



KAREN PECK & NEW RIVER

Page 17

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MERCY AND ME”

PAGE 24

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NEW RESIDENT churchguide



Harvest Family Fellowship

See inside back cover!

“Kids Ride Free!” on city buses



Topeka kids can now look forward to a break from school as well as free transportation around Topeka on city buses.

Since the summer of 2013, Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority has offered bus transportation at no cost on all fixed routes to youth ages 18 and under. They have again launched this popular promotion, beginning May 15.

“Summertime is full of activities and Topeka Metro is proud to offer the youth in our community free rides to some of their favorite places in the city,” said Bob Nugent, Topeka Metro general man-

■ Please see FREE RIDE page 3

Have American Values Shifted?



Majority still see hard work, tolerance, and religion as important

By Elizabeth Nolan Brown

Gone are the days when liberals or conservatives would advocate that the government stay out of... well, anything. A new poll suggests that maybe this political impulse is rooted in a deeper values shift. Only 58 percent of those surveyed said tolerance for others is a very important value, down from 80

percent who said as much four years ago.

The latest Wall Street Journal-NORC poll found other shifts in public opinion as well. For instance, just 38 percent of respondents said patriotism was very important to them and just 39 percent said the same about religion, down from 70 percent and 62 percent in 1998, when the ques-

tion was first asked. “The share of Americans who say that having children, involvement in their community and hard work are very important values has also fallen,” the Journal reports.

But have American values really shifted all that much? While the percentage of poll respondents naming various values as very im-

■ Please see VALUES page 2

Jayhawk Theatre gets \$5 million for renovations



Revitalization plans for the historic Jayhawk Theatre have been in the works for decades and now they have gotten a big assist.

The grants come from pandemic “SPARK” funds, which support capital projects that spur regional economic development in the tourism industry.

“What the money will help us do is finish our architectural plans and really get started on some of the mechanical instruction. This building is 97 years old. It has almost nothing modern in it and so that’s a

■ Please see JAYHAWK page 3

Pools, mini-train and other attractions now open for the summer

Summer has unofficially started, as Shawnee County Pools, Aquatic Centers and the Lake Shawnee Adventure Cove are all officially open! Grab a towel and some sunscreen and make a splash!

A spokesman for Shawnee County Parks and Recreation wants to give people some reminders when heading to the pool.

“Be ready for the water to be a little cool,” Mike McLaughlin Communications and Information Supervisor for Parks and Rec said. “It needs some warm, sunny days to help it warm up. But, remember all the usual summer precautions. Bring sunscreen and hydrate. Even though you’re in the water, you need to hydrate.”

Starting this year you can bring

■ Please see POOLS page 2



Two non-profits will host Community Walk/Passport to Health

The Twilight Branch of the Topeka Lions Club has taken on the challenge to provide a service to the community that focuses on Diabetes. Lions International has five main causes including: Diabetes · Vision · Hunger · Environment · Childhood Cancer.

They will partner with Midland Care/24 For Life to present the Community Walk/Passport to Health for the second year in a row. The event will be held in Gage Park on Saturday, June 24.

"We wanted there to be no barrier to have members of our community come take a walk in the park and learn more about the risks of Type 2 diabetes, so we are offering this as a free event," said Irene Haws, President of the Topeka Twilight Lions.

Participants can save time by signing up in advance and taking the risk test for pre-diabetes online. Doing so will earn them additional chances in the prize drawing after completing the walk and getting their passport stamped. Both links are at www.topekalions.org/community-walk. Topeka Lions Foundation, a registered non-profit organization, is still accepting donated prizes to be awarded.

To register for the event, go to www.topekalions.org/community-walk. For more information or to donate a prize, contact Irene Haws, 785-249-1913.

24 For Life Offers Lifestyle Change & Prevents Type 2 Diabetes

It's Summertime! Perhaps that means taking walks, riding a bike, or spending time in the garden. If you're having a hard time getting back into the swing of your activities after the winter season, consider 24 For Life, a Diabetes prevention program. The 24 For Life program will help teach you simple ways to be more active, eat healthier, and develop lasting habits.

Thanks to a grant with the American Diabetes Association, participants who qualify as pre diabetic can be a part of this 24 For Life Program at no cost.

In the last 20 years, the number of adults diagnosed with diabetes has more than doubled as the American population has aged and become more overweight or obese, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

With the 24 For Life program, you are given a trained lifestyle coach that will lead the program in a way that helps you make adjustments in your lifestyle such as eating healthier, reducing stress, and getting more physical activity. The research from the CDC shows that making modest behavior changes helped participants lose 5 to 7 percent of their body weight. These lifestyle changes reduced the risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes by 58 percent in people

with prediabetes.

These modifications easily fit into your already busy lives. As these participant experiences show, you can be successful. The group support you will receive from those on the journey alongside you will be invaluable as you share your goals and struggles. "The program reminds us of how to overcome stress in our lives and how it can affect our health. We talk through all the ways to help us get through these stressful times," said Vanessa, a 24 For Life participant. "I

was devastated when the doctor said I was prediabetic and I needed to start medication. Honestly, I was reluctant to start 24 For Life, but knew it was for my own good and besides, it was totally free. My first goal was to lose 5% of my weight, but at the half-way point, I lost 10%! My doctor even cut my medication in half," said Kelly, a 24 For Life par-



ticipant.

During each session, your lifestyle coach will facilitate a lesson and group discussion. Some examples, of the things we will learn along the way are how to:

- Eat healthier
- Add physical activity to your life
- Manage stress

- Stay on track when eating out
- Understand your responses to food
- Stay motivated
- Solve problems that can get in the way of healthy changes

If you're interested in learning more about 24 For Life visit www.midland-care.org/24forLife or contact Donna Doel at 785-250-5210.

POOLS

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outside food and non-alcoholic drinks to any of Shawnee County's aquatic centers. Each cooler is \$10.

The Lake Shawnee Adventure

Cove offers opportunities to dive into an inflatable playground featuring a floating iceberg, an aqua trampoline, and plenty more thrilling attractions! The Cove will be open from 11:30am to 7pm, offering an array of water activities.

You can rent paddle boats, paddle boards, canoes, and kayaks for just \$8 per hour.

Gather your friends, pack your sunscreen, and prepare for an unforgettable adventure at Lake Shawnee Adventure Cove!

Fitness swimming is available from 8-9:30 a.m. Mon.-Fri. at Shawnee North Family Aquatic Center from May 31-Aug. 4.

Admission is \$5 OR you may use your Aquatic Fitness Pass, which may be purchased at the

aquatic center.

The hours of the Gage Park mini-train and carousel have also changed to daily summer hours! They're now open from noon-6:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri. and 11 a.m.-6:30 p.m. on the weekends.

VALUES

continued from page 1

portant has declined, the vast majority still said that things like hard work, patriotism, and tolerance were at least somewhat important.

A look at the polling data reveals that 94 percent still say hard work is very or somewhat important, for instance. Some 67 percent say it's very important and only 3 percent say it's not important at all.

The percentage who say tolerance for others is very important did indeed shrink—but 90 percent still say it's a very or somewhat impor-

tant value.

Some 70 percent of those surveyed still say marriage is very or somewhat important; 65 percent say having children is very or somewhat important; 80 percent say community involvement is very or somewhat important; and 60 percent still say religion is very or somewhat important.

Americans are still plenty patriotic as well, according to this poll. In all, 73 percent say patriotism is very or somewhat important.

Findings like fewer people attaching extreme importance to patriotism are sometimes portrayed as unabashed negatives. But of course

they could reflect positive developments, like an increased willingness to question government authority, more realism about America's flaws, or a comedown from the sort of jingoism that got us the worst of the war on terror.

And tucked in the less publicized poll results are a number of unequivocally positive findings.

For instance, most people surveyed said they are happy, with 56 percent saying they are "pretty happy" and 12 percent saying they are "very happy."

Those surveyed were way more worried about censorship in schools than schools being too permissive in

what they teach. Some 61 percent said they were more worried "that some schools may ban books and censor topics that are educationally important" than they were concerned "that some schools may teach books and topics that some students or their parents feel are inappropriate or offensive." Just 36 percent said the reverse.

And despite politics seeming to have crept into every facet of American life, political affiliation is still viewed as the least essential of six traits related to personal identity.

The pollsters asked respondents to think about "the various ways that you define yourself as a person"

and determine how important each characteristic was "to your own personal identity." Of the six traits asked about, gender was viewed as the most essential, with 48 percent of those surveyed saying it was vital to their identity. Religion came the closest to gender (34 percent), followed by a three-way tie between race, occupation, and family origin (21 percent). Political affiliation was viewed as essential to identity by just 11 percent.

The poll was conducted March 1-13. It had 1,019 respondents, and has a margin of error of plus or minus 4.1 percentage points.

Menninger Pocket Park unveiled

On May 9, City of Topeka leaders and community members gathered to celebrate the unveiling of the Menninger Pocket Park. The new pocket park, located at the 600 block of Kansas Avenue across from

Every Plaza, features a life-size statue of Dr. C.F. Menninger, a tablet with Menninger history, as well as busts of Drs C.F., Karl, Will, Roy and Walt Menninger.

The statues were created by nationally recognized sculptor

and Kansas native, Joe Skeeba. Skeeba's other local works include the life-size bronze statue of Cyrus K. Holliday located in the Burlington Northern Santa Fe pocket park.



JAYHAWK

continued from page 1

real hard thing for us to look at. Its a big mountain to climb because we have to put in sprinkling systems. We have to put in new electrical, new security cam-

eras, new water and all of that has to get done so all that mechanical work needs to happen first," says Board President, Jeff Carson.

Carson says that work will help the theatre build for the future.

"The biggest limitation we have right now is that we can only have 300 people

in the theatre so part of our goal is to phase our construction if we can to allow us to increase that to like five, six, 700 people which gives us a lot more tickets that we can sell and we can bring in bigger and better acts," says Carson.

Work is expected to begin next year and be completed in 2026.

area kids.

No IDs are necessary when boarding for those 18 and under during the promotion, however, bus operators reserve the right to ask for ID. Maps and time points for routes are posted on Topeka Metro's website. Downloading the DoubleMap mobile app on a cell phone will display where buses are in real-time and indicate when the next bus will arrive at a bus stop, which makes it even easier for youth to make sure they are

on the right bus. DoubleMap is also available on Topeka Metro's website at <https://www.topekametro.org/#doublemap>. For questions or help with trip planning, call Topeka Metro Customer Service at 785-783-7000.

"Some youth may already ride our buses, but some have not. For those who are new to public transit, offering Kids Ride FREE! instills a lifelong navigation skill that may be useful in the future," said Nugent.

C5Alive Power Luncheon will feature columnist Clint Decker

The June C5Alive POWER Luncheon will be held June 8, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at The Peak, 1930 SW Gage Blvd.

Featured speaker Clint Decker has served as pastor of several churches; then in 2004 launched his own evangelistic ministry, Great Awakenings, Inc., traveling the world and teaching on radio, TV, online, and in newspaper columns. He has preached in churches and at prisons, from the streets of New York City to the state-house of Kansas.

The cost is \$15 for C5 members and first-time guests who RSVP, and \$17 at the door. Repeat guests pay \$20. RSVPs and inquiries can be sent to info@C5Alive.org.

Next month's luncheon will feature Max Manning at Aldersgate Village.

"POWER" luncheons are held on the second Thursday of each month and are open to the public.

C5Alive is dedicated to creating Christian culture in the Capital City, by developing and uniting Christian Leadership in community businesses, non-profits and churches. C5 also hosts other periodic events, including **EASTERFEST**, the annual Topeka Easter Parade and Fun Fair, held on N.

Kansas Avenue and at **Great Overland Station** on the day before Easter.

The 3rd Annual C5Alive **TOPEKA FALL FEST** will be on September 16, 2023 at **Great Overland Station**.

C5 members may also sponsor luncheons and other events as a way to promote their organizations. C5 is currently holding a membership drive with special incentives for new members.

For more information about C5, go to www.facebook.com/C5Alive, C5Alive.org, or call 785-640-6399.



Decker

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FREE RIDE

continued from page 1

ager.

Kids can ride the bus to the library, pool, meeting up with friends, summer school or for older youth--getting to their workplace. The free rides promotion is only available to youth on Topeka Metro's fixed routes. In fiscal year 2022, Topeka Metro provided 12,696 rides to

Banning the “Sell By” date on food gets wide support

Most consumers believe “sell by” dates are mandated by the federal government but they’re not for most foods. Now, California may join the effort to ban “sell by” in an effort to stop needless dumping of good food and saving unknowing consumers billions of dollars. The bill is currently under review and has already passed two legislative committees.

Existing law requires food—such as eggs and produce—to be tagged with “sell by” stickers for distributors or retailers to know when to stock the items. However, according to Assemblywoman Jacqui Irwin (D-Thousand Oaks), they are confusing and lead to unnecessary food waste. The stamped dates means 20 percent of all food ends up as waste. According to the Department of Agriculture, \$1 trillion is spent on food annually. That means \$200 billion is wasted by dumping food.

Critics of “sell by” dates say they are arbitrary, not based on science or food safety, and primarily used to increase food sales by manufacturers. The dates didn’t come into popularity until the 1960s when mass-produced and processed foods began filling shelves. Consumers began to be confused by conflicting dates of “sell by” and other date labeling added by manufacturers for no apparent reason. Up until that time, consumers were believed to be savvy enough to tell if food had spoiled. The dates have been a boon to food manufacturers, increasing profits with little to no effort other than putting a stamp on a can.

“They read these dates and then they assume that it’s bad, they can’t eat it and they toss it, when these dates don’t actually mean that they’re not edible or they’re not still nutritious or tasty,” said Patty Apple, a manager at Food Shift, an Alameda,



California, nonprofit that collects and uses expired or imperfect foods.

Assembly Bill 660, authored by Irwin would set new standards by requiring expiration labels to use the phrases “best if used by” and “use by” to communicate peak freshness and food safety, and completely ban the terminology of “sell by” dates, starting January of 2025.

“We have all opened our fridge or pantry and had to wonder whether our food is still good. AB 660 will eliminate confusion with food labeling and reduce food waste, saving consumers money and meaningfully impacting climate change,” Irwin said in a May 2 press release.

Irwin cited data from the Food and Drug Administration in the news release, that confusion caused by current date stickers causes around 20 percent of food waste.

She pointed to a study released in April by ReFED—a national nonprofit working to cut food waste—which found that changing the labeling system

could save 265 billion gallons of water and stop 796,000 tons of food waste from entering landfills nationwide per year.

The goal in passing the bill, according to Irwin, is to fight climate change by lessening the amount of food that ultimately ends up in such landfills. Such decomposing

food emits methane gas, which is over 80 times more powerful than greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide.

“About six million tons of food are wasted in California each year, much of which rots in landfills and creates harmful methane emissions,” Gracyna Mohabir, Policy Associate at Californians Against Waste—a nonprofit advocate for waste and recycling legislation and one of the bill’s sponsors—said in the press release.

Another sponsor for the bill is the Natural Resources Defense Council—an international nonprofit environmental organization.

“Addressing so-called ‘expiration date’ labels, a surprisingly substantial systemic cause of food waste, will help our environment, our health, and our economy,” Andrea Collins, Senior Sustainable Food Systems Specialist for the nonprofit, said in the same press release. “Despite past measures, confusion over the dates on food is still leading to an enormous amount of

wasted food.”

Fortune Magazine reports that, “since 2019, the Food and Drug Administration—which regulates around 80% of U.S. food—has recommended that manufacturers use the labels “best if used by” for freshness and “use by” for perishable goods, based on surveys

showing that consumers understand those phrases.

“Most people believe that if it says ‘sell by,’ ‘best by’ or ‘expiration,’ you can’t eat any of them. That’s not actually accurate,” Richard Lipsit, who owns a Grocery Outlet store in Pleasanton, California, told Fortune.

FALL FELLOWSHIP TRIP TO MACKINAC ISLAND!

October 13 through 17, 2023

- **Oct. 13:** 8:00am Depart Grace Community Church, 310 E. 8th St, Overbrook, KS.
 - Lunch (not included) Des Moines, IA
 - 2:00 Arrive at Amana Colonies
 - 5:00 Depart for Dinner Theater Detective Murder Mystery Performance in Cedar Rapids
 - Stay at Double Tree Inn 350 First Ave. NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52401
 - **Oct. 14:** 10:00am Arrive at The House on The Rock
 - Lunch (not included) on your own at The House on the Rock
 - 2:30 Depart The House on the Rock
 - Supper (provided) along the route to Escanaba, MI
 - Stay at Magnuson Grand Pioneer Inn & Suites, Escanaba
 - **Oct. 15:** 10:30am Board Shepler’s Ferry to Mackinac Island, MI
 - 11:30 Arrive at The Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island
 - Lunch on your own; Free Time on the Island all afternoon
 - 6:30 Supper at The Grand Hotel with Sunday Service and Fellowship Time to Follow
 - **Oct. 16:** Free Time on the Island. Lunch on Your Own
 - 1:00 Depart on Shepler’s Ferry for Mackinaw City.
 - Supper at Albano’s Villa
 - Stay at Country Inn & Suites, 3805 Frontage Rd. Michigan City, IN
 - **Oct. 17:** Breakfast at hotel. Travel Home – Fast Food Lunch (not included). Arrive in Overbrook approx. 5:00pm
- Total Trip Cost: \$1100 (double occupancy) Space is limited!**
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International Christian medical conference coming in June



pool is a fellow of the American College of Surgeons; a fellow of the American College of Physicians; a s i s t a n t professor of

surgery at Texas A&M University College of Medicine; and a regular contributor to medical journals on tropical diseases and to political publications on U.S. disaster response and developing world goals.

The complete agenda and registration information are available at www.inmedhhc.com.



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The Institute for International Medicine, based in Kansas City, will hold its 2023 Humanitarian Health Conference on June 9-10 at Graceway Church in Raytown.

INMED exists to equip health-care professionals and students with the skills necessary to effectively serve the world's most forgotten people. The nonprofit educational organization offers didactic instruction in a full range of global health topics via online, hybrid and in-classroom courses, as well as through conferences.

Dr. David Vanderpool, founder of LiveBeyond in Haiti, will be one of the featured speakers

A successful trauma surgeon, Dr. Vanderpool served as a volunteer for more than 20 years, providing free health care in Third World countries that suffered from either natural or manmade disasters. He has run temporary medical clinics in war-torn and impoverished countries such as Ghana, Mozambique, Iraq, Honduras and South Africa.

After an earthquake devastated Haiti in 2010, Vanderpool was a first responder to provide care to thousands of patients affected by the disaster. After spending 12 days seeing horrific injuries, performing countless operations and the desperate need of Haiti, the Vanderpools felt called to truly help the Haitian people and provide a lasting impact in this country. In May 2013, Vanderpool and Laurie officially moved to Thomazeau, Haiti on a full-time basis. They sold both their home in Brentwood, Tenn., and a private medical practice. Vander-

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MOM'S LOAN NOW MINE?

Dear Dave,

My mom took out a Parent PLUS loan in 2009 to help pay for my college education. I also took out \$70,000 in student loans myself. My mom never made a payment and now the amount due has

ballooned to \$100,000. She says I should be the one to make the payments after I became financially stable. Thankfully, I just got a new job making \$140,000 a year. My mom is a nurse practitioner, so she makes good money, but she recently financed two new luxury cars within 24 hours of each other — one for work and one for church. She also has loans out from borrowing on her 401(k) and credit card debt. Should I take over the Parent PLUS loan under my name?
Tommy

Dear Tommy,

Wait, are you serious? Your mom has a church car? I've never heard of such a thing.

Ok, here's the deal. If you had an agreement with your mom, or promised at

any time to pay back the Parent PLUS Loan when you were able, you should cover it. But that's not what you told me. It sounds like your mom has a good heart and was just trying to help, but she did it in a dumb way. Sounds like she's done a

42 Reasons to Sell All of Your Investments

By Ryan Shumaker
Smartvestor Pro at
The Retirement Team



The stock market hit a new 52 week low a whopping 13 times last year. That's more than what we saw over the entire last decade and nearly twice as many times as what occurred during the booming 90s. Banks are starting to fail, inflation is still stubbornly high, and commentators are creating clickbait titles that the next financial crisis is coming and/or is already underway. You may be asking yourself, "With everything that is going on in the world, should I just bury my cash in a coffee can in my backyard?"

A few weeks ago was the 14th anniversary of the 2008-2009 stock market bottom. Below is a small sampling of the negative headlines we've been bombarded with since then, where you could have thought the same "with everything that is going on..." phrase. Certainly any of these 42 events could have, at the very least, caused concern if not outright panic, particularly if you did not have a plan in place that ensures your retirement will not get delayed or completely derailed if already underway.

Things that have never happened

lot of dumb things with money.

Under no circumstances do you take the loan back under your name. In fact, I'm not certain you can even do that with a Parent PLUS Loan. You need to get your debt cleaned up first before trying to help her. If you choose to be a bigger help after that, you need to start things by having a serious conversation with your mom. She needs to hear that she's being absolutely silly with her money. Let her know you're

willing to help because the loan was for your benefit. But make sure she understands you won't pay it all, and you won't do it while she's making two luxury car payments — including one on a church car. That's ridiculous.

Offer to help her find a good financial coach. You might want to let her know you'll match whatever she pays toward the loan, so it'll feel like a team effort.

—Dave

before happen all the time. There's always a reason to worry, but worry is like a rocking chair. It will give you something to do, but won't get you anywhere, at least not anywhere you want to be. In the case of investing, worry can lead to emotional decision making and potentially to ruin. If you treat the stock market like a casino, it will respond in kind. Las Vegas Boulevard wasn't paved by gamblers who won long term. Instead, the stock market should be treated like what it actually is, which is a place where you have the ability to become an owner of thousands of large and successful companies. If you owned your own business, would you have sold your business during any of these 42 headlines, especially if it meant you had to sell it for less than before?

Since the 08-09 bottom, the S&P 500 is up over 700%. That means if you would've invested \$100,000 then, you'd have over \$700,000 today even after accounting for losses last year. To put it another way, to have a million dollars today, one would have only needed to invest \$143,000 14 years ago and nearly 86% of the money you would have now would be from gains.

The reality is that if you have a good financial plan in place, the short term direction of any financial asset should not matter. Whereas, if you rely on correctly guessing a direction, you are almost certainly doomed. Even the highly-paid analysts on Wall Street are wrong significantly more often than right. In 11 out of the last 13 years, the stock market ended the year either higher than what the highest estimate of any analyst was or lower than the lowest (as we pointed out in a previous article you can read at RetireTopeka.com).

March also marked the 3 year anniversary of the economy being shuttered and the fastest bear market ever happening (which caused nearly 1/3 of those over 65 to sell everything at or near the bottom, something we've also highlighted before). Since then, the market has nearly doubled in value.

It is not a question of if, but when,

and how many negative news headlines and financial market corrections will occur during the average retirement. If the stock market or any current event has you worried, the problem is not the stock market, nor any current event. The problem is a lack of a plan (or a poor plan) and likely also your portfolio. If you've uttered the phrase "with everything going on" anytime lately in reference to your money, you should talk with a financial professional that doesn't just say "hang in there" when times inevitably get tough, but instead helps you create a worry-free plan to get to and stay in retirement. Find someone who can explain exactly why your particular plan will get you ever increasing income in retirement (to offset ever increasing prices) without having to worry about the short term direction of any financial market. With a plan that ensures you receive the cash flow you want and need regardless of what is happening, you'll probably never be tempted to sell your business ownership because of "everything that's going on."

Other great articles about retirement, investing, and tax reduction can be seen at RetireTopeka.com/blog.

Ryan can be contacted at 785-228-0222 or RetireTopeka.com.

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Take a Fresh Look at Your Finances

By Jim Hanna



Hanna

Remember those financial resolutions you committed to at the beginning of the year? If they seem like a distant memory, the start of summer is an excellent time to reset and take stock of your progress. Follow the tips below to recommit yourself to your financial goals.

1. Start with a clean slate. Review your financial situation and recent spending patterns. Is your spending aligned with your financial goals? Re-evaluate any bad money habits that may be holding you back from making better financial decisions. Remind yourself that healthy financial behaviors can become part of your daily routine.

2. Commit to financial stability. It's easier to do something when you are intentional. Just like you set aside an afternoon to clean out the garage, set aside a few hours to clean up your finances. During this time, reflect, organize and make a conscious commitment to take responsibility for your financial future.

3. Create, update or review your plan of action. A financial plan provides a roadmap for spending and saving, and encourages you to allocate your money toward the items or experiences that matter most to you. Your plan should articulate how you intend to handle your day-to-day finances, while working to achieve your long-term goals such as paying off your home mortgage and confidently retiring on your terms. If a large expense comes along, you may need to re-evaluate your financial priorities. Adjust as necessary and then get back on track as soon as possible. Likewise, if you receive a raise or windfall, consider how the additional funds can be applied to your financial plan.

4. Spend within reason. Your plan can provide you with guardrails to keep long-term goals in sight as you satisfy near-term wants and needs. When you know your emergency fund, retirement and other goals are on track, you can purchase tickets to the big game or plan a family trip without feeling guilty or worried that the costs will prevent you from achieving your larger financial goals.

5. Prepare for the unexpected. Life can throw challenging curveballs. Unexpected

events such as unplanned medical bills or losing your job can greatly impact your bottom line. The only certainty is uncertainty, and that's why it's critical to assess your insurance policies to ensure you're fully covered, and establish an "emergency fund" to cover surprise expenses. Consider reviewing your life, disability health, home and auto insurance policies with a financial professional who can help you identify and close any gaps in coverage. If you've acquired artwork, collectibles, technology or other valuables, make sure they are covered under your current home insurance plan. Also, use this as a time to update beneficiaries on your policies if needed.

6. Find joy in the process. The desire to keep your finances in good order is an admirable aspiration, and it has lasting impacts. Focusing on your finances today may help you to achieve a more comfortable financial future for you and your family tomorrow. Consider working with a financial professional to help create a plan to reach your goals. With renewed energy and a well-defined plan, you can feel good about your financial choices.

Jim Hanna, CFP®, MBA, CKA®, is a Private Wealth Advisor and Certified Kingdom Advisor® with Heart Financial Partners a private wealth advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services, LLC. He specializes in fee-based financial planning and asset management strategies.

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Protecting Personal Info

By Peggy Beasterfield
Owner, Peggy's Tax and Accounting Service

These tips will help you protect personal financial and tax information for a complete preparedness plan.



Keep key documents safe; make extra copies

Original documents such as tax returns, Social Security cards, birth certificates and deeds should be placed inside a waterproof container in a safe space. Taxpayers are encouraged to also make copies of these important documents and store them in a secondary location such as a safe deposit box or with a trusted person who lives in a different area. In addition, scanned documents can be stored on a flash drive for easy portability.

Create a record of valuables and equipment

All property, especially high-value items, should be recorded. A simple list with current photos or videos may also help support claims for insurance or tax benefits after a disaster. The IRS disaster loss workbooks in Publication 584, Casualty, Disaster, and Theft Loss Workbook (Personal-Use Property) and Publication 584-B, Business Casualty, Disaster, and Theft Loss Workbook can help individuals and businesses make lists of belongings or business equipment.

Reconstructing records

Reconstructing or replacing records after a disaster may be required for tax purposes, claiming federal assistance or insurance reimbursement. The more accurately the loss is estimated, the more loan and grant money there may be available. Taxpayers who have lost some or all their records during a disaster should visit IRS's Reconstructing Records webpage as a first step.



- Multiple Year Tax Returns
- Tax Problem Solutions
- IRS letters



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Celebrate **SUMMERTIME** in Downtown Topeka!

Summertime is the perfect time to visit Downtown Topeka! Shopping downtown can also be fun, with all the unique shops and a bit of nostalgia in the air! Following are some tidbits from some of your friendly downtown merchants waiting to serve you!

A Full-Service Florist, Home Decor & Gift Shop

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.

This locally-owned Topeka florist delivers courteous, professional service and the highest quality floral and gift



items around. Their experienced designers can create floral designs that will complement any occasion and meet your budget and style expectations as well. Daily delivery service is available to all local funeral homes, hospitals and nursing homes.

You can even save \$5.00 on an in-

store purchase with the coupon on this page! You can also order or wire flowers 24 hours a day at: www.absolutedesignbybrenda.com.

Taking chocolate to a new level

Owners Nick & Terry Xidis at Hazel Hill Chocolate, 724 S. Kansas Avenue, have been a staple in Downtown Topeka for years.

Hazel Hill, Terry's grandmother, is a symbol of their dedication to a family tradition of "the best in everything they do." Nick is the third generation



chocolatier, and they use only the finest ingredients, chocolate, fresh cream and butter, to produce handmade treats that explode with flavor.

Lately, Nick has been making handcrafted chocolate from cacao (coco beans) that import from around the globe. Much like fine wine, each cacao origin produces a unique flavor profile

in the finished chocolate.

"There are only a couple of hundred companies in the US that hand craft chocolate," Nick said.

"In 2019, three of our handcrafted chocolate bars won bronze in the International Chocolate Awards Americas competition," Nick said. "In 2020 our sea salt caramel won the gold medal in the Chocolate Alliance competition. Both of these competitions include entries from more than 400 craft chocolate professionals."

Whether your preference is handmade chocolate truffles, home-style fudge, crispy-creamy caramel apples or something else – at Hazel Hill they have delightful treats for every palate.

Need a gift basket, gift box, or just a few delicious chocolates to go? They'll do all the packing and shipping, too!

When you need a break

For your coffee emergency, go to Juli's Coffee and Bistro – a locally owned, woman owned, Veteran owned and operated coffee shop offering legit house coffee and all manner of espresso drinks.

Take home a bag of the featured "Made in the USA" coffee grown and roasted in Hawaii, with aloha flavors like toasted coconut, chocolate and vanilla macadamia nut.

Local favorites are still available, like the Turkey Lurkey and house made Cranberry Almond Chicken Salad for lunch. Fresh salads, wraps and tasty paninis make it perfect for casual dining. Daily house made specials keep it fresh and exciting. Check out the menus on-

line at www.juliscoffeeandbistro.com. You can order and pay online and then pick up, or use Eatstreet delivery.



Community matters, so remember 911 S. Kansas for "Great Coffee, Better Food!"

Leather and more

Doug Mingus, owner and designer at Mingus Leather Studio, believes the world needs more beauty and joy: More gifts given and used; More smiles, kindness, and real service; More people doing what they love and sharing it.

His business was born to pursue all these when life presented an unexpected change. He created a place where beautiful handcrafted items, that are designed for life, are celebrated and shared. Immediately when walking into this shop you will be greeted with the intoxicating smell of leather and a warm kind welcome from Doug.

It all starts with full grain leather items made in his studio, or from

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other artisans he has partnered with. Belts, bags, journal covers, catch-all and game trays, wallets, keychains, pouches, purses, and more.

Mingus didn't stop at leather. He partners with George's Pen Creations



and has jewelry from Kamama Designs, candle makers like Beauty from Ashes, and other artists. Mingus Leather Studio is a place to find unique, useful and beautiful items that bring a smile, and build businesses and families. There is something for everyone on your gift list here and you may even need to splurge on something for yourself.

Doug also does repairs on all kinds of leather items.

SUMMERTIME Memories, Events, & Fun!

Check out these upcoming Summertime Events & Activities Downtown!

While you're making your way around the downtown area, watch for these downtown events coming up:

ART WALK ON FIRST FRIDAYS – Downtown & NOTO arts district. Arts, antiques, fine crafts, many more items. Free shuttle will run from 5 pm to 9 pm.

MOVIES AT EVERGY PLAZA – Second Fridays til fall at 7th & Kansas.

LIVE @ LUNCH – Wednesdays; 11am-1pm, Every Plaza downtown. Live music, food trucks, yard games & more.



EATS & BEATS – Every Thursday through Sep. 14, 6:30pm-8:30pm, Every Plaza. Bring lawn chairs. Food trucks, beer gardens.

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



and more.

DOGGIE DATE NITE – Jun. 3, 5-7pm at Every Plaza. Enjoy a night out with your pup!

OPEN HOUSE TOURS – June 8, 6pm, Jayhawk Theatre. RSVP at jayhawktheatre.org

FRIDAY FLICKS: BACK TO THE FUTURE – June 9, 8pm, Every Plaza

LADY SHAKES' ROMEO & JULIET – June 9-10, 7pm, and June 11 at 2pm, Jayhawk Theatre. Come early at 6pm for dinner with



DJ's Catering and drinks from Norseman Brewing. A benefit for Jayhawk Theatre and Lady Shakes Theater Co. Tickets \$12 (\$8 students) at: jayhawktheatre.org

TACO TOPIA STREET FEST – June 10, 4pm, Topeka Vendors Market, 528 SE Adams St. Live music, taco eating contest, play area, fresh fruit stand, margarita tent, more.



JUNETEENTH PARADE – June 10, 11am, Williams Magnet School, 1301 SE Monroe St. Community gathering at noon at Cushmanberry Park.

SUNSHINE REGGAE ROOTS FESTIVAL – June 17, 4pm, 8th & Jackson downtown. Reggae & Ska bands, food trucks, beer garden, vendors. Adm \$15

THE PENNANT 5TH ANNIVERSARY BLOCK PARTY – June 24, 4pm, 900 Block Downtown. Aaron Kamm and the One Drops, The Mix Band & Mike Babb, vendors, fun activities.

THE MIX IN CONCERT – June 23, 7pm, TPAC

HOLLEY MILITARY MUSEUM – Downtown



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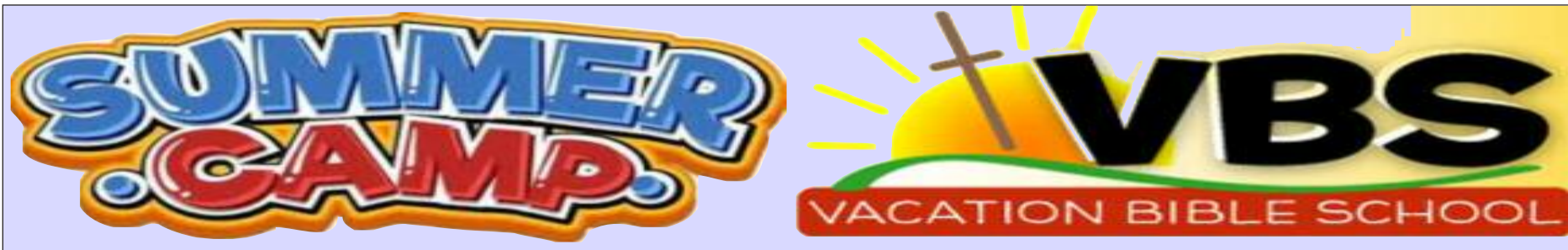
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Why Vacation Bible School Still Matters



Vacation Bible School is the perfect way to immerse visitors into church culture and VBS provides a wide opportunity for volunteers to work in children's ministry.

Here are 3 reasons why Vacation Bible School is still important

Vacation Bible School is important for kids meeting Jesus.

VBS is the ideal ministry vehicle for introducing children to Jesus—and it's so much fun! From the music to the crafts, to the teaching,



Jesus becomes more than a character in a Bible story. Through your efforts and through Vacation Bible School programs, children get to see how real the Bible truly is and how God's Word applies to them. Vacation Bible School offers children opportunities for salvation too.

And isn't that the central reason for bringing forth such effort? Roll

out the welcome mat and get ready to share the love of Jesus with a spiritually hungry generation.

Vacation Bible School is important for families finding your church.

As I mentioned in my opening statement, VBS is the perfect event for showcasing your ministry and your church. To my mind, VBS is as important as a holiday event. My team and I think a lot about how a visitor feels. Is there someone to greet him or her when they arrive? Are there inclement weather volunteers ready with an umbrella? Is there a way to connect with visitors after the event ends?

Vacation bible school and other children's ministry events force us to think about our friendliness level. Up your game at VBS and remind everyone to smile and shake as many hands as possible. Connect with all

visitors, big and small. And if you really want to know what people think about your church, ask them to submit an anonymous questionnaire.

Ask questions like:

- "How many people greeted you when you arrived?"
- "Were the classes easy to find?"

Use the data to improve your future programs.

Vacation Bible School is important because it helps find new volunteers.

Yeah, it's Vacation Bible School time. If you have a plethora of tried and true volunteers, congratulations! You'll have plenty of helping hands to make this a memorable event. Put volunteers to work that may not normally get to participate.

Got a recently graduated teen? Hand him a puppet. Have a few of your seniors mentioned that they would like to help out with snacks? Put out the call and let all your volunteers do something for Jesus. Providing ministry opportunities to people that may not otherwise get the chance to minister will help the team grow, personally and corporately. Growth is always good.

And one more thing on volunteers: It's okay to ask for outside help.



Reach out to fellow children's ministry leaders in your community. Be mindful when you do, have a few options. "Hey, would you mind coming to demonstrate this object lesson? I am sure our kids would love to see you in action." Be specific in what you need to avoid confusion

and encourage participation. (That means you must be willing to return the favor.)

Yes, it's true. The church culture has to change with the times but Vacation Bible School remains an exciting and necessary ministry outreach.

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Summer Camp Matters Now More Than Ever



Our camp community is where we turn when times get tough. We call our oldest friends, we plan and attend virtual events, and we support our peers who are doing everything they can to make sure kids have a place to go this summer. We need these connections because nothing could have prepared us for life during a pandemic like COVID-19. From the fear and grief, to the uncertainty, isolation, and economic insecurity, the stressors we are facing are real and intense. As we look ahead to a summer in which we all aspire to return to some semblance of normalcy, camp will be needed more than ever because it can help us find our footing again.

Right now, time is moving slowly, one day runs into another, and kids may feel like they have nothing to look forward to. Their normal routines have been thrown out of whack and this can be extremely isolating. Camp facilitates the in-person connections that we all crave – especially now. It provides an opportunity to find joy during difficult times. Camps give everyone – staff and campers alike – a safe space to process and heal.

In the midst of the unknown outlook for this summer, we love thinking about how the immense amount of work being put in to make camp happen safely this year could translate into such incredible happiness this summer. We love imagining kids walking into camp for the first time, seeing their friends, and feeling an overwhelming sense of connection. In some ways it will be unlike any other they've previously felt at camp.

Camps Build Resilience and Determination

Running camp this summer, however different it may be from a normal summer, will be a lesson in resilience and determination. Camp directors are facing unprecedented challenges in preparing to adjust to a new reality, and are working together like never before to provide resources and support for

their teams and each other. This resilience trickles down to staff and campers as lessons in how to adapt to the unexpected. Camp activities are full of practices that can be applied to life, and many camp alumni credit their camp experiences with giving them the tools to succeed as adults. The way we have rallied together to make camp happen during the summer after COVID-19 will surely make that list.

Camps Provide A Break from the News

Many of us are overwhelmed by the constant stream of pandemic-related news and updates. It feels like things are shifting every minute, and that there is no escape. Wherever we turn, there it is. Kids are picking up on this, they're asking questions about how this will impact their lives, and parents and caregivers are struggling with which questions to answer and how to answer them. This summer, camps can provide a break from the stream of information, a safe space to grieve and process, and an opportunity for mental and emotional restoration. Many camps already limit access to technology, which will support their campers' ability to connect with their immediate surroundings, while limiting intake of news and social media.

Camps are a Safe Place to Heal

We've already seen a number of conversations on camp forums about ways to make sure that campers feel safe in dealing with the new trauma induced by COVID-19. This season, camp staff and directors will have to prepare to help campers process these distressing emotions and experiences. As camps bring together so many young people with diverse experiences, they'll be able to help everyone connect and unpack their experiences.

For some campers, COVID-19 may have been a distant issue that was limited to upending their school year and sports activities. Others may have experienced it more acutely, feeling the

direct impact of COVID-19 on their families or communities. Supporting this range of experiences will be challenging, there should be no doubt that camp staff members are well-positioned to help kids process their feelings. Camp is, and always has been, that safe place – and it will be a healing environment for a lot of campers in the summer of 2020.

Camps Help Us Regain a Sense of Normalcy

COVID-19 has taken away our routines, upended our schedules, and thrown our sense of normalcy out of whack. The good news is that, for children, camp provides a respite from the chaos in the form of familiar routines, activities, and traditions. Whether camp is a few days or six weeks, what won't change are the daily activities that help give back a familiar and predictable routine. And to those reeling from a loss of order – whether they're campers or staff members – the experience of camp this year will be like salve to a wounded spirit.

Even first-time campers will benefit from being surrounded by peers, adapting to a daily routine, and having their days filled with productive and fun activities. The social distancing orders created long stretches of unfilled time, leaving children hungry for creative and intellectually stimulating activities – a void that camp is exceptionally well-prepared to fill.

Camps Foster Personal Connections

We're all waking up to the reality every day that we can't see our friends or go out in public for anything except essential needs. With school closings, kids are feeling a sense of social isolation, perhaps even more intensely than adults, because they are used to being surrounded by peers every day. If camp is prepared to do anything this summer, it's to reconnect people with their friends and mentors – and this includes campers, staff members, and leaders. Six feet of distance can feel like so much more, and video calls can't replace the feeling of connecting face-to-face, a connection amplified by the bonds that camps create through shared experiences in unforgettable settings. These memories solidify connections and can last well beyond someone's camp years, which will certainly be true of the 2020 camp season.

Camps Support Re-opening the Economy

In addition to how camp makes us feel, it is also a necessity for many fam-

VBS & SUMMER CAMPS

RODEO BIBLE CAMP – June 7-10. Overnight camp for kids age 9 to 18. All meals are provided. Learn Barrels & Poles - Horsemanship - Bull Riding & Steer Riding - Team Roping. You WILL need to bring your own horse. Space is limited; deposit required. Crossroads Cowboy Church, 1255 Oak St., Perry, Ks <https://forms.gle/RhEGXj7VBYuwDGg38>

STELLAR VBS – July 10-14, 9-12! First Southern Baptist Church <https://fsbctoepka.ccbchurch.com/goto/forms/37/responses/new>

GOD'S LIVING WATER VBS – June 12-16, 2023 -- 9 AM to Noon, kids entering Kindergarten through 5th grade. Free. Christ Lutheran Church 785-266-6263 www.christlcms.org/vbsregistration

STELLAR VBS – June 19-23, 8:30am - 12pm, K-5th grade Christ the King Catholic Church www.cktoepka.org/vbs-2023

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL – June 4-8, 6-8:15 PM Topeka Baptist Church

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL – June 26-28, 9am-noon The Rock Community Church, 908 SW 7th St (corner of 7th & Western in Old Town)

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL – June 20-24, 9-3 Salvation Army, 1320 SE 6th St. 785-2339648

KEEPERS OF THE KINGDOM VBS – June 5-9, 6 - 8:45 pm. For ages 3 (potty trained!) to adult. No cost. Register online at www.highlandheightsscc.com. Highland Heights Christian Church

KIDS SOCCER CAMP – June 12-15, 6-8pm, Grace Bible Church, 4021 SW 37th. For kids who have finished K-6th.

'KEEPER OF THE KINGDOM' VBS – June 12 to Family Fun Night, June 16, 6 - 8pm, Lakeview Church of the Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. Bring your friends, family, neighbors, & enemies! Contact info: (785)266-3247, FB: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene, Email: Lakenaz@aol.com

KIDS SUMMER CAMP – GreatLife Topeka. Trampoline, laser tag, swimming & more. For details call 785-233-9815 or visit greatplaytopeka.com

'I CAN BIKE' AND 'I CAN SWIM' SUMMER CAMPS - programs for children with disabilities. Capper Foundation of Topeka. www.capper.org or call 785-272-4060.

THREE TRAILS SUMMER CAMPS - Salvation Army offers Music Camp, Sports Camp or STEAM Camp. <https://threetrailscamp.org/summer-camps/>

FOOD TRUCK PARTY VBS – June 12-16, 5:30-8pm, First Presbyterian Church, 817 SW Harrison St. Kids age 4 thru 6th grade. <https://tinyurl.com/wcsyj8vd>

DAY CAMP - July 24-28, 8am-5pm, Trinity Presbyterian Church. For children entering 1st thru 7th grades. Cost: \$25 per child. Bring sack lunch daily - no refrigeration; + other items. Info & registration 785-272-2620 or office@trinitypresbyterian.net

ilies. Home schooling is already a challenge for those who are considered essential workers, and it is a privilege to have a job that allows for a work-from-home flexible schedule. For many families, camp is not a nice-to-have, it's a must-have, and the prospect of a summer without camp means parents would be without their primary form of childcare.

As we look ahead to re-opening the economy, and sending adults back to work, it's undeniable that camps will be a strategic vehicle in this process. Families need to feel confident that their kids are in physically and emotionally safe places – which camps are preparing to provide with an emphasis on camper health and safety – so that they can return to their regular schedules feeling confident that their children are being looked after. Not to mention the

thousands of people employed by camps themselves, whose economic stability relies on as normal a season as possible.

Camps are Restorative

As each day passes, camp directors are faced with decisions and are making adjustments because we all know that there's no better place to emerge from stay-at-home orders and to regain closeness than at camp. Timing and other logistics may change, but we believe that as we try to resume life as we know it, camps can lead the charge in giving the much-needed support and refuge we're all yearning for amidst this crisis.

This summer, camps will provide a service to the campers and to society at large. Camp is always important, but this summer we think it's more essential than ever.

opinion

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The naked public square and Lancaster, Pennsylvania

A couple of weeks ago I was in Lancaster, Penn., for the annual meeting of the Evangelical Press Association. I had been to Lancaster before, but this trip caused me to fall in love with the city. One of the things I came to appreciate about Lancaster was the ability of both traditional, Christian residents of the town (including Amish and conservative evangelicals) to participate fully in the civil life of the town.

But that peaceful coexistence seems to be breaking down. While I was in Lancaster, I learned the story of the Lancaster County Community Foundation. This Pennsylvania foundation had given millions of dollars in grants to Christian groups over the years, but that could end. LCCF announced that nonprofit groups must post their nondiscrimination policies in order to participate in its annual ExtraGive event.

It also published what it calls an anti-hate policy containing a broad definition of hateful activities, including “misinformation targeting an individual or group based on their...sexual orienta-

tion.”

The change in policy caused many Christian groups to pull out of the ExtraGive event. The number of groups participating in ExtraGive dropped from 516 to 452. In 2021, the event raised \$16 million, but only \$10 million in 2022. Many of those who pulled out of ExtraGive participated in a new event in Lancaster called FaithfulGive.

After we published a story about that controversy, we started getting messages from other MinistryWatch readers, telling us that Lancaster is not alone. Our reporter Kim Roberts, who did a great job telling the Lancaster story, took one of our reader tips and a few days later wrote about a similar situation in Lincoln, Neb.

I commend those organizations in Lancaster and Lincoln who took the difficult step of taking a stand for their religious convictions. That said, I can't help but feel that something is lost when the institutions



of civil society – from these community foundations to the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, to many other institutions – force those with sincere religious convictions to withdraw from participation.

Richard John Neuhaus wrote about this phenomenon in his 1984 book *The Naked Public Square*. He wrote that such restrictions as those placed on religious groups by the Lancaster County Community Foundation would have the effect of leaving the public square “naked,” or “bare” of religious speech and religious

people. The effect would be that the contributions of religious people would be missing or segregated, “ghettoized” from civic life, to the diminishment of both religious and secular communities. That book will mark its 40th anniversary next year, and it's hard not to see it now as prophetic.

–By Warren Smith | *Ministry Watch*, an independent donor advocate that profiles public charities, church and parachurch ministries. *Ministry Watch* is also a place to learn about how to be a responsible giver.

What passes for a Christian worldview these days?

What does the word “Christian” mean these days? It doesn't seem to mean very much. The last few reports from George

Barna's Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University reveal that a very small percentage of American Christians have a Christian worldview.

Nearly seven in ten (69%) of Americans self-identify as Christian. Yet only about 4 percent of Americans have a Christian worldview. George Barna ex-

plains, “Christian has become somewhat of a generic term rather than a name that reflects a deep commitment to passionately pursuing and being like Jesus Christ.”

The self-identified Christians may embrace many basic doctrines of the Christian faith, but then diverge on one or more important issues. For example, a significant number deny the idea of objective truth rooted in Scripture. They deny the exist-

ence of absolute truth, and thus make their decisions based upon relative ethics and personal experience.

Most Christians may say they believe in the Bible and the gospel message. But they also indicated on their surveys they believe people are basically good. Of course, if people believe they are good, then they may not believe in sin and the need for a savior.

If you look at the cultural issues, you find even more discrepancies between their views and a Christian worldview. These differences in biblical beliefs will

then manifest themselves in the widely divergent views today among American Christians on questions of morality and politics. This includes divergent views on sex, marriage, family, and abortion. Those, in turn, affect how American Christians vote on candidates and key political issues.

If you are a pastor or Bible teacher, you need to get back to the basics. It is likely that many of the people you teach do not have a Christian worldview. They need your biblical teaching and biblical discipleship.

– Kerby Anderson



Anderson

This Pride Stuff Isn't Healthy

By Dennis Prager

I've never understood ethnic, race, gender or sex pride. Even as a kid.

For my bar mitzvah, someone gave me a book titled "Great Jews in Sports" or something like it.

Aside from the usual jokes — it was not a long book; the print and the photos were very large — what I remember best was that I had little interest in the book. I loved sports. And I strongly identified as a Jew — I was raised in an Orthodox Jewish home and attended yeshivas until the age of 19. So, my disinterest in the book didn't emanate from either disinterest in sports or disinterest in Jews. I was keenly interested in both.

But even at the age of 13, the idea of ethnic pride meant little to me.

As far as I could tell, my friends — and, of course, the relative who gave me the book — considered the book quite meaningful. They were proud of Detroit Tigers Hall of Famer Hank Greenberg, of the great Cleveland Indians third baseman Al Rosen, of the lightweight boxing champ Benny Leonard, and the other Jews who were featured.

I apparently marched to the beat of a

quirky drummer. It turned out, however, that my attitude at 13 wasn't a quirk. Though I didn't realize it then, it was actually the dawning of a conviction — that maybe group pride wasn't a great idea.

The next time that view hit me was when I was in college and the slogan "black is beautiful" was becoming popular. This time I did more than not relate to group pride; I objected to it. How could a race be beautiful? Isn't the idea of a beautiful race itself racist? When I raised these questions in my college and graduate school years, I was given one of two answers: After being put down for so many years, blacks needed to bolster their self-image. And since blacks — especially black women — had suffered greatly because white beauty was the normative standard of physical beauty, "black is beautiful" was a much-needed corrective.

These were entirely understandable explanations. But I still recoiled. Perhaps being a Jew born only a few years after the Holocaust rendered race-based pride scary.

It turned out my instinct was right: It is scary. "Black is beautiful" soon mor-

phed into "black power," a phrase that, often accompanied with a raised clenched fist, was meant to be scary. And then, in an echo of Aryan racism, terms like "race traitor" were thrown around to describe any black who wasn't into "black power" or "black solidarity."

Soon, feminist women joined the group solidarity bandwagon with "girl power"; "I am woman, hear me roar"; "A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle"; "Any job a man can do, a woman can do better" and other puerile celebrations of "sisterhood," a term which applied only to women who shared feminist views. Women who didn't share those views were not just gender-traitors; they weren't even women. Ms. magazine founder Gloria Steinem famously called conservative Texas Republican Sen. Kay Bailey



Hutchison a "female impersonator."

Group pride is a characteristic of all left-wing thought and activism.

The most recent incarnation of group pride is LGBTQ pride. Every company, every professional sports team, every Democratic politician, even the armed forces and American embassies around the world are expected to celebrate Pride Month, Pride Night and year-round LGBTQ Pride.

This is problematic for at least two reasons.

First, what exactly is one proud of? What accomplishment is involved in being gay, lesbian or bisexual? Even trans is allegedly built into one's nature. Isn't the entire premise of the LGBTQ movement that one does not choose one's sexual orientation or sexual identity? Wasn't anyone who argued that homosexuality is a choice declared a hater and a science denier? So, then, if no choice is involved, no effort on the part of the individual — let alone no moral accomplishment —

■ Please see PRIDE on next page

The Cross: America's Only Hope



CLINT DECKER

President and Evangelist with Great Awakenings, Inc.

Speaking Truth

If you take a few minutes to read any local or national news, you will find tragic stories. They often surround a person or group of people making poor moral choices that harm themselves and others. Somehow in the process, they convinced themselves that what was wrong, was right. This is at the heart of the crisis in our nation. The battle we face is not a political or ideological one. It is a spiritual one.

Above America's dusty and grim skyline is an image. If you look carefully, you should be able to see it. There is one image of a long vertical wooden beam, then a second one of a shorter horizontal beam. Then

slowly they come together and form the image of an old wooden cross that is blood stained. And there is a light shining from the heavens down on the cross. That is the vision of America's only hope.

It is the sign of the cross. It is where Jesus, the Son of God, suffered and died for the sins of Americans and the whole world. And the hope of this cross lay in its purpose.

At Jesus' birth an angel announced to shepherds in a field, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11). Save means "to rescue." Rescue from what? Sin, which are the wrongs we do against ourselves, others, but primarily against God our Creator. Sin is what lives within our hearts. All of us are born with it. It is that natural bent within us to pursue our own desires, versus God's. It is that sense of refusal to submit to His ways. Our sin is demonstrated in every lustful image in our mind, every selfish thought and act, every hurtful word spoken. It is like an inner moral rot that we are blinded to, and work to justify.

Jesus was sent from heaven to die,

to recuse us from this. His suffering and death were the only means through which it could be done. The corruption by religious and political figures that sentenced Jesus to death was unjust. The crown of thorns pushed down into his head was excruciating. The tearing apart of Jesus' flesh through gruesome whippings was bloody. Jesus' weak body being hung on two pieces of wood, by being nailed to it through his hands and feet, was inhumane.

The horror of the cross illustrates the severity of our wrongs. Though we do not see them as evil, in the eyes of God they are. Our actions are unjust, wicked and only the cross can satisfy the punishment that is due for them.

Despite what we think of ourselves, in the courtroom of God, our horrific sinfulness requires the ultimately penalty of death. However, in the greatest display of mercy the world has ever known, God Almighty provided a better way to satisfy His justifiable penalty. He sent His Only Son to die in our place. He poured out the rightful punishment due for us on



His perfect, sinless and holy Son. Jesus lovingly took our place.

And what is the validation of all this? Jesus not only died, but three days later rose from the dead and is still alive today! His resurrection means He overcame and conquered all our sinfulness that was poured out upon Him. He destroyed it all! He is the victor over sin, death and the Devil himself. Now because He lives, so can you. Because He has conquered, so can you. That is the hope of the cross for every individual and that is the hope of America!

Through the cross, a hard-hearted man can become loving, a bitter woman can become compassionate,

a divided nation can become one.

A prayer for you - God in heaven, we can see the darkness of America. Evil and injustice in so many places. We are a broken people. Only you can save us! Examine our hearts O God. Help us to turn from our sin and to you for mercy. Wash us. Make us clean we pray. In Jesus' name. Amen.

—Clint Decker is President of Great Awakenings and Speaking Truth is a nationally syndicated column. Please share your comment with Clint at cdecker@greatawakenings.org and follow his blog at clintdecker.blogspot.com.

World Cup 2026 countdown begins as logos go up around Kansas City

The countdown to the 2026 World Cup in Kansas City is officially underway as the new logo is revealed. Kansas City will have brand activations at a number of local landmarks:

Union Station — branded banners

Mill Creek Park — branding painting on lawn

The National WWI Museum and Memorial, north lawn — branding painting on lawn

KC streetcar — new branded wrap

KC cityscape — lighting in branded colors

Branded digital displays across the metro

Kansas City will have six differ-



ent logos in the branding effort, including one that says, “We are Kansas City,” featuring a design reminiscent of a fountain.

“The World Cup will bring jobs

to our residents, generate hundreds of millions of dollars for our region and will illustrate on a global stage what we’ve known for some time: Kansas City is the soccer capital of America,” Mayor Quinton Lucas

said. “I can’t wait to welcome the world to Kansas City.”

The FIFA World Cup is the largest and most prestigious single-sport event in the world and is followed by billions of fans all over the world. Since its inaugural tournament in 1930, the FIFA World Cup has been held 21 times. Occurring every four years, the 2026 World Cup will be the 23rd tournament and

will return to the United States for the first time since 1994. The 2026 FIFA World Cup will be held in 16 cities in the United State, Canada and Mexico and will be the first-

ever tournament with 48 teams fighting for the title of world champion

In 2017, forty-one cities submitted bids to host matches, with the selection committee ultimately trimming the list down to 23 finalists for the official bid to FIFA. The finalists included 17 cities in the United States (later trimmed to 16 when Baltimore and Washington D.C. merged bids), and three each in the United States and Canada. The official 2026 World Cup host cities were announced to a global audience on June 16, 2022

Last month, the NFL Draft was held in Kansas City. The NCAA wrestling and volleyball championships also will be held in the city before the World Cup.

PRIDE

continued from page 13

what is there to be proud of? Maybe I couldn’t identify with Jewish pride over great Jewish athletes, but at least they all actually accomplished something.

The other problematic element has to do with why the LGBTQ movement does everything possible to bludgeon every institution into celebrating Pride Nights, Days, Weeks and Months. The reason is the totalitarian nature of all left-wing movements. Unlike liberal and conservative movements, every left-wing movement is totalitarian. Therefore, it is not enough for people to tolerate or even show respect to LGBTQ individuals. We must all celebrate lesbianism, male homosexuality, the transgendered and queers. No left-wing movement is a movement for tolerance. They are movements that demand celebration.

For the first time in any of our lifetimes, the Left may have met an immovable obstacle. Americans are prepared to tolerate just about everything and everyone. But at least half of us will not celebrate girls who have their breasts removed — or the therapists and physicians who facilitate it. At least half of us will not celebrate men dressed as women, especially those who dance in front of 6-year-olds. And while some medical schools have been cowed into saying “birthing person” rather than “pregnant woman,” at least half of us will

hold the cowards who run these medical schools in contempt.

I return to my opening point. I have devoted much of my life to helping my fellow Jews. It started when I was 21 years old, and the Israeli foreign office sent me into the Soviet Union to smuggle in Jewish items and smuggle out names of Jews wanting to leave the Soviet Union. I have brought many disaffected Jews back to Judaism. And I have constantly fought for Israel’s security. I am very happy to be

a Jew. But I don’t quite relate to being proud of it — it was not my achievement; it was an accident of birth. That is equally true of your race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity and orientation. You don’t get credit for, shouldn’t be proud of and have no right to demand others celebrate something you had nothing to do with.

Finally, if you’re honest, group pride must be accompanied by group shame. Yes, a disproportionate num-

ber of Nobel Prize winners were Jews. But a disproportionate number of Western spies for Stalin were also Jews. If you’re not prepared to be

ashamed of your group, don’t take pride in it. That rule applies to blacks, gays, women, Christians and every other group in the world.



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North Topeka has a lot going on

There's a lot happening in North Topeka this month, and it's not just in the NOTO area.

EXHIBITING inside the NOTO Arts Center Morris Gallery this month is "Mapping Change". This special exhibit will shine the light on those artists who are actively working to make art that is grounded in doing. Join us for the special exhibit and take part in the interactive Data Mapping Project that will help us to discover what incites change throughout the people of Topeka. This exhibit will run through July 29th.

Our Art in The Vestibule exhibit features "The Art of Denny Stewart".

Gallery Hours are Wed 11 - 5, Thurs and Fri 11-7, Sat 10-4

FIRST FRIDAY ART WALK & MARKET is the first Friday of every month. The North Topeka Arts District has become an attraction to Art Lovers and History Buffs alike with beautiful scenes

of art and history. Entertainment can also be found on First Fridays, at various venues during the artwalk up and down N. Kansas Avenue, as well as streetside vendors. The restaurants, locally owned shops, art galleries antiques and studios have become a favorite art walk destination. Art Walk Hours are 10 am to 9 pm.

First Friday Music at Redbud Park by The Basement Melons 6-8pm.

THIRD FRIDAYS. Concerts are planned for five consecutive third Fridays through September, 7-10PM. June 16 is Hector Anchondo.

COMMUNITY BLOCK PARTY – June 2, 5-9pm, 1110 N. Kansas, Kaw Valley Bank celebrating 150 years in their parking lot. Food and live music by Chance Encounter. Kid friendly! Free face painter, balloon artist, and obstacle course. Free Glory Days Pizza and Pineapple Dream while supplies last.

NORTH TOPEKA COMMUNITY BAND CONCERT - June 5, 7:30pm, Garfield Park Gazebo, 1600 NE Quincy. (Also on June 19 and July 10) North Topeka Community Band concerts have been a summer treat since 1996. No admission cost. Bring your lawn chairs. Contact Info: Ginger Patterson, (785) 633-2438

FLAG DAY – June 14. Great Overland Station will have an outdoor concert, kids activities and a ceremony to retire all of last year's flags and present new ones.

TOPEKA KIDS FEST – June 17, 10-3, The Woodshed. Food, kids events, crafts, bounce house, photo booth, vendor market, men's items, kids items.

ELMONT OPRY PRESENTS HELEN RUSSELL & COMPANY – Jun. 23, 7pm; and Jun. 24, 1pm, Elmont UMC, 6635 NW Church Ln. Doors open 90 minutes early for lunch or dinner. Tickets \$15 – call 785-249-0908.

SENIORS PITCH CLUB - Every Tuesday 1 pm at Garfield Community Center. First visit free then a dollar per visit for coffee and replacement cards

For more information visit <https://exploreNOTO.org>.

SUNRISE OPTIMIST CLUB – Every Tue., 6:30am, Sunrise Optimist Complex, 720 NW 50th St. 246-1291.

VIP LUNCHEON FOR SENIORS – Every Wed., 10:45 bible Study and meal at Noon, Topeka Church of the Brethren, 3201 NW Rochester Rd. (1 mile north of Dillon's North). FREE lunch with Christian fellowship, devotions & entertainment provided by Topeka North Outreach. For info: 785-224-8803.

OPERATION BACKPACK – 1st Thurs., 6pm, Indian Creek Elementary, 4303 NE Indian Creek Rd. Volunteers gather to assemble Weekend Snack Sacks for low-income students. No assembly in August. Sponsored by Topeka North Outreach. For info: 286-1370.

FREE MOBILE FOOD DISTRIBUTION – 4th Tue. through Nov., 9am, 1231 NW Eugene St. Randel Ministries, Inc., in partnership with Harvesters and Family of God Church will have its monthly food distribution. No ID or proof of income required, first come first served. Distributing fresh produce and other items to families in need. 785-234-1111 www.RandelMinistries.com

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the events calendar

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Get your event **Highlighted in Blue** in print, our online calendar and promoted in social media for only \$29!

CONCERTS

KANSAS PRAIRIE PICKERS – Fourth Sun. ea. Month, 1pm, Auburn Community Center. Foot-stomping, hand-clapping tunes. Concessions available

THE BERRYTON PICKERS – First Sat. of ea. month, 7-9pm, Berryton Baptist Church. Bring your snacks!

GRAND OTTAWA OPRY – 2nd & 4th Saturday, 5:30PM-pre-show, 6PM showtime, Ottawa Memorial Auditorium, 301 S Hickory, Ottawa. Tickets are \$15 and only at the door. Ph. 785-241-6762, email grandootpry@gmail.com. GrandOttawaOpry.com

NORTH TOPEKA COMMUNITY BAND CONCERT – June 5, 7:30pm, Garfield Park Gazebo, 1600 NE Quincy. (Also on June 19 and July 10) North Topeka Community Band concerts have been a summer treat since 1996.

No admission cost. Bring your lawn chairs. Contact Info: Ginger Patterson, (785) 633-2438

LIVE AT LUNCH – June 7, 11-1, Every Plaza. R & J Productions

EATS AND BEATS – June 8, 11-1, Every Plaza. Undercover

LIVE AT LUNCH – June 14, 11-1, Every Plaza. Delta Haze

EATS AND BEATS – June 15, 11-1, Every Plaza. Stranded in the City

LIVE AT LUNCH – June 21, 11-1, Every Plaza. Hoodoo Brothers

EATS AND BEATS – June 22, 11-1, Every Plaza. Switch in Time

ELMONT OPRY PRESENTS HELEN RUSSELL & COMPANY

PANY – Jun. 23, 7pm; and Jun. 24, 1pm, Elmont UMC, 6635 NW Church Ln. Doors open 90 minutes early for lunch or dinner. Tickets \$15 – call 785-249-0908.

THE MIX IN CONCERT – June 23, 7pm, TPAC.

LIVE AT LUNCH – June 28, 11-1, Every Plaza. Pastense

EATS AND BEATS – June 29, 11-1, Every Plaza. Steve Kile Band

KAREN PECK AND NEW RIVER IN CONCERT – July 7, 7pm, Wanamaker Woods Church, 3501 SW Wanamaker Rd. Doors open at 6pm. No tickets necessary. Free-will offering

SPECIAL CHURCH EVENTS

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

HOPE HOUSE FREE COMMUNITY CLOTHING BANK – Wed. 6-8pm and Sat. 12-3pm, Oakland Church of the Nazarene: 939 NE Oakland

HARVESTER FREE MOBILE FOOD DISTRIBUTION – 2nd Saturday each month, 1:30-3pm, Oakland Church of the Nazarene: 939 NE Oakland

FREE WEEKLY COMMUNITY PANCAKE BREAKFAST – Sundays 8:10 to 10:30am, at Oakland Church of the Nazarene: 939 NE Oakland, followed by church services at 10:45am with Pastor Jeanette Cook.

FIRST SATURDAY BREAKFAST BUFFET – 7:30 AM - 10:00 AM, Shawnee Heights UMC, 6020 SE 44th

INSIDE OUT FELLOWSHIP CHURCH – Every Sunday 12pm service; Every Tuesday 7:30pm service. Location: 2020 SE 21st. For info: 785-380-7031 or io@insideoutinc.net or www.insideoutinc.net

KIDS for JESUS! – Wednesday's 6:30 - 8pm, Lakeview Church of the Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. Bring your friends, family, neighbors, enemies! For info: 785-266-3247, FB: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene, Email: Lakenaz@aol.com

MID-WEEK PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY – Wednesday's, 7-8pm, Lakeview Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. You are invited! Contact info: (785)266-3247, FB: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene

LOL "LADIES OF LAKEVIEW" – Lakeview Church of the Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. Monthly Women's Ministry Events! (Cooking, Crafts, Outreach, Bible Study, Fellowship!) Call the church office for info: (785) 266-3247, Facebook: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene Email: LakeNaz@aol.com

FERVENT BIBLE STUDY – May 1, Lakeview Church of the Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. Bring your Fervent by Priscilla Shirer, with you. Contact info: (785) 266-3247, Facebook: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene Email: LakeNaz@aol.com

FAMILY-FRIENDLY EVENTS

SENIORS NUTRITIONAL LUNCH – Weekdays, except holidays, at noon at Auburn Civic Center, 1020 N. Washington Street. Minimal cost per person. Reservations/cancellations required 24 hours in advance by calling Meals on Wheels of Jefferson & Shawnee Co. at 295-3980. Each meal includes 1% milk & sugar-free items for diabetics. 215- 0064.

MEDICARE MONDAYS – First Mon. ea. month, 1-3pm.

Topeka/Sh. Co. Public Library, 1515 SW 10th. Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging offers Senior health insurance counseling. For info: 580-4545 or nhoni@tscpl.org

SHEPHERDS CENTER PICKLEBALL GROUP – plays Mon. & Wed. Mon. at Countryside UMC, 32nd & Burlingame, from 3-5. Park on the NORTH side & use the furthest WEST door. Follow the hallway to gym. On Wed. at First Baptist, 30th & MacVicar, from 1-3. Park on the WEST side.

COUNTRY AND BALLROOM DANCING – Thursdays 6-9pm. Croco Hall. Info: Edwina 379-9538, 478-4760.

FIRST FRIDAY ART MARKET – Downtown and NOTO arts district. Arts, antiques, fine crafts, flea market items, snacks, beverages, entertainment and more.

TOPEKA ACAPELLA UNLIMITED AUDITIONS – Topeka Acappella Unlimited is looking for female singers who would like to sing four-part acappella harmonies. Topeka Acappella Unlimited is a Chapter of Sweet Adelines, International. Call Cindy Patton at 785-640-7403 for info

SQUARE DANCING – Shawnee Swingers has monthly dances and sponsors lessons in the Fall. Call or text 785-845-2357; wesquaredance.com shawneeswingers@gmail.com. On Facebook: Shawnee Swingers Square Dance Club.

HARVESTERS MOBILE FOOD PANTRY, 1st & 3rd Sat, 2-3pm, Shawnee Heights UMC parking lot.

FREE MOBILE FOOD DISTRIBUTION – 4th Tue. through Nov., 9am, 1231 NW Eugene St. Randel Ministries, Inc., in partnership with Harvesters and Family of God Church will have its monthly food distribution. No ID or proof of income required, first come first served. Distributing fresh produce and other items to families in need. 785-234-1111 www.RandelMinistries.com

TOPEKA PUBLIC LIBRARY PLAY BUS – 9:30am-noon, Lakeview Nazarene Church, 2835 Croco. Every Tuesday, enjoy story time, play opportunities, books for check-out & take & make art. 785-266-3247.

OPEN INDOOR COURT PICKLEBALL – Sundays at 4pm, Berryton United Methodist Church (7010 SE Berryton Rd. All ages and abilities welcome.

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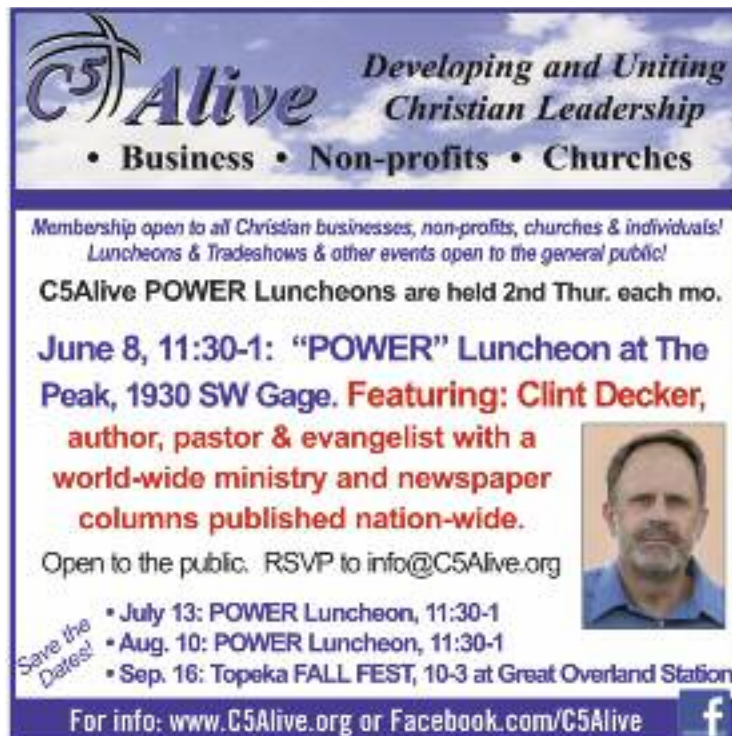
C5Alive POWER Luncheons are held 2nd Thur. each mo.

June 8, 11:30-1: "POWER" Luncheon at The Peak, 1930 SW Gage. Featuring: Clint Decker, author, pastor & evangelist with a world-wide ministry and newspaper columns published nation-wide.

Open to the public. RSVP to info@C5Alive.org

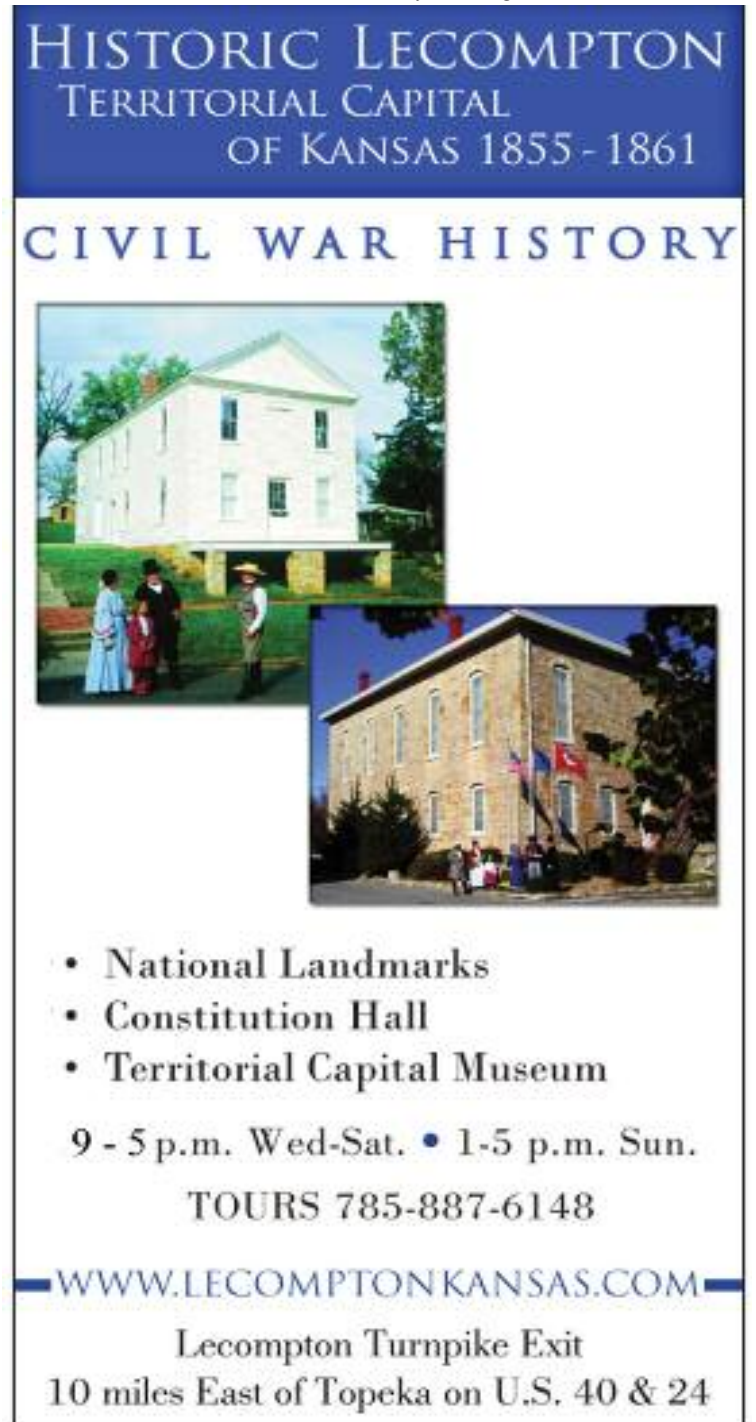
Save the Dates!
• July 13: POWER Luncheon, 11:30-1
• Aug. 10: POWER Luncheon, 11:30-1
• Sep. 16: Topeka FALL FEST, 10-3 at Great Overland Station

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CYCLING EVENTS – Various cycle rides are offered by Kansas Cyclist. www.kansascyclist.com/

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES – Outdoor events and activities. www.getoutdoorskansasa.org/calenda

MONDAY FARMERS MARKET – Mondays 7:30-11:30am, May 8 to Oct. 2, Topeka & Sh. Co. Library, (closed Memorial Day & Labor Day)

OVERBROOK FARMER'S MARKET – every Monday now to Labor Day, from 4-6 pm at the Overbrook Fair Grounds

LAWRENCE TUESDAY MARKET – Tuesdays 4-6pm, South Park, 1141 Massachusetts. Opens May 9

SILVER LAKE FARMERS MARKET – Tuesdays 6-8pm, June 7-Sep. 13, Silver Lake Library, 203 Railroad St.

CARBONDALE FARMERS MARKET – every Wed. 4-6pm in Carbondale City Park. Vendor-grown or vendor-produced. 785836-7887

PERRY LECOMPTON FARMERS MARKET – Fridays 4-6:30pm, Bernie's/Cenex parking lot, Ferguson & Hwy 24

DOWNTOWN TOPEKA FARMERS MARKET – Saturday's April 8 to Oct. 28, 7:30am-noon, 6th & Harrison. The open-air market is full of fresh fruits and vegetables, herbs, arts & crafts, flower, home-baked goods and more.

BREAD BASKET FARMERS MARKET – Saturday's, 7:30am-1pm, Apr. 1 through Nov. 18, south end of West Ridge Mall parking lot.

LAWRENCE FARMERS MARKET – Sat. 7:30-11:30, 824 New Hampshire Street. Opens April 8

MOTHER TERESA'S FARMERS MARKET – Saturdays, July 1 – Sep. 9, 8:30-11:30am, 2014 NW 46th St.

COMMUNITY BLOCK PARTY – June 2, 5-9pm, 1110 N. Kansas, Kaw Valley Bank celebrating 150 years in their parking lot. Food and live music by Chance Encounter. Kid friendly! Free face painter, balloon artist, and obstacle course. Free Glory Days Pizza and Pineapple Dream while supplies last.

DOGGIE DATE NIGHT – Jun. 3, 5-7pm, Every Plaza. A free event with food, drinks, and other items for sale. Prizes, a photo booth and a "paw print station" too

FOOD TRUCK NIGHT – June 3, 4-8pm, HHHS, 5720 SW 29. Featuring music and food trucks. Helps homeless animals.

"JUNGLE CRUISE" ON THE YAGER STADIUM Jumbotron – Jun. 3, gates open at 6:30pm, movie at 7:30 – 9:45 p.m. Concession stands will be selling popcorn, hot dogs, drinks & other snacks, and attendees are welcome to eat in the stands, con-course or on the grass, or bring your own food and non-alcoholic beverages

FITNESS BOOT CAMP – June 3, 9-10am, Quinton Heights Hill. Cardio exercises, strength training, endurance training. www.0mni-circle.co

GERMANFEST – June 3-4, 312 NE Freeman, Sacred Heart-St. Joseph Parish

FREE SHREDDING EVENT – June 3, 11am-2pm, Silver Lake Bank back parking lot, 201 NW Hwy 24. Limit 5 boxes per household.

YOUTH IN THE OUTDOORS – June 3, 9am-1pm, Ravenwood Lodge, 10147 SW 61st St. Free activities for kids ages 6-16. Laser shoot, archery clinic, BB gun clinic, Turkey clinic, Fishing & fly fishing demos, Black powder, Hunter Safety, Clay target clinic, Water fowl calling, Wildlife Habitat education. 785-438-2065

MISS JUNETEENTH SCHOLARSHIP PAGEANT – Jun. 3, Gary Fine Arts Center,

Washburn Univ. Free Adm.

MULVANE ART FAIR – June 3-4, Mulvane Art Museum, Washburn University

WOMEN ON WHEELS CAR SHOW – June 3, 4-7pm, KTUW on the Washburn University campus. Featuring women and their motor vehicles, including motorcycles. https://ktwu.org/womenonwheels/ or call 785-670-1111

GARAGE SALE – Friday, June 3-4: Perry United Methodist Church Activity Center. Friday 8-4; Saturday 8 am to noon 1/2 price sale and \$1 bag from noon to 2 pm. To make donations to the sale, write to Paula Hladky at cathouse4000@hotmail.com.

CHILDRENS MIRACLE NETWORK CRUISE NIGHT – June 4, 7-9pm, Sams Club parking lot. 1401 SW Wanamaker. Food trucks, live DJ, more. Events.topekasamsclub@gmail.com

C5Alive "POWER" LUNCHEON – June 8, 11:30-1 at The Peak, 1930 SW Gage! Featured speaker is Clint Decker, a writer, speaker, pastor & evangelist who has shared his message with over two million people around the world. • Cost: \$15 for C5 members & first-time guests who RSVP, \$17 at the door • \$20 for non-members & repeat guests. Please RSVP to info@C5Alive.org, so we know how much food is needed! *Open to the public – Put POWER in your life with great food, great speakers and great company! Invite a friend to join you!*

SAVE THE DATE: C5 POWER Luncheon, July 13, 11:30-1 at Aldersgate Village featuring Max Manning.

OPEN HOUSE TOURS – June 8, 6pm, Jayhawk Theatre. RSVP at jayhawktheatre.org

FRIDAY FLICKS: BACK TO THE FUTURE – June 9, 8pm, Everyy Plaza

FAIRLAWN PLAZA SIDEWALK SALES – June 9 & 10, 10am-5pm. Bargains, refreshments, activities.

FAIRLAWN PLAZA CRUISE NIGHT – June 10, 5pm

LADY SHAKES' ROMEO & JULIET – June 9-10, 7pm, and June 11 at 2pm, Jayhawk Theatre. Come early at 6pm for dinner with DJ's Catering and drinks from Norseman Brewing. A benefit for Jayhawk Theatre and Lady Shakes Theater Co. Tickets \$12 (\$8 students) at: jayhawktheatre.org

VENDORS MARKET – June 10, 9-3, Barb's Country Barn.

TACO TOPIA STREET FEST – June 10, 4pm, Topeka Vendors Market, 528 SE Adams St. Live music, taco eating contest, play area, fresh fruit stand, margarita tent, more.

JUNETEENTH PARADE – June 10, 11am, Williams Magnet School, 1301 SE Monroe St. Community gathering at noon at Cushinberry Park.

HEARTLAND MILITARY DAY – Jun. 10, 7am - 4pm, Museum of the Kansas National Guard, 125 SE Airport E. Dr. Free day of Military Equipment Exhibits, WW II Battle Reenactments, Civil War Artillery Drills, Topeka Big Band, Sante Fe Band, Vietnam War Exhibits, Pancake Feed 7 to 10 (Donations), Cookout

Meal 11 to 2 (Donations), and free admission to all Museum exhibits, inside and out. office@kngmuseum.org. 785-862-1020

OUTDOOR FLEA MARKET – June 10, 10-3, 10th & MacVicar

CRPS STRONG LET'S RIDE – June 10, 9am registration, Kickstart Saloon. 78.1 mile ride, \$20/bike, ending at Victoria's, \$10/plate pulled pork & sides. Raffle. 785-249-9702.

FLAG DAY – June 14. Great Overland Station will have an outdoor concert, kids activities and a ceremony to retire all of last year's flags and present new ones.

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT PLANNING MEETING – June 15, 6:30pm, Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library. Get info, register your neighborhood, order t-shirts, etc. 785-266-8666 or info@parstopeka.org

RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK – June 15, 7pm, Jayhawk Theatre. Tickets \$10 (\$7 students & seniors & military) at: jayhawktheatre.org

JUNETEENTH COMMUNITY CELEBRATION – June 17, Noon, Hillcrest Community Center.

TOPEKA KIDS FEST – June 17, 10-3, The Woodshed. Food, kids events, crafts, bounce house, photo booth, vendor market, men's items, kids items.

SUNSHINE REGGAE ROOTS FESTIVAL – June 17, 4pm, 8th & Jackson downtown. Reggae & Ska bands, food trucks, beer garden, vendors. Adm \$15

SUMMERTIME BLUES – June 21, 7pm, Gage Park Amphitheatre. Orphan John & the Abandoned

SOLE REASON GOLF TOURNAMENT – June 24, Cypress Ridge Golf Course. 8-8:30 AM registration, 9 AM shotgun. Solereason@yahoo.com or 785-338-2965 or register at solereason.net. Benefits children that need sneakers. Lots of prizes and silent auction items.

COMMUNITY WALK/PASSPORT TO HEALTH – June 24, 8am, Gage Park Corral #2. Free event with information provided by local health organizations, plus chances to win prizes when you complete the walk and have your passport stamped! Hosted by the Topeka Lions Club/Twilight Branch and 24 for Life by Midland Care. Register to get your free event passport at the event or earn extra chances for the prize drawings when you register online and complete the Risk Test for pre-diabetes from 24 for life. Both links are at topekaliions.org/community-walk

THE PENNANT 5TH ANNIVERSARY BLOCK PARTY – June 24, 4pm, 900 Block Downtown. Aaron Kamm and the One Drops, The Mix Band & Mike Babb, vendors, fun activities.

LAST SUNDAY FREE BREAKFAST BUFFET – June 25,

9am – 12pm, Philip Billard Post 1650, 3110 SW Huntoon. Free pancakes & sausage, eggs, coffee, juice, and sometimes biscuits & gravy. Donations accepted and will go to helping vets in the Topeka area.

AZURA FIREWORKS – July 1, 7pm, Avondale East Field. Food trucks, DJ, inflatables. Fireworks at 10pm.

TEE-PAC GOLF TOURNAMENT – July 21, Shawnee Country Club. A fundraiser for mainstage programming and capital improvements at the Topeka Performing Arts Center. The early bird registration price for a team of 4 is \$375, available until April 30th. On-line registration deadline is July 7th. Registration will include lunch, 18-hole course and golf cart. Individual person registration is \$100. Lunch sponsor Iron Rail Brewing. Also silent auction and 50/50 raffle. https://www.topekaperformingarts.org/events/2023/teepac-golf-tournament

3RD ANNUAL TOPEKA FALL FEST – Sep. 16, 10am-3pm, at the Great Overland Station. Live music, a craft & vendor fair, food trucks, and a health & fitness fair, plus games and activities for kids. Admission is free! Dozens of local businesses, non-profits & churches will operate games & activities such as Face Painting, Craft Stations, Inflatables, Petting Zoo, Cake Walk, Pumpkin Decorating and more! We'll have a Health & Fitness Fair sponsored by Topeka Emerald City Cosmo Club, featuring Health Screenings & Fitness Demonstrations, Information & Educational Booths, Health & Safety Products and more. For more info, email info@C5Alive.org

MEETINGS & CLASSES

CONCERNED WOMEN FOR AMERICA MEETING – Join other concerned people to pray and unite in action for Shawnee Co. and our Nation. For info about monthly meetings: 785-260-5659 or ks.cwfa.org.

THE HEAT – FREE fitness classes for the community. Located at Florence Crittenton Services Center for Integrative Health, 5423 SW 7th St. www.fl-croitkansasa.org Sun. 4-5 pm Yoga; Mon. 12-12:45pm Cardio Remix; Mon. 5:30-6:15pm STRONG™; Tue. 12:15-1:15pm Restorative Yoga; Tue. 5:30-6:15pm Zumba®; Wed. 5:30-6:15pm Cardio Sculpt; Thu. 12:15-1:00pm Pilates + CIRCL

Mobility™; Thu. 5:30-6:15pm Zumba®; Fri. 12-12:45pm POUND

DEAF WORSHIP SERVICE – 3rd Sun., 3pm, Faith Lutheran Church, 17th & Gage. Also, every Sun. 9:30am service is interpreted.

SENIOR FIT & FUN PROGRAM – every Mon., Wed., & Fri., 1:30pm, Rolling Hills Christian Church, 4530 NW Hiawatha Place (US Hwy 75 & NW 46th St.) 785-286-0601 or office@rhctopeka.org

TOPEKA LIONS CLUB – 2nd Mondays at Noon at Wings, Etc. Come at 11:30 to order from the menu. Guests welcome.

BOY'S TRAIL LIFE & AMERICAN HERITAGE GIRLS TROUPE – Every Mon. 6pm, Cornerstone Comm. Ch., 7620 SW 21st. Faith-based scouting programs, age 5-18. Register: cornerstonetopeka.com. 478-2929.

TOPEKA NEEDLEWORK GUILD – Every Mon. (except holidays) 9a-11a in the Menninger Room of the Topeka Public Library. Bring a project to work on as we share our needleworking skills and ideas. All are welcome to drop in.

HEARTLAND HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOODS – 2nd Mon., 11:45am-1pm. Promoting neighborhood well-being by mobilizing people, ideas & resources. 233-1365.

CHRISTIAN HOMESCHOOL CO-OP – Monday's, 1-4pm, Lakeview Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. Contact info: (785)266-3247, FB: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene

SENIOR ADULT EXERCISE CLASS – Tuesday's 10am, Lakeview Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco Rd. All exercises will be done from a chair, will help you get up out of a chair, & climb stairs safely! Contact info: (785)266-3247, FB: Topeka Lakeview Nazarene

TOPEKA LINCOLN CLUB – 1st Tue. of month, 7pm, Topeka Public Library. Discussing our greatest President, Abraham Lincoln, and his times. The public is welcome. For info, contact Kirk Nystrom 235-6977.

SUNRISE OPTIMIST CLUB – Every Tue., 6:30am, Sunrise Optimist Complex, 720 NW 50th St. 246-1291.

NARVE (Nat'l Assn of Railroad Veteran Employee) – 2nd Tuesday each month at Grace Episcopal Church, 701 SW 8th Ave - 9:30AM. Enter on NW corner.

MENNINGER BIBLE CLASSES – Tuesdays 11am-12:30. Amerus Room, YWCA, 225 West 12th. A new

KAREN PECK NEW RIVER

Concert at **The Woods AT WANNAMAKER**

July 7th 7:00pm

• Doors open at 6pm
• Freewill Offering

3501 SW Wannamaker Rd. • 785-273-2248 • www.woodsnsbz@watts.org

Community Walk

Passport to Health

Hosted by Topeka Lions Club/Twilight Branch and Midland Care/24 for Life

June 24, 2023 - 8 am to 10 am

Gage Park, Corral #2, 4330 SW Conservatory Drive, Topeka KS

- Free Screening for risk factors for diabetes
- Free Registration online and onsite the morning of
- Free Health Information and Health Screenings
- Complete your passport for a chance to win prizes
- Water in coolers provided – Bring your own water bottle
- *Bring your used eyeglasses to be recycled by the Lions Club*

FREE - Come out and take a walk in the park!

Kid friendly, strollers welcome, dogs on leashes. Water for dogs onsite.
Walk & collect stamps on your passport for a chance to win prizes!
Registration online: [TopekaLions.org/community-walk](https://www.TopekaLions.org/community-walk)

Sponsors as of 05-23-23

study group for Year One of Flo Menninger's course on Four Years through the Bible. Read and discuss Genesis through First Kings. Nominal charge for materials. For info call the YWCA at 233-1750 or Clara Gamache at 785-408-5433. (The Bible study is also taught on Sat. mornings on 101.5 FM radio.)

FRATERNAL ORDER OF EAGLES Aerie 4319: 1st & 3rd Tue. 7pm; Auxiliary: 1st & 4th Tue. 6pm, 2941 SE Fremont Street. An international non-profit organization uniting fraternally in the spirit of liberty, truth, justice, and equality, to make human life more desirable by lessening its ills and promoting peace, prosperity, gladness and hope. www.foe.com 785-266-7307

DUPLICATE BRIDGE - Tuesdays and Thursdays at 12:30PM at The Woman's Club of Topeka, 5221 SW West Dr. Bill Gates and Warren Buffett play duplicate bridge! It is great for your brain health. For additional information email janescola@hotmail.com.

O.W.L.S. (Older Wise Loving Saints) - meets the second Tuesday of the month. Location varies and can be found at www.faithfamilylife.com

S.W.A.G. (Spiritual Warriors Anointed by God) youth group - Wed at 7:00 p.m. 3710 NW Topeka Blvd.

AWANA - Every Wed., 6-8pm, First Southern Baptist Church, 1912 SW Gage Blvd. Bible based program for children & youth ages 3-HS. For info: 272-0443.

AWANA - Every Wed., 6:30pm, Bethel Baptist Church, 4011 N. Kansas Ave. Bible based program for children & youth ages 3-HS. For info: 286-0467.

AWANA - Every Wed., 6:30-8pm, Auburn Christian Church. Bible based program for children & youth ages 3-HS. For info: 256-2515.

VIP LUNCHEON FOR SENIORS - Every Wed., 10-45 Bible Study and meal at Noon, Topeka Church of the Brethren, 3201 NW Rochester Rd. (1 mile north of Dillon's North). FREE lunch with Christian fellowship, devotions & entertainment provided by Topeka North Outreach. Free will donations accepted. For info: 785-224-8803 or vip@topekanorthoutreach.org.

SAFE STREETS MEETING - 1st Wed., 11:45am, Great Overland Station 266-4606. (no meeting in July)

STUDENT IMPACT - Every Wed., 6-8pm, First Southern Baptist, 1912 SW Gage Blvd. Youth games, teaching, worship, small groups. For info: 272-0443.

CHRISTIAN CHALLENGE - Every Thurs. 7-9pm, First Southern Baptist, 1912 SW Gage Blvd. Worship for college students.

TOPEKA TWILIGHT LIONS BRANCH CLUB - 3rd Thursdays at 7pm at Lakeview Church of the Nazarene, 2835 SE Croco. Social gathering, guests welcome. Topekalions.org

INTENTIONAL MOM - 1st & 3rd Thurs., 9-11:30am, Topeka Bible Church Auditorium, 1135 SW College. For all moms, helping to be intentional! 234-5545.

OPERATION BACKPACK - 1st Thurs., 6pm, Indian Creek Elementary School, 4303 NE Indian Creek Rd. Volunteers gather to assemble Weekend Snack Sacks for low-income students. No assembly in August. Sponsored by Topeka North Outreach. For info: 286-1370.

TOPEKA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY - 4th Thurs., 7pm, Topeka Shawnee County Public Library, 1515 SW 10th St. No program in Nov. or Dec. Promotes & stimulates the education, knowledge & interest of the membership & the public in family history, genealogical records & research. 233-5762 or tgstopeka.org.

KINGDOM ADVISORS TOPEKA AREA STUDY GROUP - 3rd Thu., 11:30am, Northland Christian Church, 3102 NW Topeka Blvd. Christian financial professionals: financial planners, accountants, attorney's & insurance agents invited. kingdomadvisors.org or Jim Hanna, james.c.hanna@ampf.com or 357-6278 x19.

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

A GOOD YARN CLUB - 2nd & 4th Sat., 9-11am, Wanamaker Rd Baptist Church, 2700 SW Wanamaker. Doing Good for Others: Knitting & Crocheting for Local Charities, free yarn, needles, hooks & patterns. All are welcome. Info: Anne, 785-272-9249 or kittens812@sbcglobal.net

BIBLE QUIZZING - 1st Sat. Learn God's Word &

have fun with area Christian youth age 9-19. YFC/YEA style quizzing & rules. 913-593-6427 or biblequizzing.org.

MONTHLY SCORE MEETING - 1st Sat., 8-9:30am, Washburn Tech, 5724 SW Huntoon (enter east doors facing Huntoon). No RSVP or fee is required. Small business owners are invited to a Breakfast Roundtable discussion with members of SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives). Info: 234-3049.

TOPEKA GREAT LIGHT AGLOW - For meeting info contact Vickie Lynch at greatlighttopeka@gmail.com.

SUPPORT GROUPS

HOPE AND HEALING ACADEMY harnesses the power of horses to transform the human spirit. They are expanding services to address the needs and experiences of first responders and members of the armed forces. For info, call 785-224-4232 or go to www.hopeandhealingacademy.com.

OVERCOMER'S OUTREACH ANONYMOUS RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUP - Mondays 6:30-7:30pm, at Be Filled Of South Topeka, 200 Airport Rd, Bldg. 818 Suite 1. Led by Pastor Bill Ritchey. 785-817-2802

BINDING UP THE BROKEN HEARTED - Sessions offered for women who suffer from the after-effects of abortion. All the women who lead these sessions have had an abortion and have received healing from God's Word. For info, contact local Healing Hearts representative Shelly Brush, First Southern Baptist Church at shelly.b@healinghearts.org. All communication is confidential and secure.

MIDLAND CARE GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS: Building A, 200 SW Frazier Circle; Every Mon., 4-5pm: 12 Week Adult Group for Recent Loss 1st and 3rd Thu., 10:30am & 5:30pm - Ongoing Adult Group 1st and 3rd Thu., 5:30pm: Ongoing Young Adult Group (4-18 years of age) For All Groups: Call for start dates and info packet. Group and individual grief support available upon request. Info: 785-232-2044 ext.341

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUPS - Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging provides an opportunity for caregivers to get together and share their ideas and feelings. 2nd Monday, 3:30pm; Topeka public library, Anton Rm. 3rd Friday, 12 noon, Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging, 2910 SW Topeka

ABORTION RECOVERY SUPPORT - Providing services for women & men who suffer from Post-Abortion Syndrome. Kay Lyn at KLCarlson20@cox.net.

AL-ANON is a support group for families and friends of alcoholics. For information on meetings in the Topeka area email ais-topeka@kansas-al-anon.org or 785-215-1045. All correspondence confidential

PURSUIT FOR SEXUAL PURITY - Men struggling with pornography & sexual addiction. This bible study/ accountability group uses the Pure Desire book by Ted Roberts. For info: 249-9509. All inquiries confidential.

ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUPS - Monthly support group meetings for caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia. All of our programs have moved from in-person to virtual.

Caregiver support group via Skype 9:30am every other Wednesday. Email Hayley Young at hdyoung@alz.org or call 785.379.3067 for the meeting link and other info.

Caregiver Support Group via Google Hangouts, 4:30pm every other Wednesday. Email Hayley Young at hdyoung@alz.org or call 785.379.3067 for the meeting link and other info.

BIKERS AGAINST CHILD ABUSE - NE Kansas Chapter (B.A.C.A.) 3rd Sun., 4 pm American Legion, 3800 SE Michigan. Open to the public. For info: 817-5801.

COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS/BEREAVED PARENTS GROUP - 4th Mon. in Formation classroom at Most Pure Heart of Mary, 17th & Stone. Discussion starts 7pm; fellowship & refreshments 8:30. 785-272-4895

CAREGIVERS GROUP - Caring Hearts of Hope meet 2nd and 4th Tuesdays from 5:30-6:30pm at Highland Heights Christian Church. This group will root its encouragement in God's word and prayer as well as conversation and sharing and is open to all those who care for others with illnesses such as Alzheimers, dementia, cancer or other debilitating ill-

nesses or injuries. For dates and info, go to "Weekly Class List" at www.highlandheightscc.com or call 785-379-5642.

EMOTIONS ANONYMOUS: a 12-step program for those suffering with emotional instability such as depression, anxiety, grief, etc. Meets every Tues. at Grace Episcopal Cathedral, Noon-1pm. For info: Sharon 785-633-7764

FIBROMYALGIA & CHRONIC FATIGUE SYNDROME SUPPORT GROUP - 2nd Tue., 7-9pm. First Congregational Church, 17th and Collins. For info: Randy at 785-969-4038 or TopekaCFS@outlook.com.

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

GRIEF SUPPORT - Sponsored by Heartland Hospice for those dealing with death or major loss. 1st Mon., 5:30-7:30pm, Individual appointments; other times are available. Call Terry at (785)230-6730. 3rd Thurs., 11am, Lunch After Loss, Paisano's Ristorante, Fleming Place, SW 10th & Gage Blvd. For reservations or info: 785-271-6500.

"HEALING AFTER THE SUICIDE OF A LOVED ONE" ("HEAL") - or Survivors of Suicide" (SOS). 1st & 3rd Tue., 6:30-8pm, Zoom meeting 1st Tue, and in-person meetings 3rd Tue. at First Congregational Church, 1701 SW Collins. No cost to attend. Informal meetings. Contact: Topeka.heals@gmail.com or Sandy at 785-249-3792

PRISON OUTREACH MINISTRY - Every Tue., 7-9pm, Topeka Women's Prison, 815 Rice Rd. Reaching out to those who can't come in, finding freedom behind bars, inspiring inmates to seek salvation during a difficult time. Providing support & guidance through the Holy Spirit to offer strength. Director: Don Garner, 286-0489 or faithfamilylifeministries@gmail.com.

GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS - Every Wed, 7pm, St. Francis Hospital, meeting room #8.

MOMS-IN-TOUCH PRAYER GROUP - Every Wed., 2:30-3:30pm, Library at Cair Paravel-Latin School. Experience God's power through prayer as we lift our students, teachers, staff, administrators & board up to the Lord. For info: 357-0369.

DIVORCECARE PROGRAMS - (For updates check www.divorcecare.org) locations and times:

WED. - 6:30pm, Topeka Bible Church, 1101 SW Mulvane. Cost: \$15. Child care provided. For info: 379-0505 or www.divorcecare.org.

WED. - 6:45 - 8:45pm, Walnut View Christian Church, 3634 SE 37th St. (Just East of 37th & Croco). Cost: \$10 registration (scholarships available). The video seminar series featuring some of the nation's foremost experts on divorce and recovery topics, combined with support group discussion of the materials. Complimentary child care children up to the fifth grade. Info: 266-7550 or walnutviewcc@att.net.

WED. - 6:30pm, Northland Christian Church, 3102 NW Topeka Blvd. No Cost. 286-1204, www.northland.cc

PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP - First Thursday, 3pm, St Francis Hospital, Room 300 on 2nd floor. For info: Jim 785 806 3266

CELEBRATE RECOVERY - Every Fri., 6pm, 1912 Gage Blvd. A Christ-centered program, based on 8 principles found in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Applying these Biblical principles, become free from addictive & dysfunctional behaviors. ctopekaks.org.

NICOTINE ANONYMOUS - Every Fri., 6:30pm, Town & Country Church Renaissance Room, 4925 SW 29th St., use west door cross red foot bridge. A fellowship of men & women helping each other to live free of nicotine. No fees. 402-321-486; Laboomaha@att.net

TOPEKA NAR-ANON FAMILY GROUP - For families & friends who are affected by someone else's narcotic addiction. Every Sat., noon-1:15 pm, rm. A, 1st Baptist Church, 3033 SW MacVicar, enter on S. side, door A. www.naranonmidwest.org

COVENANT KEEPERS - 3rd Sat. Group for people who want to see their marriage saved when their spouse wants out. 816-453-0884 or 816-966-0927

Nation needs spiritual renewal, not reparations, civil rights leader says

Not every civil rights activist is in favor of slavery reparations, as the Kansas City Council is exploring.

"We've got to look beyond saying

that every solution has to have a winner and a loser, that blacks can only benefit if whites lose," said Bob Woodson, a civil rights activist and the former head of the National Urban League Department of Criminal Justice. "We have to be defined as more than just victims of oppression.

We have to communicate to our people the history of how they achieved in the face of oppression.

"But if we continue to sit back and say, 'All of the challenges that we face ... that somehow the control of that is in the hands of white America and, therefore, until white people change, there's nothing that we can do,' this sets up a terrible situation for this nation."

In addition to pointing out a handful of the myriad complexities that make fair and equitable reparations seemingly unfeasible, Woodson spoke to what he sees as the root cause of America's cultural decay. He discussed the victim mentality pervading much of American society, as well as the divisiveness and spiritual upheaval he believes is at the center of many of the country's problems.

"The big crisis facing America is not racial," Woodson declared boldly. "It is a moral and spiritual freefall that is consuming our children. If we are to address this crisis that is causing our children to lack a sense of personal responsibility or value for their own life — they will take their own life or someone else's — so in order to ad-

dress that, we must come together and look beyond race and realize America's drowning because it's in a moral and spiritual freefall."

The civil rights leader's comments come amid recently released survey data from the Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University showing only 4 percent of Americans hold to a biblical worldview. Woodson outlined

what he believes is the best way to heal, to stop focusing on past sins and instead chart a better way forward.

"None of us should be defined by the worst of what we were in the past," he said. "But we should be defined by what we want to become in the future and that people are motivated to change when you give them a vision of victories that are possible, not constantly reminding them of injuries to be avoided."

Woodson has also talked about where the civil rights movement went wrong early on.

"I realized I was in the wrong struggle, and the civil rights movement was beginning to morph into a race-grievance industry," he said upon his retirement. "And then the poverty programs came along, where they spent 22 trillion dollars with 70 cents going, not to the poor, but to those who served the poor. They asked which problems are fundable, not which ones are solvable," Woodson reflected. "And so I realized that ... I'm in the wrong struggle, that I need to be reaching out and helping poor people of all races who are locked out."



Send your calendar events to voice@cox.net

See complete calendar at metrovoicenews.com

Barter For What You Want

816-470-9055



Israel's Ambassador speaks at Truman Presidential Library

Speaking at the Truman Presidential Library May 11, Michael Herzog, Israel's ambassador to the United States, shared the crucial role the 33rd president played in the formation of modern-day Israel.

"I think we can safely say that if there had been no Harry S. Truman, there would be no Israel today," Herzog stated in Independence, Mo.

The event, which also featured Truman's grandson, was one of many around the world this week celebrating Israel's 75th anniversary.

Just 11 minutes after its founding on May 14, 1948, President Harry S. Truman recognized the new state of Israel providing the endorsement the fledgling nation needed to legitimize its existence. Truman's action came against advice of the U.S. State Department at the time.

President Harry S. Truman (left) meets with Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion (right) and the Ambassador of



Israel to the United States, Abba Eban (standing) in a gift ceremony in the Oval Office on May 8, 1951. (Abbie Rowe/Harry S. Truman Library & Museum)

Israel's declaration came almost 2,000 years after the Roman Empire destroyed the ancient capital of Jerusalem, killing an estimated one million Jews and early Christian believers. Rome renamed Israel "Palestine." It would take 1,878 years before Jews regained sovereignty over their ancient homeland. Immediately

after the Israeli declaration, all of the surrounding Arab nations attacked the reborn state.

Truman stated years later what the reformation of a Jewish state meant. "I had faith in Israel before it was established. I knew it was based on a love of freedom which has been the guiding star of the Jewish people since the days of Moses," Truman said. "I believe that it has a glorious future ahead of it, not just as a sovereign nation, but as an embodiment of the great ideals

of our civilization."

As the world marks the anniversary, historians, journalists and humanitarian organizations are sounding the alarm at rising antisemitism in the United States and around the world. The event asked "What can Harry Truman's decision in 1948 teach us today? What lessons can be gleaned

Clifton Truman Daniel, eldest grandson of Harry S. Truman.

"My grandfather considered his decision to recognize Israel of the proudest of his life," Daniel shared.

This library's anniversary event hosted Herzog in a sold-out symposium where he talked about Israel's founding, Truman



from his principled leadership and his unwavering commitment to democratic ideals?"

Also speaking at the event was

and why it matters in the 21st Century (see video below). The formal program will officially air on C-SPAN.

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Target partners with clothing retailer promoting “Satan respects pronouns”

A Wisconsin woman is calling out Target for promoting Satan in the retailer's LGBT pride product line.

The allegations come as Target, the nation's sixth-largest brick-and-mortar retailer, already faces backlash over “tuck-friendly” swimwear for children and adults. The swimwear, designed for biological males to “tuck” their genitals so they can identify as female, includes sizes for children.

Now, say critics, Target continues to step in even more cultural doo-doo.

Scarlett Johnson recently went viral on Twitter with a thread explaining why she is “done” with the retailer. In particular, Johnson took issue with Target listing three items on its online store from Abprallen, a London-based designer of products that sometimes mix imagery and messages about gen-



der with the macabre.

None of the three colorful apparel items for sale under the Abprallen label on Target's website has satanic imagery. The catalog includes a “We Belong Everywhere” mini-messenger bag

for \$18; a “Too Queer for Here” tote bag for \$18; and a “Cure Transphobia, Not Trans People” sweatshirt for \$25. All are listed under “Pride Adult Clothing.” Other slogans say that Satan offers “hope” and “love.”

However, Johnson highlighted other products for sale that are shown on the Abprallen website and associated Instagram account with about 25,000 followers. Among them is a skeleton draped in rainbow colors; a “Trans Witches For Abortion” badge; and a “Satan respects pronouns” T-shirt. Johnson's thread has been retweeted thousands of times since it began, with many users criticizing Target and some even calling for a boycott. Others complimented the products and questioned why Johnson had a problem with the designer's work.

The product page for the “Satan respects pronouns” shirt talks about how LGBT+ people are “so often referred to as being a product of satan or going against God's will” while making the

case that the Church of Satan and The Satanic Temple are more accepting of the gay community.

“Satanists don't actually believe in satan; he is merely used as a symbol of passion, pride and liberty,” the page says. “He means to you what you need him to mean. So for me, Satan is hope, compassion, equality and love. So naturally, satan respects pronouns. He loves all LGBT+ people.”

Target's recent actions are leading some to suggest the retailer will face a wave of backlash similar to the Bud Light controversy over its partnership with self-identified transgender social media influencer Dylan Mulvaney.

Target this week pulled some of the clothing, alleging without proof that its employees had been threatened.

Walmart, Kohl's, Old Navy and North Face also selling “pride”

Target announced this week that it has lost more than \$9 billion in sales since revelations it was selling “pride” clothing for kids, including male genital binder swimwear. But what about the nation's largest retailer, Walmart, or Kohl's?

Walmart sells “breathable” chest binders for “transsexuals, lesbians and tomboys.” The items marked “NEW” products are only available online. A chest binder listing on Walmart's website features various images of young girls modeling chest binders.

Walmart has gone all in pushing “pride” branded ice cream, dog biscuits and more.

Customers of the stores have posted photos of similar items for sale at Kohl's, Macy's, Old Navy, The Gap, Apple and more. The North Face, a favorite for high-quality outdoor gear, has a nationwide ad campaign promoting a “Summer of Pride” campaign.

We took a stroll with @SarahP-Perry through a Target store to see the extent of their “pride” merchandise.

What we found is that @Target is very much in the business of promoting gender confusion and grooming children.



The verdict: avoid shopping at Target.

Tracy Holmes, who lives in central Pennsylvania, told a media outlet that when she first saw an ad for the campaign she thought it was “definitely a hoax.”

It wasn't.

“It's a pure level of narcissistic pandering,” said Holmes, a mother of four, including two teenagers. “It's not only ridiculous, it's also annoying and insulting. Women don't act like that.”

North Face, say critics, has used drag queens with excessive makeup and thick wigs to promote the campaign. Its value has also

plunged in the last week.

One model goes by the name Pattie Gonia. Adopting a different style from Dylan Mulvaney—the transgender influencer who partnered with Bud Light and who makes videos about identifying as a teenage girl—Gonia sports a mustache and, in a recent video promoting North Face's Summer of Pride, introduces himself as a “real life homosexual.”

In the video, he is dressed in a rainbow-colored dress with a thigh-high hemline and stands in a field surrounded by nature and urges potential customers to “Come Out” and “Nature With Us.”

The North Face has taken the tour nationwide.

“This tour has everything,” Gonia said, “hiking, community, art, lesbians, lesbians making art.”

The video includes clips of children and teens outdoors, and is promoted by an ad featuring a little girl wearing a rainbow-colored North Face jacket.

It is the second year North Face has put on its “Summer of Pride” campaign.

As Gonia walks provocatively in the video, he boasts that “last year, we gay sashayed across the nation.”

He ends the video by saying, “That was pretty gay.”

Canadian-based podcaster Amala Ekpunobi, who considers herself a “red-pilled” former woke leftist turned conservative, accused North Face of being “yet another woke company” pedaling “swift grift.”

“Don't fall for it, and maybe don't support North Face,” said Ekpunobi, who has 1.23 million

followers on YouTube.

Kohl's is another retailer facing a boycott in recent days. It carries a large range of pride merchandise for sale, including a Baby Pride Bodysuit set.

The store, which has long promoted itself with the slogan “The More You Know, the More You Kohl's,” is also selling items like a Care Bear Pride Rug and, for early holiday shoppers, a “Gay Pride Christmas Nutcracker” complete with rainbow pants and a purple busby hat.

Other stores with pride apparel for children include Old Navy, which is selling pride unisex swim trunks for toddlers, and Macy's, which is selling several kids' toys under its “Pride+ Joy” campaign, launched around the same time as Target's Pride month. They include Minnie and Mickey Pride plush dolls, Funko Pop Heroes DC Pride Collectors Set, and also baby clothes including a “Happy Pride” onesie.

Target this week says that after boycott threats and loss of \$9 billion in worth, it is removing some of the items from its stores. It has moved other items to the back of the store.

18 Christian colleges closed since start of Covid-19

Eighteen Christian colleges have closed permanently or have been forced to merge since the start of the pandemic, a recent report from Higher Ed Dive found.

Schools shuttering their doors include Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, Catholic, Church of Christ and Independent institutions. Many schools, like Iowa Wesleyan University, attribute their struggles to shifting enrollment trends, inflation, decline in giving and the reluctance of state governments to share federal funds equally with private schools.

For St. Louis Christian College in Missouri, merging with another college did not save it. The school attributed problems related to unrest in nearby Ferguson, Missouri and strict Covid restrictions.

Amanda Staggengborg, chief communications officer for the Council for



Christian Colleges and Universities, said that both secular and religious institutions have experienced enrollment declines. She cited multiple reasons for the decline, including declining birth rates,

a decrease in the number of students graduating high school and fewer high school graduates seeking a higher education

She pointed to a report last updated

in May 2022 by the National Center for Education Statistics, which found that total undergraduate enrollment at undergraduate institutions had decreased by 9 percent between 2009 and 2020.

Staggengborg also cited the 2020 study titled “Diversity and distance learning: An exploratory study of the relationships between online and minority enrollment at private nonprofit Christian colleges,” which addressed the likely reasons behind the higher education enrollment decline. According to that study, private nonprofit colleges feel the impact of declining enrollment of students ages 18 to 24 more strongly than larger public uni-

versities with more-robust academic options.

“Declining birth rates, changing national demographics, competition among colleges and a strong economy have resulted in a decline in the number of new high school graduates seeking a traditional residential college experience,” the study said.

Staggengborg believes Christian universities can boost enrollment by promoting their values and showing people what they have to gain by attending a faith-based institution over a secular one.

“There is no better time to communicate the value of Christian higher education,” she said. “Faith is rooted in Christian higher education, where a student is called to use God-given talents and gifts combined with the learned skills in that university setting to live out that calling or vocation.”

Surgeon General warns social media affects mental health of minors

Social media use among minors can severely damage mental health, U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy warned this week.

“The most common question parents ask me is, ‘is social media safe for my kids?’” he said. “The answer is that we don’t have enough evidence to say it’s safe, and in fact, there is growing evidence that social media use is associated with harm to young people’s mental health. Children are exposed to harmful content on social media, ranging from violent and sexual content to bullying and harassment. And for too many children, social media use is compromising their sleep and valuable in-person time with family and friends.”

Some 95 percent of minors between 13 years old and 17 years old report using social media, while 40 percent of children between 8 years old and 12 years old said the same despite minimum age requirements for the platforms. The advisory added that frequent use of technology is associated with changes in the development of the amygdala, the region of the brain responsible for emotional learning and behavior, as well as the prefrontal cortex, which is responsible for impulse control and the moderation of social behavior.

Members of Congress have noted the addictive properties of social

media services and their deleterious effects on mental health. One lawmaker described TikTok, the most popular social media network for young people, as “digital fentanyl,” a reference to the addictive characteristics of the limitless stream of vertical videos offered by the platform. Children and teenagers spent an average of 99 minutes per day on TikTok as of two years ago, far exceeding the amount of time spent on other rivals.

U.S. officials have noted that Chinese authorities seem to understand the effects of TikTok. Children under 14 years old who use the version of TikTok available in China are permitted only 40 minutes of screen time each day and cannot access the platform at night.

The Surgeon General’s Advisory offers recommendations to help ensure children and their families have the information and tools necessary to make social media safer for children:

Policymakers can take steps to strengthen safety standards and limit access in ways that make social media safer for children of all ages, better protect children’s privacy, support digital and media literacy, and fund additional research.

Technology companies can better and more transparently assess the



impact of their products on children, share data with independent researchers to increase our collective understanding of the impacts, make design and development decisions that prioritize safety and health – including protecting children’s privacy and better adhering to age minimums – and improve systems to provide effective and timely responses to complaints.

Parents and caregivers can make plans in their households such as establishing tech-free zones that better foster in-person relationships, teach kids about responsible online behavior and model that behavior, and report problematic content and activity.

Children and adolescents can adopt healthy practices like limiting time on platforms, blocking unwanted content, being careful about sharing personal information, and reaching out if they or a friend need help or see harassment or abuse on the platforms.

Researchers can further prioritize social media and youth mental health research that can support the establishment of standards and evaluation of best practices to support children’s health.

Medical professionals have been nearly unanimous in support of the findings.

Jack Resneck Jr., M.D., President, American Medical Association re-

sponded with a written statement saying, “With near universal social media use by America’s young people, these apps and sites introduce profound risk and mental health harms in ways we are only now beginning to fully understand. As physicians, we see firsthand the impact of social media, particularly during adolescence – a critical period of brain development.”

Resneck said that we need additional research to help formulate concrete steps “to address concerns and protect the mental health and wellbeing of children and adolescents.

In 2021, Dr. Murthy issued a Surgeon General’s Advisory on Protecting Youth Mental Health – PDF calling attention the crisis. Earlier this month, he released a Surgeon General’s Advisory on Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation – PDF, where he outlined the profound health consequences of social disconnection and laid out six pillars to increase connection across the country, one of which being the need to reform our digital environments. The new Surgeon General’s Advisory on Social Media and Youth Mental Health – PDF is a continuation of his work to enhance the mental health and well-being of young people across the country.



How to Enhance Your Outdoor Living Spaces

With warm weather here, it's time to make the most of your home's outdoor living spaces.

"Whether you want to beautify your landscaping or add elements to your patio that will help you entertain, using manufactured stone veneer is a smart, on-trend choice," says James Alpeter, stone marketing manager at ProVia. "A versatile and charming alternative to brick, high-quality manufactured stone looks natural, but can be installed much more quickly and affordably than the real thing."

Project Ideas

As you mull over your plans, consider these three manufactured stone project ideas, all of which will boost the beauty and functionality of your outdoor living spaces:

1. Outdoor kitchens. Manufactured stone allows you to think well beyond a simple grill by building a complete outdoor kitchen. Depending on your budget and goals you may include a prep space, a sink, refrigeration and storage, and go for more niche features like a pizza oven. No matter how you choose to build this space out one thing is certain, you will be creating an instant room-like area to gather for conversation and laughter, or to relax after a long day of work.

2. Outdoor hearths. Enjoy the warmth and ambiance of flames on cool summer nights with an outdoor hearth, which can provide a stunning, one-of-a-kind focal point, whether it's connected to the home or part of your backyard patio. Imagine having friends over for hot mulled cider and s'mores or snuggling up in front of the fire under a star-lit sky. For maximum comfort, treat this space as you would your family room, adding outdoor-grade couches, cushions and rugs.



3. Landscaping. Have you ever dreamed of having a water feature in your backyard that would provide a habitat for koi fish or local wildlife? Is it time to take your garden to the next level? Manufactured stone is ideal for a range of elegant landscaping applications, from surrounds for a small backyard fish pond to raised planting beds to retaining walls.

Selecting Materials

Manufactured stone is as versatile and authentic-looking as natural stone, offering endless options to tailor your project to your unique aesthetic. Stone profiles range from the classic shape and texture of limestone to the irregular and imperfect look of ledgerstone to the layered and precise fit of dry stack stone. They also come in various hues, so you can go for a warm, cozy feel or a sleek and striking look.

For the true depth and character of natural stone, just be sure to select materials inspired by nature itself. The process at ProVia, for example, starts with trained stone masons who select stones from nature to create the casts used to build their molds, and who pay careful attention to the contours and varying hues of natural stone. With ProVia, you'll also have the opportunity to select the grout color, which is a factor that should not be overlooked.

"Contrasting grout colors can be used to intensify the overall look while complementary grout colors can soften it. Selecting a grout color that mimics the dominant color of your stone can help blend materials into a near-seamless palette," says Alpeter.

Look before you leap with the brand's Stone and Grout Visualizer tool, found at www.provia.com/stone/grout-visualizer/. For additional design inspiration, visit www.provia.com/stone/applications/.

This season, consider outdoor projects that will not only extend your home's outdoor living spaces, but add elegance and charm while you're at it.

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entertainment

New movie “Between Mercy and Me” helps Christians address racial issues

A new movie being released shortly after the upcoming Juneteenth celebration will help Christians have honest conversations about sensitive racial issues.

“Between Mercy and Me” features an original musical score and standout musical performances, and delivers a powerful cinematic experience that will resonate with audiences of all backgrounds. The movie already has garnered awards from several notable film festivals, including “Best Musical Soundtrack” at the International Christian Film and Music Festival (2022); “Best Screenplay” at the New York Movie Awards (2021); and an “Honorable Mention” at the Florence Film Awards (2022).

The story centers on Hugo, a talented musician and worship leader. As his community begins to shudder under the impact of gentrification and tragedy, Hugo sinks into the emotional circumstances of the world around him. His pastor challenges him to produce new music, something a bit more inspirational, in hopes of uplifting the congregation.

Facing writer’s block, he opts to visit the new and improved neighborhood coffeeshop, where he encounters Merc,



a jubilant and extroverted fellow musician who offers to join him in his song writing efforts. As their relationship grows, they are surprised by the reactions from their communities, friends and their own families. Hugo and Mercy, determined to not let hard conversations or tension keep them from being together, set out to create space for honest conversations and work toward unification in their community, challenging biases seen and unseen, often unspoken.

One evening, their relationship is rocked by a routine traffic stop causing them to come face to face their own internal narratives and beliefs. Will they choose to be vulnerable with one another or move apart with hard hearts, affirming the very biases that they worked

so hard to obliterate?

“Between Mercy and Me” was cowritten and directed by Craig Lamar Brown and produced by Chase Crawford (Four by Three Productions), and Ashlee Mello (Day Twosday Productions). The film features original music by Andrea Summer, who cowrote the script with Brown and stars as “Mercy,” with David Driskill as “Hugo.” It also features appearances by popular radio host and minister Dr. Michael Brown, James Troup and Kyndra Jefferie.

“Between Mercy and Me” will be available in theaters nationwide on June 20, for one night only, through Fathom Events at 7 p.m. local time. Tickets are available at www.fathomevents.com.

Comedian Chonda Pierce finds humor even in a “crazy world”



Sometimes the news is so bad that the only response is to laugh at it, Christian comedian Chonda Pierce said.

“It’s a great cultural lesson of what’s going on in the world,” she says. “Now that they’re trying to censor and cancel comics, I’m like, ‘Really? You’re shooting yourself in the foot, because in 25 years, there’ll be no reality of what was really going on in 2023, because they’re trying to censor.’”

“First of all, there’s free speech, and second of all, you’re missing some great laughs. The world today is so crazy.”

Pierce said she knows not everything is funny to everyone but that the art of comedy is a “sweet gift” from the Lord.

“God created every one of our emotions and allows us to use every one of them — even our anger,” she said. “He says, ‘Be angry but sin not.’ Everything that we do, all of the arts, was used at the beginning for worship.”

But Pierce knows entertainment and other venues have been tainted by the enemy, adding, “Satan took everything to make it ugly.”

However, she has yet to be canceled. “Can you believe I haven’t been canceled?” she asked “I would love to get canceled. I think it would be so cool, and great publicity.”

On a more serious note, she spoke about the importance of supporting faith-based movies, noting it sends a message to Hollywood to make more inspirational films. Audiences

can do just that with the release of “Roll With It.” Pierce plays Bonnie Taylor, a woman who is demoted from her job and faces losing her home in an auction unless she can come up with \$20,000 in back taxes. In true Pierce form, Bonnie is a riot as she navigates a karaoke contest in hopes of nabbing the grand prize winnings and saving her house.

She wants people to enjoy watching the movie. “I hope they just have a fun night,” Pierce said, adding that she also hopes the movie touches hearts.

“It’s kind of the last story idea my husband and I worked on before he passed,” Pierce shared. “It sat on my desk for a long, long time. I think I was in the middle of doing a Hallmark movie and one of the directors said, ‘Have you ever done a movie around your persona?’ And I said, ‘Well, as a matter of fact I have.’”

Reviews have been positive and the film has a 97% rating on Rotten Tomatoes. The movie features what the Tennessean calls “hilarious cameos” with cameos by Michael W. Smith and Elizabeth Hasselbeck, and others.

The film’s other stars include Shari Rigby (Overcomer, October Baby), Evan Hofer (Run the Race), McKaley Miller (You’re Killing Me and Where Hope Grows) and Brett Gentle.

The film ran for three days in early May and is set either for a broader release in theaters or to streaming.

Chris Pratt looks to Jesus for handling criticism of Christians

Actor Chris Pratt has a good role model for handling ridicule from non-Christians. Pratt, 43, told entertainment outlet Page Six last week that he always thinks back to the story of Jesus and the suffering he endured, which reminds him that for Christians, hatred often comes with the territory.

“I sure do,” Pratt said, acknowledging that he gets plenty of criticism for being open about his personal faith. “But that’s nothing new, that’s nothing new, you know?”

He went on to quote a scripture that reiterated his point, saying, “If I were of this world, they would love me just like that but as it is, I’ve chosen out of this world. That’s John 15:18 through 20. That’s the way it is, noth-



ing new, 2,000 years ago they hated him, too.”

Pratt was completing a media tour for his latest Marvel film, “Guardians of the Galaxy: Volume 3,” at the time, and he also told Page Six that thinking of Jesus’ struggles was only part of his process when it came to dealing with hateful comments.

Saying that the trick was to deal

with hate “just how you deal with anything,” he added, “Like a rhino, stick your head down, you keep driving forward, you have thick skin and if anyone gets in your way, you stick the horn right up their ... ! When it comes to rejection, I was trained in the crucible of door-to-door sales some 25 years ago. So you can’t turn me away. Sales is a very hard job, and it’s not dissimilar to acting or at least auditioning. You gotta collect nine ‘no’s’ to get one ‘yes.’”

The Pratt-led “Super Mario Bros,” released the first week in April, was the first 2023 film to gross more than \$1 billion, and after just one weekend, “Guardians” has raked in more than \$280 million worldwide.



Pure Flix, Great American Media announce merger

Pure Flix and Great American Media are two of the largest companies providing family-friendly entertainment. Now they are joining forces.

The Sony-owned Pure Flix is a faith-based streaming service. Great American Media owns the Hallmark-rival Great American Family. The companies last week announced the signing of an agreement to merge, saying it will benefit the faith and family audience and provide an opportunity for each platform to reach a larger and broader audience.

Bill Abbott, president and CEO of Great American Media, will serve as CEO of the merged entity and report to the board of directors.

"In a media environment where programming and distribution business models are in a constant state of flux, this agreement provides a rare opportunity to maximize our potential with the expertise, market knowledge and content creation capabilities of a world-class partner like Sony Pictures," he said. "This merger will allow us to further our commitment to original, quality content and makes Great American Media and Pure Flix leaders in a large and underserved market."

Pure Flix will become part of the merged company, with Great American Media contributing two cable networks

(Great American Family and Great American Living) and the free ad-supported streaming channel Great American Adventures.

"Family friendly entertainment remains an important segment of the industry, and merging these two entities will create the greatest opportunity to achieve more scale for Pure Flix as it continues to build its subscriber base," said Ravi Ahuja, chairman of global television studios and corporate development for Sony Pictures. "Bill and the Great American Media team have been successfully leading the Great American Family and Great American Living brands, and we believe they have a winning plan to take Pure Flix to even greater heights."

The companies share the "same mission to serve and delight consumers in the family and faith categories," a news release said. "Combining the power of Great American Media's linear networks and FAST channel with Pure Flix's SVOD service and vast content library will provide an opportunity for each platform to reach a larger and broader audience. Bringing the brands together into one entity will immediately establish the company as a leader in the genre."



In 'Journey to Mount Sinai II,' Tim Mahoney reveals evidence for biblical story

In a major documentary release through Fathom Events, moviegoers will see hard evidence of Mount Sinai and proof of the biblical account.

For Tim Mahoney, an investigative filmmaker, his own story to know God the Father began long ago and influenced his journey as a filmmaker. His earthly father could be dangerous and threatened to kill them all, so his family fled and hid to be safe, with Tim merely ten years old. His grandmother's home he often visited felt like a safe place. His grandmother, mother, and others shared their faith and that greatly impacted Tim.

In his twenties, the movie *The Hiding Place* produced by the Billy Graham Association captivated Tim and connected him to storytelling and the Jewish people. Tim became a commercial filmmaker and switched to promoting movies for the Billy Graham's film company, World Wide Pictures. While working he heard of someone looking for evidence of the Exodus and the archeologist he met said there was no evidence of the biblical event. That shook Tim's faith, but he moved past one man's opinion and found people who indicated there were other ways to interpret the evidence. Tim began investigating patterns of archeological evidence that matched the patterns described in the Bible. He shared his thoughts and discoveries in his first film *Patterns of Evidence: The Exodus*. That launched his career in creating more *Patterns of Evidence* films.

As a thinking man, as he calls himself, Tim dug deep for truth and worked toward finding how the nation of Israel made their way through the wilderness to Mount Sinai. He also realized that God had been with him as he made his way



through his own wilderness and that many people face challenges and journey through wilderness while learning to trust God. His upcoming Fathom Event, May 17 and 19, 2023, *Patterns of Evidence: Journey to Mount Sinai 2* investigates how God led the Israelites through the wilderness after they crossed the Red Sea. This journey illustrates our need to rely on God through our struggles. Tim is passionate about passing on his faith and encourages families to use the films to share faith.

In the wilderness in his mind and heart, one day Tim told God that he wished he had a father. God spoke to his heart, "Haven't I been more of a father to you than any earthly father?" Tim agreed. God responded, "Trust me." He started involving God in everything and found God constantly beside him, providing for each next step of his journey. That helped Tim look for what God provided the Israelites in their travel, as he outlined a pattern of evidence documented in the Bible that he would need to find for the film.

For *Journey to Mount Sinai II*, Tim in-

vestigates the route from the sea to the mountain, to discover if there is one mountain that appears to best fit the scriptures. The pattern includes looking for places that have enough space to accommodate a nation around the mountain's base. The film uses an ingenious geographical grid to measure the space available at each candidate. Other steps of the pattern include finding the right artifacts and attributes to confirm the account, including a possible water source that could sustain such a large population in the wilderness. He had to show how Israelites could survive two months on foot in the desert following a pillar of cloud and fire on their journey to the mountain. Tim interviews experts on both sides of the issue as each gives their case, challenging viewers to come to their own conclusions.

Tim hopes the movie will strengthen the faith or viewers, and inspire them to share their faith within their families.

Learn more at <https://www.fathomevents.com/events/Patterns-Of-Evidence-Journey-to-Mount-Sinai-Part-II>.

—Karen Whiting / Metro Voice

Are Studios Finally Listening to Audiences?

In March of 2020, the world's biggest movie markets shut down due to COVID-19 and theater owners and studios have brainstormed strategies of how to return to box office normalcy ever since.

However, after three years of experimenting and analysis, what was true of the pre-pandemic box office remains true today: movies that reflect the values of the majority audience win big at the box office.

In 2023 the box office numbers are reminiscent of pre-pandemic numbers, thanks in large part to the large amount of family-friendly and moral



entertainment coming out in theaters.

According to BoxOffice Mojo data, of the top ten highest-grossing

movies in the US, 7 of them contained moral and uplifting content, and patriotic, pro-family themes.

The *Super Mario Bros. Movie* recently surpassed 1.2B at the global box office, making it the highest-grossing video game adaptation of all time. It holds the number one spot for domestic box office earnings, followed closely by *Guardians of The Galaxy Volume 3*.

When looking at the data, it is clear that family-friendly and moral movies have lead the charge in resuscitating the box office and bringing audiences back to theaters.

50+ Lifestyles

A Guide to Enjoying Life in the Best Years

How to Get the Most Out of Your Retirement

Retiring from the workforce provides opportunities you may have been unable to take advantage of during your working years, including discovering new passions and devoting more time to the people you love.

Even though your income might be lower than when you were working full-time, being free of financial burdens like credit card debt or a mortgage may provide extra disposable income that allows you to explore hobbies, develop new skills or focus on spending time living life to the fullest.

In fact, if you're over the age of 62, own a home and have equity in it, you can extend your retirement runway by borrowing against that equity. A home equity conversion mortgage, like those available from Guaranteed Rate, a leader in mortgage lending and digital financial services with more than 850 branches across the United States, can flip the roles of lender and borrower. Homeowners can remain on their property and generate in-

come, provided they own at least 60% of their home's equity and it is FHA eligible.

"These mortgages fit a very specialized segment of the marketplace, but for those seeking financial flexibility, they can be a game-changer," said Jim Hettinger, executive vice president of operations, Guaranteed Rate. "Equity build-up over time is one of the most compelling reasons to purchase a home. These loans give long-time homeowners a way to enjoy the benefits of that equity in their retirement years – all while retaining ownership and continuing to live in the house they call home."

While this type of loan shares many similarities with home equity loans, the requirements generally allow for more flexible terms for homeowners, who remain responsible for property taxes, home insurance and home maintenance. Over time, the loan balance increases with the understanding the mortgage will one day be paid off, usually by selling the home, providing

the homeowner more flexibility and comfort during retirement. Meanwhile, homeowners receive money from their homes in the form of a lump sum payment or line of credit without making monthly mortgage payments.

Consider these ways to take advantage of a home equity conversion mortgage and get the most out of your retirement.

Travel

With minimal

limitations on vacation time in retirement, it's possible to get out and explore both domestically and internationally. With the flexibility to take extended leave, retirees can even enjoy trips dedicated to a specific hobby or pastime, such as golfing, shopping, biking, attending sporting events, appreciating the arts and more. You could also consider purchasing a boat or motorhome to take your exploration to the next level.

Pick Up a New Hobby

With more time now available, it's possible to expand on hobbies you enjoyed while working or pick up an entirely new pursuit altogether. The possibilities are nearly endless, but some options to consider include gardening, dancing, reading, baking, hiking, collecting antiques, restoring furniture, golfing, bird watching, sculpting or wine or beer making, among others.

Learn a New Skill

Devoting time to pick up a new skill can help keep your mind and body sharp. Whether through formal classes or watching videos online to learn, speaking a new language, playing a musical instrument or cooking a new cuisine are popular options for enhancing your skills later in life.

To find more ideas to live better in retirement, or access the free education guide, visit rate.com.

Benefits of a Home Equity Conversion Mortgage (HECM)

HECMs can provide peace of mind during retirement if you're worried about making ends meet. Using the equity you've already put into your home opens up new sources of income while letting you stay in your own home. Consider these additional benefits:

- Offers flexibility in drawing and repaying borrowed funds
- No pressure to make a payment,



even if interest rates increase

- Untouched funds in your line of credit grow tax-free over time
- Any remaining equity at maturity can be released to borrower or heirs
- The line of credit stays the

same, even if the home's market value drops

- Money spent on conventional mortgage payments can go to other needs

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4 Ways to Get Involved in Your Community



Do you want to support your community through volunteerism and civic engagement but don't know where to start?

Research from Points of Light, a global nonprofit organization dedicated to inspiring, equipping and mobilizing people to take action that changes the world, shows 73% of people believe that volunteering is more important than ever, yet 66% think they can't make a big impact in their communities.

Luckily, more people are connecting to resources that are pointing them in the right direction.

"Over the years, we have seen people increase their commitments to creating a just and equitable world through individual volunteer work and through their workplaces," said Diane Quest, interim president and CEO, Points of Light.

To help you get in on the action, Points of Light is sharing four great ways to get involved:

1. Stay Local: While volunteering with any type of mission can help to better the world, people tend to be more impacted by volunteer opportunities from which they can observe the fruits of their labor. Collaborate with local nonprofits to affect change in the place where you live, work and play. Visit Points of Light Engage, <https://engage.pointsoflight.org/>, to find an opportunity today in your city or zip code and based on your interests.

2. Volunteer With Friends and Family: Families can support their communities by volunteering together. Consider working at a local food bank, participating in community clean-up initiatives, or organizing donation drives for local charities. Volunteering as a family not only provides a chance for quality time together but also encourages children to develop empathy and social responsibility. By volunteering, families can strengthen relationships, build community connections, and make a positive impact in their communities.

3. Recognize and Expand What You're Already Doing: While many of us think about volunteering in a formal way with longer time commitments and structures, civic engagement comes in all forms. Informal actions like helping a neighbor and leveraging your purchase power all make up civic action. Ask yourself: how could I take three to five actions around one cause area that's important to me to make greater impact? Find out how through the Points of Light Civic Circle <https://www.pointsoflight.org/civic-circle/>.

4. Get Inspired: To learn more about how others have volunteered and gotten involved in their communities, visit <https://www.pointsoflight.org/gvm>. You'll be inspired by uplifting stories and get ideas on how you can become more civically engaged, too.

"There are many paths to living a full, civic life. Now is the perfect time to start," says Quest. — StatePoint



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sports

QB Lamar Jackson's Powerful Advice to Kids About Prayer, Faith



Baltimore Ravens quarterback Lamar Jackson recently revealed how he keeps a strong and consistent relationship with God, noting prayer is the centerpiece of his connection to the Almighty.

The NFL star also encouraged kids to rely on God and be consistent in their faith walks.

Jackson commented about prayer when he responded during a May 4 press conference to a question about what it was like to have people just a few years ago challenging his ability to perform as a quarterback. Now he's the highest-paid NFL player, more than proving his proficiency.

"It's not about what people say ... it's about believing in yourself at the end of the day — keeping God first," Jackson said of navigating uncertainty at the time. "I kept Him first at all times, no matter what I went through. ... I just kept my faith with Him, and now we're here."

The player's comments come after he signed a five-year extension with the Ravens, according to Christian Headlines.

Jackson also appeared on "The Wun-

derkind Show" earlier this month and encouraged young people struggling with grades, to get on a team, or just in life more generally to put God first.


"You gotta keep God first [and] pray to God," he said. "You gotta be consistent with God. It's not like ... making a wish ... like seeing a shooting star and just making a wish ... It's not just one time."

In the end, Jackson said it's all about following God's purpose for one's life.

As CBN's Faithwire previously reported, this isn't the first time Jackson has "taken his fans to church."

When asked during a 2019 press conference what keeps him humble, he launched into an answer that sparked quite a positive reaction.

"The Lord, I give Him all his praise the glory and the honor. I could've been doing anything, you know. It's crazy," Jackson said. "I'm talking to him throughout the day, 'I appreciate you' 'I thank you.' Because when you feel you're bigger than the Lord that's when all that success dies. It goes away."




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FROM THE CHEAP SEATS

by Rob Mooney

I'm not much of an NBA fan, usually watching during the playoffs when teams seem to play defense once in a while. I have however, been immersed in the playoffs this year, watching the incredible runs of the Denver Nuggets and the Miami Heat. I was talking to one of my brothers after the Nuggets finished off the Lakers in 4 games and he was telling me about the lack of media coverage the Nuggets get. I started thinking about it and I think he's right. I very seldom see anything on ESPN concerning the Nuggets, maybe the score when they're going through those but I don't recall seeing much about them this year.

That seems strange to me considering that their star player, Nikola Jokic, has won the NBA MVP award for the 20-21 and 21-22 seasons. Not sure if you've watched the Nuggets play, but they are extremely fun to watch. They won the Western Conference by 2 games over the Memphis Grizzlies and

then they steamrolled their way through the Western Conference playoff bracket, going 12-3 in the process including an impressive 4-0 sweep of the Lakers to make it to three NBA Finals. Jokic has



averaged a triple-double during the playoffs, averaging 29.9 points, 13.3 rebounds and 10.3 assists per game. He has put his team on his back and has carried them all the way to

the NBA Finals for the first time in franchise history.

After watching the Nuggets eliminate the Lakers, I was disappointed to see LeBron James head straight to the locker room. I understand that this is one of the reasons a lot of people don't like him, which I can completely understand, but he's at the center of the greatest player of all time debate.

I started thinking about that. What makes a player the greatest ever? Is it just

opinion or are there certain measuring sticks that we can use. A lot of folks would say that Michael Jordan is the greatest ever. Some would say Kobe Bryant, or Larry Bird, or Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, the list could go 10 or 12 deep. Let's take a look at Jordan and James, who are usually the two at the center of the controversy.

Jordan played in six NBA Finals and won all six times. He also won the Finals MVP award all six times. LeBron has played in 10 Finals and won 4 of them, winning the MVP award each time his team won the championship. LeBron is the NBA all-time scoring leader with 38,652 points scored. Jordan is fifth in scoring coming in at 32,292. However — and you know we need a "however" right here, LeBron did that in 349 more games than Jordan did. James has averaged 27.2 points per game and Jordan averaged 30.1 points a game. If you project Jordan over those 349 games, he would have scored 42,796 points. But that's kind of a moot point.

I'm not going to debate Jordan vs. LeBron anymore. I'm going to sit back and relish in the fact I've been able to watch 2 of the greatest players in NBA history.

Faith and family come first, Chiefs kicker Harrison Butker tells Georgia Tech graduates

Harrison Butker, who kicked the game-winning field goal for the Kansas City Chiefs in February's Super Bowl, encouraged graduates at his alma mater to put God and family first. He gave the commencement speech at Georgia Tech this weekend.

"I am someone not much older than all of you, yet I've been asked to speak, not because I am a great orator or because I have a number of impressive accolades," Butker said, according to Fox News. "Well, I guess I do have two Super Bowl rings. I just happen to be blessed by God to be really good at kicking a funny-shaped ball between two yellow posts."

Butker said he planned to "pop off some hard truths" in his speech. He said that it doesn't matter how much money you earn or the amount of success that comes to you career-wise — "none of it will matter if you are alone and devoid of purpose."

He gave the graduating class some poignant advice on how to have a fulfilling life. "I'm not sure the root of this, but at least I can offer one controversial antidote that I believe will have a lasting



impact for generations to come — get married and start a family," he said.

Butker added that none of the accomplishments in his career could be compared to the happiness he gets from his family.

"While I'm still striving to be a better, more virtuous man, I'm confident that with God and with my wife by my side, I can do more than I ever could have imagined alone," he said.

Butker told the students that as they move forward in life, they will face challenges and added that there is a "war on

truth" in the world.

Many have lost respect for the dignity of the human person, he said.

"Gone are the days when a plurality of thought was accepted and encouraged. Instead, freedom of thought has been replaced by a culture built on cancellations for those who disagree," he continued.

Butker encouraged the students to "take risks at the expense of being silenced."

"There will always be critics and those that disagree with our viewpoints; however, if we shy away from confrontation, then the only voices left will be the ones with the most power," Butker said.

He concluded: "I pray that something I've said has resonated with you all and that no matter what happens from here on out, remember your purpose, focus on meaningful relationships, and know that, with or without the spotlight, your life has value, and you are meant for more."

Butker kicked the go-ahead field goal for the Chiefs in Super Bowl LVII as Kansas City defeated the Philadelphia Eagles 38-35.



Sole Reason's 5th Annual Golf Tournament slated for June 24

Sole Reason's 5th Annual Sneaker's and Smiles Golf Tournament will be held on Saturday, June 24th, 2023 at Cypress Ridge Golf Course, 2533 SW Urish Rd, Topeka, Kansas 66614. Breakfast is available at 8 a.m. and there is a shotgun start at 9 a.m. The event benefits Sole Reason, a local not-for-profit under 501 c (3) that pro-

vides free sneakers to kids in need in the Topeka, KS area.

"Sole reason has been so blessed to be able to provide new sneakers to so many wonderful kids over the last 6.5 years," said Jerry Hudgins, Sole Reason Founder. "One of the ways we continue to do this is through our annual sneakers and smiles golf classic.

There's always so much excitement and support from those who participate."

There are several activities at the tournament, including a putting contest, closest to the pin, longest putt, and a hole-in-one contest with a chance to win a brand new \$30,000 vehicle) courtesy of Laird Noller Ford.

"We're excited for our 5th annual golf tournament. We're always blown away by the community support for this event, and we are excited to raise some money to help provide sneakers to kids in the Topeka and surrounding areas!" said Sandra Clear, Sole Reason Board President.

A silent auction featuring items from in state D1 programs as well professional sports teams in Kansas City. Bidding is done day of event and in person.

"We will be having a couple of fan favorite additions... a raffle and silent auction for Chiefs, Jayhawk, Wildcat and Royals items and local gift cards,"

Hudgins said, "So come and join the fun. More sneakers. More smiles. And more of a great time!"

The entry fee for the 4 person scramble is \$360 per team or \$90 per person. the fee includes green fees, cart, drinks, breakfast, and lunch. Breakfast will be provided by Amanda Scully of Amanda's Roll's Bakery Cafe and lunch is provided by food truck operator Bobby Food Co.

Sign Up Today! Register online at: www.SoleReason.net. For sponsorships or more information, please contact Jerry Hudgins, tournament director, at (785) 338-2965 or e-mail: sole_reason@yahoo.com.

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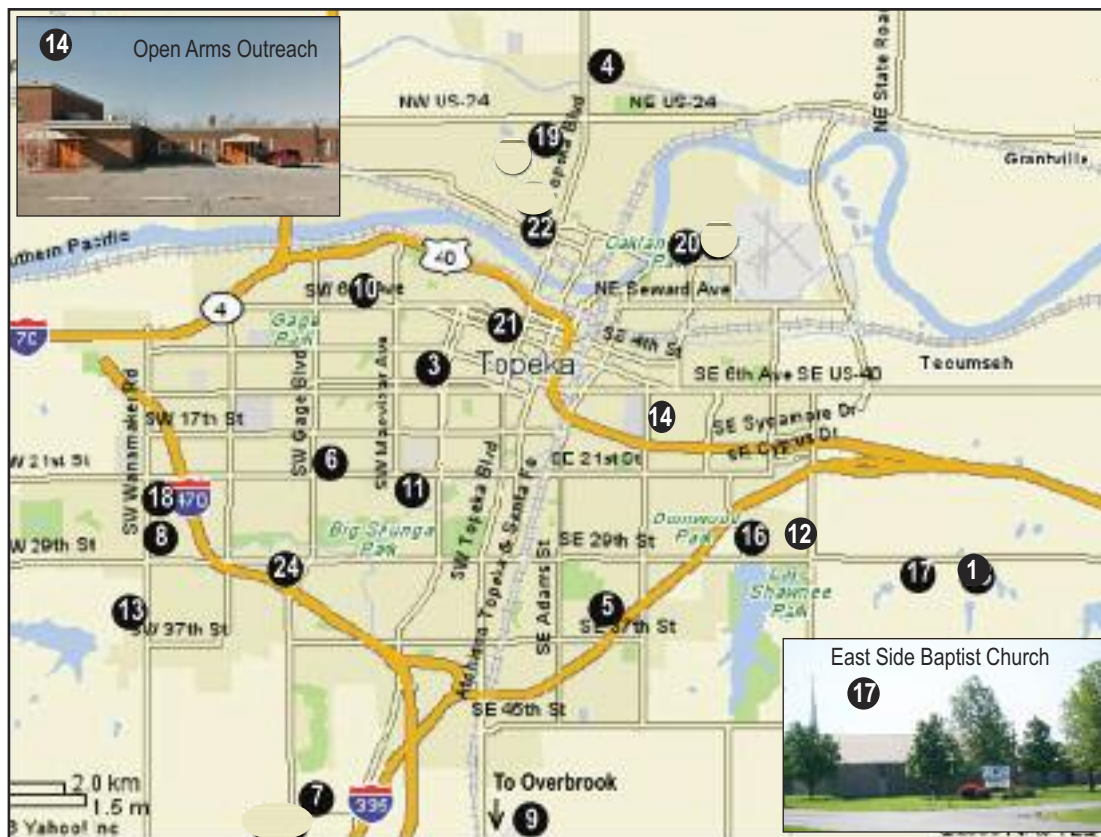
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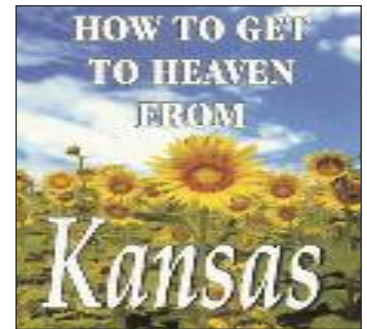
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More important than living in KANSAS is where you will live forever. Just as you would look at a map of KANSAS to find your way, so you must look at the Bible to find your way to heaven. The Bible says, "Narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life,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

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

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

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

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

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