characters of the previous books. The 49th Mystic is even better in the way that Dekker brings out the spiritual insights through his characters. If you’ve never read these books, here is what to expect—they are allegorical in nature. The new main character, named Rachelle Matthews, lives in a small town named Eden, Utah, which has been established as an experiment by well-meaning people who are infiltrated by someone who has a sinister side. Rachelle is blind but acrher finds out about something that can possibly restore her sight. She becomes the target of the sinister person, discovers that when she falls asleep, she wakes up in another world, etc. which is what happened with Thomas in Dekker’s previous books. In this book we have the struggle between good and evil, darkness and light, all told in an exciting, adventurous saga as Rachelle discovers her place in an ancient prophecy. I highly recommend it!

Charles Martin has written several really great fictional Christian stories. His last book, Long Way Gone, was a modern day retelling of the biblical story of the prodigal son. This one, Send Down the Rain, is also very riveting from beginning to end as you follow the story of a man named Seth who has suffered in body and spirit as a result of trauma at home and in Vietnam.

The story captures you from the very beginning with characters that come into his life from a refugee little family whom he becomes involved with, and they all eventually wind up in Florida where he has a bitserrewwien with his childhood sweetheart. The story builds all the way to its surprising ending when the truth is revealed. Charles Martin is a great storyteller!

**For Young Readers**

This summer would be a good time to get your child’s version of I Can Only Imagine, A Friendship with Jesus Now and Forever, by Bart Millard and Laura Neutzling. It’s beautifully illustrated from beginning to end and a wonderful way to talk about heaven with your child.

Instead of the usual lyrics of the beloved song, it puts into the kinds questions children would be asking, i.e. “Do you wake up in heaven with your hair all men? Must you make up your bed right before you get dressed? Is there breakfast in heaven when your tummy’s all rumbly.” Your kids will love it!

— By Rachel Carmell

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**These top pick books can’t be beat for summer reading**

- Summer has begun and so has the rush to find the perfect books to read. Rachel Campbell is the owner of Beacon Book and Bible in Belton, Mo. She’s compiled a list of new books you may have overlooked. Whether for the beach, the long car ride, or the shade on your deck, you’re sure to find something to keep you cool and interested through the long, lazy, hazy days of summer! — Editor

- Just Open the Door, by Jen Schmidt, will help you to understand how inviting people into our lives and homes can be so much deeper and more memorable than ever the movie could capture. You will not regret picking this book up, but you may have a hard time putting it down! There are many things you learn in the book that help to make even more sense of the things depicted in the movie. It is so good that every time one of my customers would ask if I’d seen the movie, I would come back with “Have you read the book?” It will also make you even more appreciative of how the group MercyMe stuck it out through many long road trips before they became such a well-known group, and you’ll find yourself encouraged by the faithfulness of God.

- You’ll learn that Bart has a brother which isn’t shown in the movie and so many other things regarding his dad and his relationship with his girlfriend who finally becomes his wife.

- Don’t Forget the Fiction! Two good fiction reads are The 49th Mystic (Beyond the Circle, #1), by Ted Dekker, and Charles Martin’s Send Down the Rain.

- If you read the Circle books which consisted of Black, White, Red and Green, then you will be excited to once again read his latest book which ties in with some of the characters of the previous books. The 49th Mystic is even better in the way that Dekker brings out the spiritual insights through his characters. If you’ve never read these books, here is what to expect—they are allegorical in nature. The new main character, named Rachelle Matthews, lives in a small town named Eden, Utah, which has been established as an experiment by well-meaning people who are infiltrated by someone who has a sinister side. Rachelle is blind but acrher finds out about something that can possibly restore her sight. She becomes the target of the sinister person, discovers that when she falls asleep, she wakes up in another world, etc. which is what happened with Thomas in Dekker’s previous books. In this book we have the struggle between good and evil, darkness and light, all told in an exciting, adventurous saga as Rachelle discovers her place in an ancient prophecy. I highly recommend it!

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**Vventure continued from page 18**

“As a family man working in Hollywood my goal has always been to provide quality entertainment that everyone can enjoy,” Hartman said. “With Oasis, I now have an opportunity to give families the chance to connect and experience quality entertainment together again.”

The new company’s programming will include animated series, comedy, drama, sports, feature films, reality series, fitness programs, news, and video games. Plus, the platform will have a user-based upload feature that will allow users to add their own family-oriented content for other users to enjoy. All uploaded content will be screened to ensure that it is suitable for all users when it is published.

Hartman’s goal is to start his new venture next year.
Sunburn-causing melanoma avoided with sunscreen

If you’re wondering whether it’s worth the trouble and expense to use sunscreen, consider this: Only one blistering sunburn you get as a child or adolescent doubles your risk for skin cancer when you’re older, and the risk goes up from one blistering sunburn you get as years.

SPF 30 means it takes 30 times longer for your skin to burn than if you were not wearing sunscreen at all. However, sunscreen doesn’t protect as well as we think.

The main problem is human error. Sunscreen should be applied:
• Every Two Hours
• To Dry Skin
• Generously

Manufacturer error also plays a part. In its annual report ranking sunscreens, Consumer Reports discovered the number on the bottle isn’t always accurate: Of the 58 sunscreens rated by Consumer Reports this year, 20 of them tested at less than half of the SPF listed on their label. For example, one was labeled SPF 30, but the protection it actually provided was about 15.

Here are some of the top-rated sunscreens according to Consumer Reports:
• La Roche-Posay, Anthelios 60 Melt-in Sunscreen Milk, $36
• Equate, Sport Lotion SPF 50, $5
• Pure, Sun Defense Disney Frozen Lotion SPF 50, $6
• Coppertone, WaterBabies Lotion SPF 50, $12
• Equate, Ultra Protection Lotion SPF 50, $8

In its new report, Environmental Working Group claims that 73% of the 880 sunscreens it tested don’t work as well as advertised or contain “worsomie” ingredients such as oxybenzone, which they claim is a hormone disruptor and retinyl palmitate, which according to government studies on animals caused they developed skin tumors. EWG recommends choosing products with zinc oxide and titanium oxide instead.

The American Academy of Dermatology recommends choosing a sunscreen with an SPF between 30 and 50. More than 50 is not necessary because while properly applied SPF 50 sunscreen blocks 98 percent of burning rays, an SPF 100 blocks 99 percent. High-SPF products require higher concentrations of sun-filtering chemicals than low-SPF sunscreens. Perhaps the biggest drawback of very high SPF sunscreens is the false sense of security they provide because people mistakenly assume they offer longer lasting protection than lower SPF sunscreens.

Also, use caution if using a spray sunscreen. Creams might be better than sprays because people tend to apply creams more generously and thoroughly, whereas people tend to spray lightly and can easily miss spraying certain areas. Furthermore, sprays can become airborne and inhaled.

Finally, using sunscreen is just one way to help prevent skin cancer. The Skin Cancer Foundation says whenever possible, seek shade or cover your skin. Also, avoid tanning beds.

A Self-Help Approach to Coping with Caregiver Stress

By Carol Bradley Bursack

Caregiving can bring forth an ever-changing kaleidoscope of emotions. These feelings are often bittersweet, and without the proper preparations and assistance, things can quickly skew towards bitter. Left unchecked, many of these emotions may lead to guilt, depression, anxiety and caregiver burnout.

While therapy is recommended for people who are struggling with these negative feelings, many wish to handle such challenges on their own. Professional help can be extremely beneficial, but there are steps that caregivers can take by themselves to better handle the emotional complexities of caregiving and get more comfortable with the idea of seeking outside assistance.

Realize That You Matter, Too

Former graphic designer Koko Kawasaki is no stranger to the importance of respite and self-care for caregivers. The experience of caring for her father who suffered from multiple health issues, including stroke and vascular dementia, inspired her to earn her master’s degree in gerontology to help other families like hers.

Self-care tends to be one of the biggest challenges for those who are caring for ill and aging loved ones, but Kawasaki agrees that it is a necessity for wellness of the entire care team. Even though this is a need we all understand the importance of, there is something about caregiving that triggers guilt in anyone who yearns for a moment to pursue physical and mental healing.

“I initially did not think of caring for myself because I thought it would take time away from caring for my father,” Kawasaki admits. Determining how much time and effort to devote to oneself is a common dilemma for many family caregivers. Even when they allow themselves a marginal amount of respite, many fear they are being selfish with their resources.

“In time, though,” Kawasaki recalls, “I realized that if I didn’t make self-care a priority, my attitude and my ability to look after my father would both be negatively affected. In hindsight, I believe that making time for myself enhanced the caregiving experience for both of us.” This realization is a fundamental part of the care journey that comes too late for many. Unfortunately, failing to recognize that your own health matters can have significant and often lasting physical and mental consequences.

Finding a Path to Self-Help

The concept of self-care is different for each person. As our responsibilities and relationships shift throughout our lives, the ways we prefer to recharge ourselves can change. Caregiving imposes limitations on time, energy and financial resources, causing many to abandon the hobbies and pastimes they previously enjoyed. Some search for new types of respite that better fit with their new routine, but the bottom line is that caregivers must establish some sort of realistic self-care regimen that works for them.

For example, Kawasaki’s regimen consisted of daily physical and spiritual activities. “For exercise, I took brisk walks on most days, even if I had only 20 or 30 minutes of spare time. The physical activity helped me to decompress and I would feel better immediately,” she assures. “My spiritual practice was also a vital part of my self-care. As a Buddhist, I chant daily and this practice helped me to stay focused yet flexible as a caregiver. It gave me spiritual nourishment that sustained me during the difficult times I faced as a caregiver. Other things that I did to self-care included short weekend getaways with my spouse (when I could) and spending time having coffee or dinner with friends.”

During her undergraduate studies, Kawasaki developed a program called “Encircle” that would provide caregiver support through community workshops and other resources. “As the demand for caregiving grows, it places the population of family caregivers at risk for poor health, strained family relations, financial difficulties and lower quality of life for both caregivers and care recipients,” she explains. The goal of this experimental program was to break...
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down caregiver support into fundamental pieces that caregivers could implement on their own, receive through community initiatives or both.

The Encircle program included:

- Workshops on self-care, healthy eating and exercise
- Neighborhood walk/talk groups
- A “buddy system” with a fellow caregiver to provide respite and friendship
- Phone check-ins with a buddy
- A video library of funny comedy films
- Positive incentives for healthy behavior

While Encircle was an experimental program, there is hope that similar initiatives will begin to catch on around the country. They are certainly needed.

Meanwhile, caregivers can accomplish some of these objectives by connecting with fellow caregivers and seeking out community resources.

Additional Ideas for Your Self-Care Regimen

No single approach works for everyone, but one or more of these suggestions may help you improve your quality of life. Pick and choose to create your own wellness program.

- Mindfulness exercises like yoga, meditation and journaling can be soothing.
- Art. Forget being “good” at it and just express yourself. Get some supplies and let yourself go. Draw anger, draw depression, draw grief. Draw what would make you happy. The process of releasing your feelings in a visual way is very cathartic. Adult coloring books are another popular stress reliever for those who prefer to place more emphasis on a simple creative outlet in order to destress.
- Listen to music that relaxes you, music that brings out the emotions you’re feeling or music that helps you recall a simpler time. Learn to play an instrument that you’ve always wanted to play. Again, being “good” isn’t the point. This is about doing something that you might enjoy and that shifts your focus to something constructive and personally rejuvenating.
- Games and applications for emotional health abound on the internet. Browse to see if you find something that is appealing to you. Many of these are meant to relieve stress, anxiety, anger and self-doubt.
- Positive self-talk training is available through community initiatives or both.
- Mindfulness exercises like yoga, meditation and journaling can be soothing. Physical stress relief can come in many forms. Handheld stress toys and gadgets, like those used in occupational therapy, can provide comfort anywhere. Exercise programs such as a gym membership, walking with a friend or using a video for guidance can help you feel healthier and more in tune with life.
- Even if you aren’t concerned with getting in shape or losing weight, staying active provides a constructive outlet for pent up emotions.
- Do something for someone else. This can mean volunteering at a place that feeds the homeless, donating clothing for those who need job interview outfits, or teaching crafting ideas or gardening to others who could benefit from learning a therapeutic skill. Although caregivers tend to have little free time, giving back to the community can expand your social networks, allow you to enjoy a change of scenery and help you find purpose outside of caregiving. Contact local organizations or your community center for more ideas.
- Pets can be a wonderful source of joy for caregivers and seniors alike, but don’t adopt one unless you truly have the time to devote to properly caring for and training an animal. Spending time with animals can be a great stress-reducer. Attend a support group. There’s nothing like being part of a group of people who understand exactly what you are going through.

MEdICARE VS. MEdICAIrD

Medicare and Medicaid sound very similar but they are two very distinct programs. This article will provide a basic overview of each federal program and describe how each is funded by our federal government.

Medicare

Medicare is America’s health insurance program for people age 65 or older. Some people under age 65 may also qualify for Medicare due to certain disabilities, permanent kidney failure or Lou Gehrig’s disease. The program, signed into law July 30, 1965 by President Johnson, helps with the cost of healthcare, but it does not cover all medical expenses or the cost of long-term care.

Medicare is financed by general revenues, a portion of payroll taxes paid by workers and employers, and by monthly premiums deducted from Social Security or Railroad Retirement checks. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is the agency in charge of the Medicare program.

Medicaid

Medicaid is a federal government program designed to provide healthcare coverage to people with low income and limited assets, other than the home they live in. Medicaid is funded jointly by federal and state governments. The federal government reimburses each state a percentage of program expenditures, although the federal government establishes certain parameters for all states to follow, each state administers and funds their Medicaid program differently. This results in variations in Medicaid coverage across the country.

Medicaid provides free or low-cost health insurance coverage to qualified low-income individuals. This includes eligible adults, children, pregnant women, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Medicaid may also pay Medicare premiums and out-of-pocket expenses for persons enrolled in both programs. About 15% of Medicaid beneficiaries also have coverage with Medicaid.

Summary

While Medicare and Medicaid are different public health programs, it is easy to see why the programs are often confused. The programs have similar names and a similar purpose, i.e. to provide health insurance coverage.

The difference is Medicare is primarily designed for individuals age 65 and older, and Medicaid provides assistance to qualified individuals due to low-income.

Century Health Solutions is a subsidiary of Stormont Vail Health, Topeka, and provides free Medicare Educational Seminars. We are your local expert in Medicare insurance planning and will help you find the best option for your personal situation. Call us at 785-270-4593 Monday-Friday, 8:00am-4:30pm with questions or to sign up for a free seminar. For more information go to www.centuryinsurancesagencyks.com or email info@century-health.com.
Super Bowl MVP Nick Foles’ new book goes behind-the-scenes

When the Philadelphia Eagles’ starting quarterback went down with a torn ACL in week 14 of the 2017 NFL season, many fans—and commentators—assumed the Eagles’ season was over.

Instead, Nick Foles came off the bench and, against all odds, led the Eagles to their first Super Bowl victory in history.

Foles’ new book Believe It offers a behind-the-scenes look at his unlikely path to the Super Bowl, the obstacles that threatened to hold him back, his rediscovery of his love for the game, and the athletes and tribulations that made him into the best thing that ever happened because they feel like they’re the only ones that feel that way. We’re professional athletes and we have moments where we step back and think and assess everything in our life,” Foles said in a press conference Sunday after the Super Bowl.

Foles decided to stick with his NFL career and was picked up by the Kansas City Chiefs, where he was a backup for one season behind Alex Smith. The Chiefs released Foles at the end of that season and the quarterback moved to the Eagles for the 2017 season.

2015, Foles became a free agent for the first time in his career in the summer of 2016 when his chances of becoming a starter for the Rams fell through.

“I had to take a week off when I was a free agent just to think about it, and it was the best thing that ever happened because I think people are fearful of feeling that way because they feel like they’re the only ones that feel that way. We’re professional athletes and we have moments where we step back and think and assess everything in our life,” Foles said in a press conference Sunday after the Super Bowl.

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GreatLife offers professionals to help your golf game

How’s your game? Does it need some work? What are you doing to improve? If you just keep practicing the same way at the range, are you really expecting to get better? Practice only helps if you practice the right way.

Relying on your golfing buddy’s advice may be no worse. What works for him may not work for you. Every golfer has an individual style, but we all need help to make sure be are doing the basics correctly.

Spending a few bucks on lessons can help you enjoy the game more and score better when you play. A golf professional can be a great investment for a small cost (compared to what you spend on clubs, accessories, fees, etc.).

GreatLife golf in Topeka has several golf professionals who can help you fix your golf game. One of them may be the right choice for your quest to improve your scoring and enjoy the game more this summer.

Joey Martina\nk has been a PGA Professional since 1994 and has been in the Topeka area since 1980. Martina\nk is a graduate of Washburn Rural High School and Washburn University and has been teaching golf in the community for 27 years. He started in the golf business in 1985 at Cedar Crest Country Club, which is now Western Hills. He then moved on to Colly Creek, now Berkshire, for 3 years from 1991-1993. After that, a stint at Manhattan country club, he moved back to Topeka in 1996 and has been at Shawnee Country Club ever since.

Martina\nk says he tries to keep his golf lessons sweet & simple. “I like to give a person only 3-4 items to think about at each lesson, and then build on that the next time,” he said. “I don’t want them to get overloaded with too much information.”

He also thinks most golfers need to focus on their short game more, which is a huge part of their golf score. “Many golfers only work on hitting drivers at the range,” he said.

Martina\nk considers himself a positive person, he wants his students to be positive also, and to be excited about the lessons. In the end, he says, there’s only one best way to improve.

“Practice, practice, practice – especially on the short game,” he said.

To schedule a time with Martina\nk at Shawnee Country Club or any other GreatLife Topeka location, contact him by phone at 785-554-2825 or by email at joey.martina@greatlife.com.

Ronnie McHenry has been in Topeka most of his life graduating from Shawnee Heights High School. After High School he went on to play golf at Washburn University and while there he also graduated with a Business degree in Marketing and Management. After College Ronnie moved to Dodge City, Kansas, to become the Golf Professional at Dodge City Country Club. While in Dodge City he moved up to be the General Manager and Golf Pro at the Club. He is now the resident pro and manager at GreatLife Golf at Western Hills.

McHenry has also had a passion for Junior Golf for a very long time. He first got involved at age six or seven. Later on, while pursuing golf at Washburn University, he worked with young golfers during the summers. And now he heads up the Junior Golf program for GreatLife in the greater Topeka area, offering golf summer camps and individual lessons. McHenry says he likes getting kids started off right in golf at a young age, which helps them learn it faster and get more enjoyment from a game they can play their entire lives.

McHenry is available for golf lessons for adults and kids all year long. For more information contact McHenry at GreatLife Golf at Western Hills by calling 785-478-400 or email him at Ronnie.Mchenry@greatlifeGolf.com.

Jane Yi is an LPAG Certified Instructor with GreatLife Topeka. A Kansas native and member of the LPAG T&SCP since 2003, Jane has worked several Golf Clubs in Kansas, Florida and Maryland. A Shawnee Heights & Kansas State University graduate and golf team member, she has competed in over 100 tournaments. She was a KSU All-American collegiate Player and the 1999 Kansas State Women’s Champion.

With over 20 years of experience in Instruction, Yi specializes in Tournament Play and Game Management for all levels and ages of students. Her motto is “Developing the right fit & approach to your game. Golf = More Fun Times!” Yi can be reached at JaneYiGolf@gmail.com. Summertime is a great time to workon improving your golf game. Call your favorite golf professional and make sure your practice time is well spent.
Dare to Dream

Add functional, appealing features for a desirable home

(Family Features) Turning your home into the living space of your dreams takes effort and commitment, but while the weather is warm and motivation is on your side, it's time to put your visions to the test.

Whether you choose to start your renovation project on the inside or outside, for fun or for function, the important part is committing to getting it done and doing it right. That includes finding the right materials and products to suit your specific needs and style, whether it's for closet organization, a beautiful kitchen upgrade, adding features like skylights or anything in between.

Your dreams and desires for your home are attainable and within your reach, so long as you're devoted and willing to put in the time. Find more home upgrade tips and tricks at eLivingToday.com.

Natural Light and Fresh Air from Above
You can brighten your space in an eco-friendly way with Energy Star-qualified, solar-powered fresh air skylights from Velux America, which provide natural light and ventilation to reduce energy costs. Adding solar-powered blinds can further increase energy efficiency. The skylights carry a 10-year, no-leak installation warranty and, along with the blinds, operate by remote control, closing automatically when it rains. Both products, along with installation costs, qualify for a 30 percent federal tax credit. To find certified installers, visit whyskylights.com.

Versatile Home Storage
It's time to get organized. Turn any closet or area in your home into a designer-inspired storage showcase with ClosetMaid’s SuiteSymphony line. This affordable, DIY system is available in multiple finishes and styles, and offers accessories such as doors, drawers, shoe shelves and expandable hang rods for total customization. Find free design, inspiration and organization solutions at closetmaid.com/suitesymphony.

Functional Furniture
Ideal for enjoying a serene cup of coffee or welcoming guests for some outdoor fun, you can liven up your backyard space with a patio furniture set to help both aethetically and functionally. The right set for your deck, patio or yard can lend a pleasing element to the eye and a comfortable spot to sit and eat, drink or rest after a friendly game of whiffle ball. Available in myriad colors and combinations, look for patio furniture that matches your style and personal preferences.

Backyard Gateway
Find a comfortable temperature and enter your most relaxed state at any time with your own backyard hot tub. The gateway to a restful opportunity, a hot tub gives you a chance to close your eyes and unwind whether it's the end of a long day or starting out your Saturday morning. With varying options like inground or above and a multitude of sizes, plus the ability to tune individual jets to your liking, a backyard hot tub can be the perfect personal oasis.

A Finishing Touch
Bring everything together in a kitchen or bathroom with the subtle feature that can sometimes be forgotten—the faucet. Extravagant or simple, modern or classic, the faucet can serve multiple aesthetic purposes like catching attention upon entering the room or simply complementing the design elements around it. Adding the final touch with the right faucet can be a beautiful way to wrap up a room.

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   Children’s Worship 9 & 11 am
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NOTO Arts Center offers summer classes

The NOTO Arts Center offers an array of classes featuring artists from the NOTO district and the community. Classes range from brief, one session workshops to multi-session classes designed to enhance knowledge and technique:

Barn Quilts
Across the Midwest, adding a painted quilt pattern on wood to decorate your barn, garage or interior, has taken Pinterest by storm. There are even barn quilt tours. Learn the simple techniques for painting one of your own.

Levels: No prior experience required.
Dates, Times: Tuesdays, July 3, 10, 24 – 3-5:30 PM
Materials: Furnished
Instructor: Shelly Bedsaul. Fee: $70

July Watercolor
Learn the basics of this magical medium by understanding how to work with water, simple drawing, water, brushes and color.

Levels: Adult Beginners, Intermediate
Dates, Times: Thursdays, July 5, 12, 19, 26 9-11:30 AM

Instructor: Barbara Waterman-Peters
Fee: $90. Materials: NOT furnished.

Mixed Media Collage
Learn methods of creating an image by working with color, shapes and various materials. No prior experience required.
Levels: Adult Beginners
 Dates, Times: Saturday, July 7, 1-3:30 pm
Instructor: Larry Peters

Spirit Collage
In this class you will explore the essence of yourself through collage. Participants will learn collage and mixed media techniques as a medium for self-expression and self-exploration.
Levels: No prior experience required.
Dates, Times: Tuesdays, July 17 – 3:00-5:30 PM
Instructor: Mark Brenneman
Fee: $30

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 com mendeth 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.