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The Beautiful Okinawan Islands

by Ed Lewis

Enjoy beauty, recreation, and refreshment on the island of Okinawa and its nearby islets. Okinawa could also be your base for exploring the Ryukyuan archipelago, which stretches about 800 miles between mainland Japan and Taiwan.

Okinawa has great beaches, a famed and healthy cuisine (noted for promoting health and longevity), WWII sites and museums, and excellent surfing. And there are great places to scuba dive and view the sea life.

Okinawa has a strong American connection: The largest WWII battle in the Pacific theatre was fought there. For decades, U.S. war veterans and their families have toured Okinawan battle sites and war museums. The biggest U.S. military bases in East Asia are on Okinawa, which was an American territory until the early 1970s.

The strong American cultural impact and the presence of so many English-speaking people makes the islands more welcoming for English language-speaking visitors than perhaps any other East Asian region. About 80,000 Americans live there, and about 200,000 American tourists are expected to visit in 2026. Many, if not most, signs are in English.

What is Notable About Okinawa?

Okinawa ranks number two on Expedia's 2026 list of Destinations of the Year.

The island boasts beautiful seas, clean and green nature, islets, surfing, and terrific beaches for recreation.

Considering the quality received, prices are low for Americans.

There is a laid-back atmosphere with an opportunity for relaxation and rejuvenation.

Okinawans are among the world's healthiest and longest-lived people. Their excellent indigenous ethnic food culture includes medicinal vegetables and herbs, seafood, and very healthy beverages. A longer stay could improve your health. Learn more about Okinawan food and beverages and Okinawan health and longevity in

"Okinawan Longevity, Cuisine, and Lifestyle" on page 11 of the September 2025 issue of the *PrimeLife Times*.

The former Expo 75 (now Ocean Expo Park) features the world's second-largest aquarium, Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium. The park features an easy-to-use, elevated sightseeing monorail.

The people are gentle, and the island is safe and family-friendly—it's a great destination for the entire family!

Plentiful accommodations range from high-end luxury resorts to inexpensive but clean and efficient backpacker hostels.

Okinawa Has Four Distinct Seasons

Each season has its special advantages:

The warm springtime (March through May) has highs of 20–25 °C (68–77 °F), with lower prices and fewer tourists.

There is a *long* rainy (*and* sunny) summer (June through October) to enjoy tropical weather, with highs ranging from 25–30 °C (78–88 °F). Summer features excellent beach, surfing, and scuba weather, though crowding increases, and prices peak.

Fall (November through early December) is short, mild, and comfortable. Highs range from about 22–26 °C (72–79 °F). Though the air is cooler, the seas stay warm for water sports, surfing, and diving. Fall brings less tourism and lower prices. It's a great time for extended stays, culture, hiking, relaxation, and quiet exploration.

Winter (end of December through February) is cool, mild, and often cloudy. There are highs of about 15–20 °C (59–68 °F) and lows of about 10–15 °C (50–59 °F). Winter provides the lowest prices and smallest tourist crowds (except around Christmas and the Chinese New Year holidays). This is an excellent time for budget backpackers, extended stays, culture, cuisine, hiking, sightseeing, relaxation, and quiet rejuvenation. Whales begin to visit the Kerama islands near the start of the year—and you can watch them from a tour boat. Okinawan cherry

Please see Okinawa on page A-16

Patience and Trust

by Esther Aardsma

My daughter was having a hard time with chores while I was preparing pizza dough for a small family birthday party. After she slammed a laundry basket on the floor and yelled at her siblings, I wrapped my arms around her, careful not to touch her shirt with my floury fingers. "What's going on, kiddo?" I asked. "Why are you struggling so much?"

"I don't want to do the laundry!" she said, then burst into tears. "By the time I'm done, everyone else will have done all the decorating without me!"

"I know decorating is important to you, baby girl," I said. "Can you trust that I know that, and that I will make sure that you get a chance to decorate?"

Understanding dawned on me—she was feeling *impatient* because she couldn't *trust*. I leaned into the thought. Were patience and trust really linked? Was there really a causal relationship between the two?

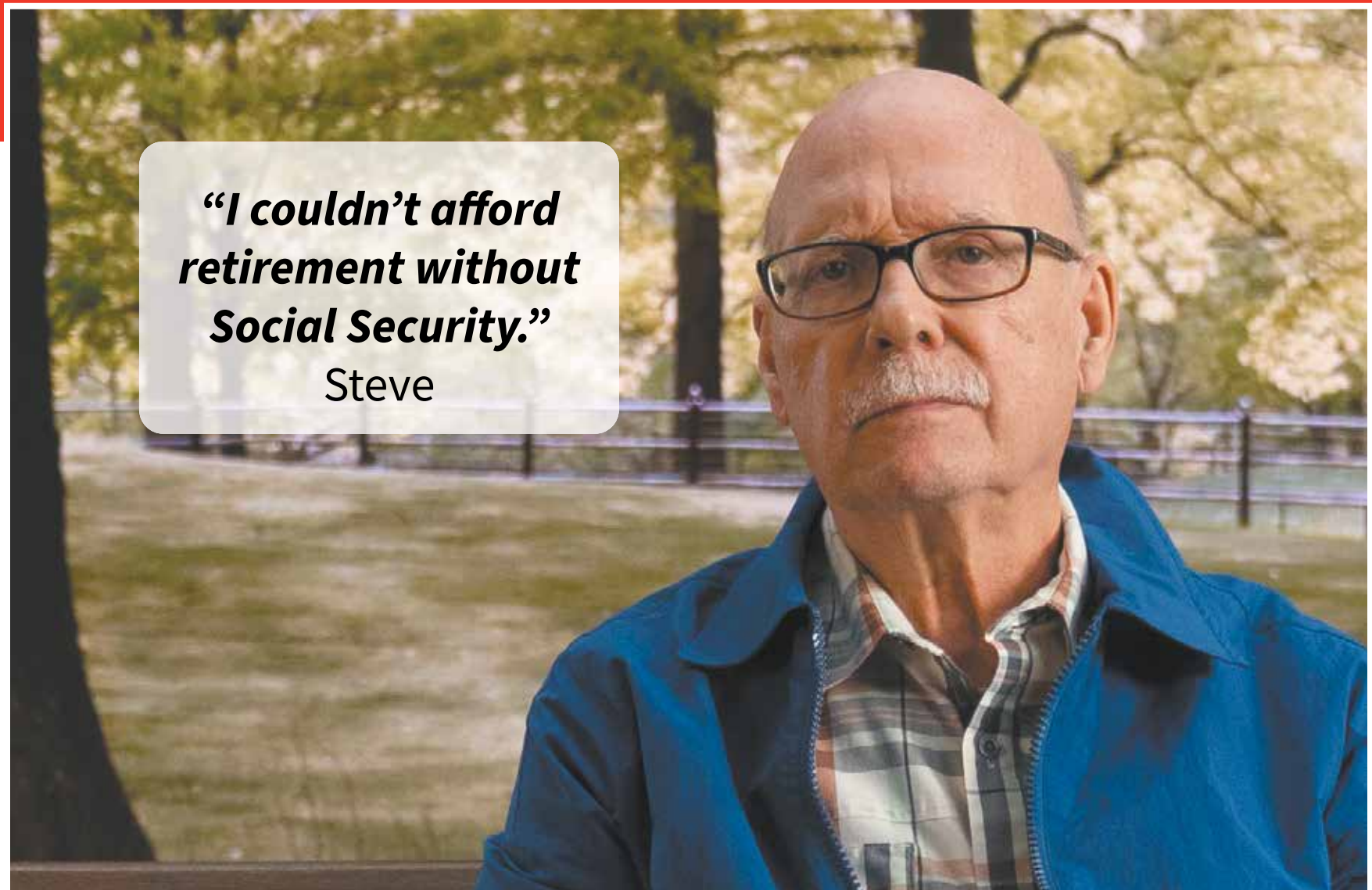
If she could trust that I understood and cared about her strong desire to help decorate, then her fear of being left out would dissipate. If she couldn't trust me, she would panic,

Please see Patience on page A-15

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Steve



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LIFESTYLES

Mark & Friends

His Mercies Are New: Finding Intimacy and Legacy in Life's Storms

Have you ever wondered why we are so quick to expect God to deliver us *out* of hard times, rather than looking for him *in* them? Western culture often teaches us to prioritize personal convenience, yet it is frequently during our darkest, most painful seasons that we experience the deepest levels of intimacy and glory with God.

Mark welcomed new studio guests Verdell and Sheila Jones, along with their longtime friend Pastor Herbert "Hub" Burnett. The group sat down to reflect on a powerful truth from Lamentations 3:22–23: "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: Great is thy faithfulness." This timeless verse took on a profoundly literal meaning as Verdell recounted surviving a sudden, life-threatening stroke just months earlier, on April 7, 2026.

God's hand is entirely in the timing of our trials. His stroke came right in the middle of a workday training session, when Verdell was surrounded by trusted peers who immediately recognized his symptoms, prayed over him, and called 911. Had he been driving between schools for his routine work as a varsity basketball coach, he would have been completely alone. Instead, rapid emergency medical care and an intensive stay in the ICU put him on an incredibly fast track to recovery.



Scan to listen

A miraculous physical healing can easily open doors for powerful spiritual breakthroughs. While in the hospital, Verdell found himself sharing the goodness of God with an overwhelmed night nurse and offering words of profound encouragement to a despondent young woman in his speech therapy class. Through simple obedience, he watched as a fellow patient who had previously struggled to walk was fully discharged, walking right out of the facility under her own power.

Ultimately, our life is a matter of daily stewardship. Every second that ticks by is a precious gift, and we are called to maximize our impact by pouring into our families, mentoring our youth, and ensuring that "our audio matches our video"—living out the very truth we speak.

Using Verdell's incredible testimony as a template, we can envision a clear blueprint for how to remain anchored when sudden storms hit our lives:

Look for Presence over Deliverance. Stop asking God to simply remove the pain, and start trusting him to walk directly through the dark spots right alongside you.

Embrace Every Second. Recognize that time is a stewardship issue. Use your moments wisely to build deep relationships and leave a Kingdom legacy.

Match Audio to Video. Live a principled life in which your daily actions—and how you treat those closest to you—perfectly mirror your spoken faith. ♦

For the full conversation and for a full archive of Mark & Friends, visit www.greatnewsradio.org.



Who Financed the American Revolution?

by Rob Siedenbug

Wars cost a lot of money, as we taxpayers know, and the Continental Congress was broke. So, who paid for the American Revolution?

Amazingly and fortunately, a number of people stepped forward to help finance what the British call *The War of Rebellion*. **Haym Salomon**, prominent, wealthy Jewish businessman and broker, helped finance the Continental Army, contributing in crucial ways to the success of the Revolution. Haym often risked his own personal safety and security in his role as benefactor.

A then well-known poet and playwright, **Mercy Otis Warren**, bravely used her writing to champion the patriot cause. She would later write one of the first histories of the Revolution, her three-volume *History of the Rise, Progress, and Termination of the American Revolution*.

Other Patriots we seldom hear of include **Nancy Hart**, a Georgian known for her fierce commitment to the Patriot cause, who boldly held six Tories at gunpoint in her own cabin until help arrived. **William Lee**, a slave of George Washington, served directly with the general all seven years of the war, acting as his confidant and trusted attendant.

These are only a few examples of the many people, now little known, who served sacrificially during the Revolution. ♦



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PEOPLE & PLACES

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Forever Homes

by Marvin Weinbaum

‘Home is a place you grow up wanting to leave, and you grow old wanting to get back to.’

—John Pearce

In the constant struggle between head and heart, the outcome of our decisions is unpredictable and sometimes surprising. A perfect example of this was reflected in the decision to purchase our current home. Let me explain:

After fleeing the wildfires in California, my wife and I arrived in Denver almost four years ago. At 78, uprooting ourselves and moving halfway across the country was challenging, an event we hoped not to repeat. So, we began our real-estate search with the idea of purchasing our *forever home*.

After several months of searching, we came upon not our *forever home*, but rather our *dream home*. A big house, elegant and well-constructed, a modern kitchen with high-end appliances, a patio garden, high ceilings—our dream.

We bid and crossed our fingers. Now it’s ours. We were thrilled, but we will almost certainly have to move again. Gasp. No fun.

Let’s examine the reasons another move is likely, viewed in the context of what ingredients comprise a *forever home*:

Size

Our current house is big, and we enjoy having our individual spaces. That said, as we get older, and our lives grow smaller, all that extra space will become not so much a blessing but more a burden. It will be too big for us and much too big for whichever of us will end up alone for years to come. Size matters; downsizing can be liberating.

Financial

On several occasions, over the course of many years, we purchased homes above our budget. We stretched our means. That said, in retirement and on fixed incomes, it is important to remain within one’s budget, particularly in the likelihood of unanticipated expenses for health contingencies. A big house is a financial burden: your forever home needs to be within your budget.

Accessibility

Our house has stairs everywhere. Since we are currently both mobile, this is a good thing for our knees and hearts. Down the road, the stairs will become a challenge. At the very least, a forever home should eliminate stairs, if possible, and have access either to a bedroom at street level or to an elevator. Attractive features would include wider doorways and walk-in showers. Sadly, our house has none of these features.



Buy or Rent

Formulas exist that help identify the financial implications of buying versus renting. The decision is situational, personal, and complex: each option comes with advantages and disadvantages. The guidance of a trusted financial planner is well advised.

Community

We love our community. It combines suburban beauty and quiet charm, close to a thriving urban center that is rich in diversity and stimulation. It is close to excellent medical services. Walkability, as the real-estate community phrases it, is a non-negotiable requirement for our forever home. Others love the quiet and spaciousness of a rural life. Choosing one’s community is a unique and individual decision. The key? Feeling comfortable in your environment and with the people in it.

Health

We purchased our dream home and in doing so made a bet on ourselves, hoping for a long stretch of good health. Should the health profile change radically for either of us, the need for assisted living, memory care, or nursing care could well emerge. We view that extra level of care as *situational* and beyond the requirements for our forever home. That said, our thinking and conversations include such possibilities.

Family

At the moment, we live very close to our extended family. That, for us, is a huge plus. Any search for our forever home will include that proximity as a high priority. This is likely true for many people searching for a forever home, though *proximity* will be defined differently for each searcher.

Summary

Your forever home should reflect your values, be adaptable to changing needs, and provide you with comfort, safety, and a supportive community. It should lend itself to a simple life, one where the future feels manageable. ♦

Marvin Weinbaum, senior life coach and columnist, writes about aging with purpose, dignity, curiosity, and resilience. He translates insights into practical guidance for everyday life: marvin@coachweinbaum.com.



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LIFESTYLES

Hola

How to say “It’s nice to meet you.”

Remember the first adjective (*encantado/encantada*) describes the person speaking. It must match the person speaking in gender and number. *Encantado* is for a male speaking here. *Encantada* is for a female speaking here.

The very last part of the verb *conocer* (the last two letters) has to match the gender and number of the person you’re meeting, that is, the listener. The ending *-te* is for any person of either sex whom you would call by first name. The ending *-lo* is for a male person you are meeting. The ending *-la* is for a female person.

| Spanish/ Pronunciation | English meaning |
|--|---|
| Encantado de conocerte. ěn-kahn-TAH-dō dā kō-nō-SAIR-tā | <i>I’m delighted to meet you</i> (informal, first-name basis) Male speaking to male or female. |
| Encantada de conocerte. ěn-kahn-TAH-dah dā kō-nō-SAIR-tā | <i>I’m delighted to meet you.</i> Female speaking to male or female, informal) |
| Encantado de conocerlo. ěn-kahn-TAH-dō dā kō-nō-SAIR-lō | <i>I’m delighted to meet you.</i> Male speaking to male, formal or informal. |
| Encantada de conocerla. ěn-kahn-TAH-dah dā kō-nō-SAIR-lah | <i>I’m delighted to meet you.</i> Female speaking to female, formal or informal. |
| Encantado de conocerla. ěn-kahn-TAH-dō dā kō-nō-SAIR-lah | <i>I’m delighted to meet you.</i> Male speaking to female, formal or informal. |
| Encantada de conocerlo. ěn-kahn-TAH-dah dā kō-nō-SAIR-lō | <i>I’m delighted to meet you.</i> Male speaking to male, formal or informal. |
| Es un placer. ěs oon plah-SAIR | <i>It’s a pleasure.</i> No gender specified for speaker or person speaker is meeting. |

Unsung Heroes of American Independence

by Rob Siedenburg



I had the privilege of serving for 25 years in U.S. military intelligence, and I deeply value the long and honorable history of the American intelligence profession. As we celebrate 250 years of American independence, it is fitting to look back at intelligence agents who served more than two centuries ago and who made substantial contributions to America’s struggle for freedom.

Among the most important, yet almost always underrecognized people, was **James Armistead Lafayette** (c. 1748–1832), an enslaved black man who voluntarily risked his life as a double agent without pay. Taught to read and write by his master (though doing so was frowned on), Armistead proved an astute observer and a highly effective operative. After Benedict Arnold defected to the British, Armistead closely monitored his activities and provided crucial intelligence on British troop movements in Virginia. His reporting contributed significantly to the American and French victory at the Siege of Yorktown, which effectively ended the war.

Another notable patriot intelligence operative was **Hercules Mulligan** (1740–1825), an Irish-born New York City tailor whose clientele included numerous British officers. These officers trusted him and frequented his shop, so Mulligan gained access to valuable information about British plans and troop activity. Working closely with the Culper Spy Ring, Mulligan provided timely warnings to George Washington through channels that included Alexander Hamilton, helping to save Washington’s life on more than one occasion.

The Culper Spy Ring was itself an ingenious and highly effective intelligence network that comprised such patriots as **Abraham Woodhull, Robert Townsend, Austin Roe, and Anna Strong**. Using ingenious coded messages, invisible ink, dead drops, and even signals conveyed through laundry hung on clotheslines, the ring successfully transmitted intelligence from British-occupied New York to patriot forces beyond enemy lines.

These men and women rarely appear prominently in popular histories of the Revolution, yet their courage, ingenuity, and willingness to operate in secrecy and at great personal risk played an indispensable role in securing our independence. ♦

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Ephesians 1:17-18

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| 66 | | | | 67 | | | | | 68 | | |

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Across

- 1 Adele's "Water ___ the Bridge"
- 6 Salsa choice
- 10 Covertly include on an email
- 13 "Nope" and "Get Out" director Jordan
- 14 Mountaintop nest
- 15 Sound from a warm tub
- 16 Road division
- 18 Reed of the Velvet Underground
- 19 Like most prime numbers
- 20 Thai neighbor
- 21 Band output
- 23 Task that's a piece of cake
- 28 Accurate
- 29 Burgundies
- 30 Dough
- 31 Open a tad
- 33 Fundraiser for STEM programs
- 36 Home of Christopher Robin's friends
- 40 Gp.

Down

- 1 As many as
- 2 One with deep knowledge of a subject
- 3 Completely mistaken
- 4 "The best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear" film
- 5 NBA official
- 6 Salsa choice
- 7 401(k) alternative
- 8 Songwriter/actor ___-Manuel Miranda
- 9 Considered
- 10 Model material
- 11 Gospel singers
- 12 Toss away
- 14 Fruit from a Brazilian palm
- 17 Sort
- 22 FedEx rival
- 24 "___ Lang Syne"
- 25 TV producer Norman
- 26 "Fast Car" singer Chapman
- 27 Munich mister
- 28 Series of gigs
- 30 Old electrical unit

- 31 Bring home from the pound
- 32 Abbr. at the start of a day planner
- 33 Pictures that don't need to be shaken
- 34 Pigeon-___
- 35 Spots that may be classified
- 37 "Titans" actor Morales
- 38 Radiate
- 39 Diaper bag cloth
- 43 Stereo input letters
- 44 Flat-bottomed boats
- 46 Cosmic fate
- 47 Name on a false document
- 48 Sandy spot
- 49 Jockey rival
- 50 Loose ___
- 51 DOJ branch
- 55 Touched down
- 56 Supermodel Banks
- 59 Yes, from Yves
- 60 Strike caller?
- 61 Vader, as a boy
- 62 Guy

See Answers on A-15.



"Sims, do you want to be part of the problem or part of the cover up?"



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| E ₁ | E ₁ | I ₁ | U ₁ | G ₂ | L ₁ | B ₃ | RACK 3 |
| A ₁ | E ₁ | I ₁ | O ₁ | C ₃ | R ₁ | B ₃ | RACK 4 |

PAR SCORE 155-165
BEST SCORE 213

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

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See Answers on A-15.

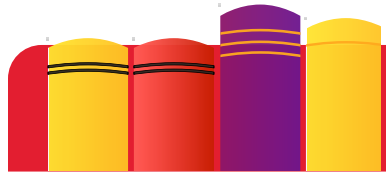
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LIFESTYLES



BOOK REVIEWS

Boots (The League of Secret Heroes, Book 3) by Kate Hannigan

reviewed by Esther Aardsma

Josie, Mae, and Akiko, when their masks are on, are the Infinity Trinity, a group of young superheroes desperate to prove their value despite their age. World War II is occurring around them, and all the grown-up superheroes have been imprisoned in France by the enemies. The Infinity Trinity can help Zenobia (and the other superheroes featured in their favorite comic books) with their code-cracking and superpowers—or can they? Maybe their fears and immaturities will prove Mae’s Granny Crumpler right: kids need to stay home where it’s safe. Battling the Nazis and their ally Metallic Falcon might be too much for the Infinity Trinity—and *way* too much for the normal girls behind the masks.

As long as young readers recognize the limits of fantasy and don’t try to practically follow the Infinity Trinity’s example in disregarding adult recommendations and striking out on their own to solve worldwide problems, *The League of Secret Heroes* series is a fun middle-school take on superheroes. The books read as verbal comic books, with sections of graphic novel illustrations interspersed throughout the prose.

Josie, Mae, and Akiko come from varied ethnic backgrounds, and *Boots* (and the earlier installments of the series) addresses racism and sexism. The three girls learn to tackle internal disagreements and disputes, care for each other’s fears, and work together through tough situations. The illustrations are surprisingly modest, with the most revealing costume being that of a one-piece bathing suit, similar to Wonder Woman’s classic costume.

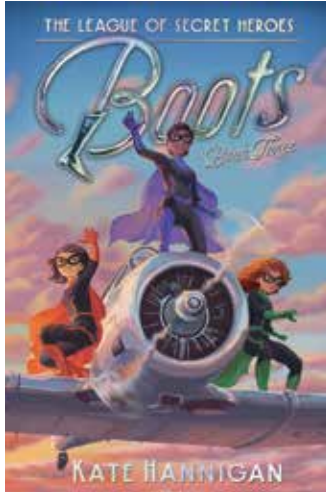
In *Boots*, Hannigan addresses the power of fear to inhibit actions, and the girls are encouraged to not think about what they can’t do, but what they *can*. When the girls are forced to lie to keep their cover or steal to further their mission, they are morally conflicted about the decisions. The girls meet and learn from real historic characters, such as African American pilots Willa Brown and Janet Harmon, and Hannigan includes historical notes at the end of her book.

The feminism is perhaps a little over the top, as almost *all* the “good guys” are female, and all the “baddies” are men. Crude and profane language is at a minimum, with the most crude expression being “chicken poop.” The three girls, at times, act against the guidance of the adults supporting them.

Violence includes a spy plot to spoil drinking water and bomb bridges and factories, an explosion, shots and energy weapons fired, planes being destroyed or crashing, mention of individuals being executed, kidnappings, and various uses of superpowers against opponents. Some light superstitious elements make their way into the book, such as a pixie keeping pilots safe, women sharing strength, and a mention of loved ones traveling along to show the way.

Boots is a fun read, and readers might even learn a few little-known facts about World War II! Join Josie and her friends as they are whisked away on a suspenseful superhero adventure. ♦

Copyright © Esther Aardsma. Esther, busy homeschooling mom of five little ones in Philo, Illinois, is an enthusiast for all things creative, and particularly for all things written. Besides being a freelance writer, Esther is a book shepherd and editor. Email her at eaardsma@protonmail.com.



How to Seal Your Own Fate by Kristen Perrin

reviewed by Susan McKinney

This is Perrin’s second mystery in the Castle Knoll Files; you might remember my review of *How to Solve Your Own Murder*. We are back at Castle Knoll with Annie Adams, who is getting settled into her new life as the heiress of her great-aunt, Frances. Frances was the victim in the earlier book just mentioned. Annie is learning that Frances’s files of secrets have made Annie a bit of a pariah in the village. Everyone is wondering what secrets she knows and whether she will reveal any said secrets.

The book follows Annie in the present day and Frances in 1967 as the first book did. Peony Lane, the psychic who gave Frances that fateful prediction of being murdered by someone close to her, is found murdered on Annie’s land, inside a locked gate. Annie is immediately the chief suspect, and she must once again start delving into Aunt Frances’s files to figure out the cryptic message Peony gave hours before being murdered.

As we follow Annie reading through Frances’s journals and files, the story of a mysterious car crash that killed all of Ford Gravesdown’s family comes to light. Frances is caught between two men who are both attracted to her—Ford Gravesdown, and Archie Foyle, who has information about that wreck. The trail Frances and Archie follow hints at cover-ups, lies, and other nefarious goings-on.

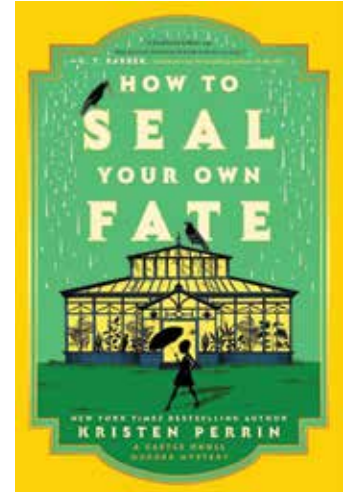
Saxon, the last remaining Gravesdown nemesis from the first book, is again snooping around. It seems he might have gotten his hands on certain volumes of Frances’s journals—coincidentally, the ones dealing with his mother, Olivia Gravesdown.

Added to the mix in this book is the new Chief Inspector, Toby Marks, who grew up in Castle Knoll and went to London, claiming he’d never be back.

How does Chief Inspector Marks fit into the story of the Gravesdown car crash that caused the death of Ford’s father, brother, and brother’s wife, Olivia? Annie and Detective Crane will have to maneuver carefully and subtly to learn who killed Peony Lane and framed Annie, as well as what really happened in 1967 that caused the Gravesdowns’ car to crash.

I really love the split story of Annie in the present, investigating the incidents that happened when Frances was alive in 1967. I look forward to reading the third book, which was recently released. ♦

Susan McKinney, Librarian at St. Joseph Township-Swearingen Memorial Library, is an avid reader who enjoys mystery, suspense, fantasy and action novels.



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LIFESTYLES

SKYWATCHER

July 2026 offers some excellent stargazing opportunities: planets, meteor showers, and the Milky Way. July 4 has a rare close conjunction of Mars and Uranus, appearing very close together in the eastern predawn sky. Watch Uranus with the naked eye or binoculars.

Paragraph should now read: July 14's dark skies make that an excellent time to view the Milky Way. In mid-July, our galaxy arches brightly across the summer sky under moonless conditions.

On the mornings of July 16 and 17, the waning moon passes near Saturn and Neptune in the constellation Pisces. Saturn and the moon will be easy to spot with the naked eye, but Neptune's faint blue-gray disk will require a telescope.

On the same dates (16–17), a very brilliant Venus shines close to Regulus, the brightest star in Leo, low in the western sky, shortly after sunset. The pairing will be striking to the naked eye and especially beautiful through binoculars.

Meteor activity increases dramatically near the end of the month. The Southern Delta Aquariid meteor shower peaks on July 28–29, producing roughly 20 meteors per hour.

The Piscis Austrinid meteor shower peaks around July 28–29, though it is fainter and remains low in the southern sky for Northern Hemisphere observers.

Meteor activity continues on July 30–31 with the Southern Delta Aquariids potentially producing up to 25 meteors per hour after midnight. Meanwhile, the Southern Alpha Capricornids (meteor shower) will reach peak activity on July 30, adding occasional bright fireballs to the display. Because the radiant points of these showers are relatively close together, it can be difficult to distinguish which meteors belong to which shower.

Throughout late July and into August, the Summer Triangle—formed by the bright stars Vega, Altair, and Deneb—rises prominently overhead in the evening sky. Its appearance signals the beginning of the Perseid meteor shower season, with occasional bright meteors possible well before the Perseids peak in August. ♦

Poetry Corner

Description Exercise

by Esther Aardsma

Imagery is one of poetry's most powerful tools. The descriptive words you use in your poems make the difference between strong or weak images in the reader's mind, and the difference between a memorable poem that engages the reader or a blah poem that can't hold attention.

Here is an easy and fun activity that stretches your brain's descriptive muscles. The exercise works best with handwritten words—you can cross each word out and write new ones above or below—although digital format works as well.

First, write a set of basic sentences. For example:

A girl walked through a garden. She picked a flower. She walked away.

Now, consider each word of those sentences. What kind of story do you want these words to tell? Ask yourself questions about the girl and the garden. What kind of setting is she in? What is the mood you want to convey? What is the weather like? What time of day is it? Why is she walking through the garden? Why does she pick a flower, and what kind of flower? Why does she walk away? Where is she going?

Add descriptive words to shape your word picture. Some ideas are *breezy, shadowy, young, tattered*. Choose more concrete nouns, such as *princess, maiden, or rose*. Consider more vibrant verbs, such as *wended, danced, snatched, plucked, and dashed*. A thesaurus (print or on-

line) is a great tool to help find alternative words!

Poetry is an art that allows (welcomes?) made-up words, so experiment with new combinations that elicit the emotion you are striving to express: *stardanced, teardraggled, joybloom*. Feel free to add phrases that help explain the setting and character.

Create several versions from the original sentences. Try to explore a wide range of moods.

For instance:

The princess strolled through her rose garden. She lazily plucked a scarlet bloom, carelessly dropped it, and wandered into the hedge labyrinth.

A small, hooded form crept into the duke's prize tulip garden. Under cover of darkness, the figure dug one blooming bulb and dashed from the garden.

Lia sprinted through the fall rain to her wildflower garden. She carefully cut the last of the season's coneflowers. She turned and ran back to the warmth of the house.

This exercise, while not creating poetry directly, is a fantastic method for training your mind to identify weak imagery and replace it with stronger word pictures. The more frequently you practice, the faster (and more accurately) you can retrieve the desired words to express your mental images.

Here's a prompt to kickstart your own descriptive phrasing:

The man sat by the lake. He was crying. He was alone.

What feelings and pictures appear in your mind? Can you capture them on paper? ♦



Laughing Matters



It's so hot outside! I just saw a dog chasing a cat, and they were both walking.

A ham sandwich walks into a bar. "Sorry," says the bartender. "You'll have to leave. We don't serve food in here."

An elderly couple lived right on the U.S.–Canadian border. All their lives, the two governments had disputed which country their house was in, and they had to carry special travel documents issued by both countries.

One day they got a letter from the U.S. government saying they were now considered full American citizens, and their property was confirmed to be on American soil.

After reading the entire letter, the old lady sighed and looked at her husband. "Thank goodness!" she said. "No more of those cold Canadian winters!"

**Q: What kind of stones are never found on the ocean floor?
A: Drystones.**

Never play tennis with a cymbal. It makes a terrible racket!

SUDOKU

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See Answers on A-15.

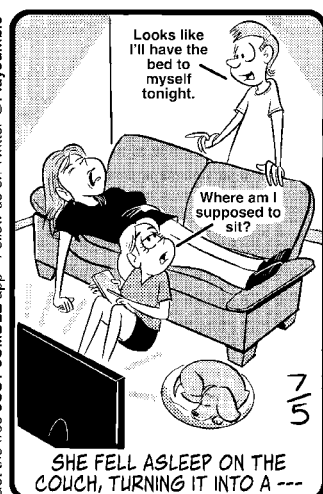
JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

OLFRO
 O O O O O
 ESISU
 O O O O O
 GELAGH
 O O O O O
 YOTEPR
 O O O O O

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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

“ O O O O O - O O O O ” O O O O O

BLISS



LIFESTYLES

Hola

Common Greetings in Spanish

Remember that exclamations in Spanish have an upside-down exclamation mark in front of the sentence and a right-side-up exclamation mark at the end of the sentence.

| Spanish/Pronunciation | English meaning |
|--|---|
| ¡Hola! Ō-lah | Hi!/Hello!—informal, with friends and family, first-name basis) |
| Saludos. !sah-LOO-dōhs | Greetings. |
| Buenos días. !BWĀ-nōhs DEE-ahs | Good morning. |
| Buenas tardes. !BWĀ-nahs TAHR-dās | Good afternoon. |
| Buenas noches !BWĀ-nahs NŌ-chās | Good night. |
| If we stick around after we say “Hello” in English, we typically ask the person something. Spanish works the same way. | |
| ¿Cómo estás? KŌ-mō ě-STAHs | How are you?—informal (first-name basis) |
| ¿Cómo está? KŌ-mō ě-STAH | How are you?—formal (last-name basis) |
| ¿Qué tal? kā TAHL | What’s up? or very informal How are you? |
| ¿Cómo te va? KŌ-mō tā vah | How’s it going? —Informal. |
| ¿Cómo le va? KŌ-mō lā vah | How is it going?—Formal. |
| ¿Cómo andas? KŌ-mō AHN-dahs | How are you doing?—Informal. |
| ¿Cómo anda? KŌ-mō AHN-dah | How are you doing?—Formal. |

thoughts to ponder

by Tim Barber

Just do it! was the advertising slogan for a shoe company a while back. “One more lap!” “One more repetition!” “One more hour of study!” One more household chore!

Just do it! comes in many different forms, and it seems they all take a lot of energy, determination, and motivation. Encouragement might come in the form of “You’ve got this” or “You’ve done things way harder than this!” Or you might have heard, “Don’t wimp out on me now!”

When God needed someone to do something of historical proportions, he called on Moses, who gave God a lot of excuses as to why he wasn’t the right person. The job? Lead God’s people out of Egypt. His excuses ended with “Please send someone else!” (Exodus 4:13). Reading between the lines, I can hear God saying those very words: “Just do it!” Those words cut through a lot of excuses.

The same was true for Gideon, one of the Old Testament judges. God’s people were again having a really hard time and needed someone to “grab the bull by the horns,” so to speak. He, too, gave God excuses as to why he wasn’t a good fit (Judges 6). “Just do it!” could easily have been a part of the narrative.

I heard those three little words over 30 years ago. They were spoken to me by a school principal. (No, not when I was in school!) I had been offered a job and was having second thoughts about it. When self-doubt creeps in, then a firm hand might be needed. Where in your life do you need to hear those words? They don’t imply that the task is easy—sometimes far from it. So, if you are convinced that it is worth doing, and you have the right qualifications, and it fits with your situation, then *Just do it!* and see what God has in mind. ♦

Copyright © Tim Barber. Tim is a retired pastor in the Champaign–Urbana area: tbarber@illinois.edu.

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Why you need dental insurance in retirement.

Medicare doesn't pay for dental care.¹

That's right. As good as Medicare is, it was never meant to cover everything. That means if you want protection, you need to purchase individual insurance.

Early detection can prevent small problems from becoming expensive ones.

The best way to prevent large dental bills is preventive care. The American Dental Association recommends checkups twice a year.

Previous dental work can wear out.

Your odds of having a dental problem only go up as you age.²

Treatment is expensive — especially the services people over 50 often need.

Unexpected bills like \$299 for a filling ... \$1,471 for a crown³ can be a real burden, especially if you're on a fixed income.

When you're comparing plans ...

- ▶ Look for coverage that helps pay for major services.
 - ▶ Look for coverage with no deductibles.
 - ▶ Shop for coverage with no annual maximum on cash benefits.
- Simply put – without dental insurance, there may be an important gap in your healthcare coverage.**

¹"Medicare & You," Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2025. ²"Aging changes in teeth and gums", medlineplus.gov, 4/17/2022. ³FairHealth, Inc. National average dental fees. Data current as of July 2025; subject to change.

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LIFESTYLES

Musically Speaking

“When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again” by Patrick Gilmore

Roger L. Wisegarver

The song “When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again,” with its musical hope for peace, dates from the American Civil War (April 12, 1861–May 26, 1865). That war was, of course, fought between the Union (“the North”) and the Confederacy (“the South”), formed in 1861. Initially seven states seceded, then four more, plus parts of two more, Virginia (West Virginia seceded from Virginia and set up a state government of its own) and part of New Mexico Territory was renamed Arizona, which became Confederate.

The states seceded from the Union partly to preserve slavery. The Confederate flag thus had 13 stars. Many southerners saw their way of life and economy severely threatened by the election of Abraham Lincoln and the growing abolitionist movement. Four years of intense combat ensued, mostly in the South. The war ended with Union victory, the dissolution of the Confederacy. And the abolition of slavery, freeing four million African Americans.

The appeal of this upbeat, lively march has lasted, and it has grown in popularity through the years. Soldiers and civilians on both sides of the Civil War conflict sang it, identifying with the feelings of relief and joy they could envision with the

eventual end of the horrible fighting—and the return home of loved ones.

The first printed sheet music for the song credits the words and music to Louis Lambert (a pen name of Patrick S. Gilmore). Born in Ireland, Gilmore came to America in the 1840s, along with many others who fled the famine of those years. A gifted musician, Gilmore served as United States Army bandmaster during the war. After the war, he organized monster peace jubilees (often lasting more than a day), with some featuring orchestras of a thousand musicians and choruses of 10,000 voices.



Gilmore claimed to have learned the tune for his song from someone he had heard singing it. It could date back to as early as 1630, because it closely resembles the tune to which Robbie Burns set a poem in that year. The song has four verses. Here are the last two:

3 - Get ready for the jubilee; Hurrah, hurrah!

We'll give the hero three times three; Hurrah, hurrah!

The laurel wreath is ready now to place upon his loyal brow

And we'll all feel gay when Johnny comes marching home

4 - Let love and friendship on that day; Hurrah, hurrah!

Their choicest treasures then display; Hurrah, hurrah!

And let each one perform some part to fill with joy the warrior's heart

And we'll all feel gay when Johnny comes marching home.

(Lyrics were written in 1863 and are now in the public domain).

In 1873, Gilmore took over the 22nd Regimental Band of New York and toured extensively. He also organized music for the 1886 Dedication of the Statue of Liberty.

Gilmore died suddenly in 1892 in St. Louis while organizing events for the 400th Columbus anniversary. His legacy as performer, promoter, and composer was heavily revered by “The March King,” John Philip Sousa, who, at Gilmore’s funeral, honored him by saying he had become “The Father of the American Band.” ♦

Roger, Monticello, Illinois, resident, combines his interest in music and history: roger_wisegarver@msn.com.

| Spanish / Pronunciation | English meaning |
|--|-----------------|
| Adiós. ah-DYŌS | Goodbye. |
| Ciao. (or Chao.) chow | Bye. |
| Hasta luego. AHS-tah LWĀ-gō | See you later. |
| Hasta pronto. AHS-tah PRŌN-tō | See you soon. |
| Hasta la próxima. AHS-tah lah PRŌX-ee-mah | Till next time. |

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| Hasta mañana. AHS-tah mahn-YAHN-ah | See you tomorrow. |
| Hasta la próxima semana. AHS-tah lah PRŌX-ee-mah sē-MAH-nah | Until next week. |
| Hasta ahora AHS-tah ah-Ō-rah | See you in a minute. |
| Nos vemos. nōs VĀ-mōs | See you. |

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LIFESTYLES

Numbering Our Days

by Greg Williams

Psalms 90

“Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men. . . . In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth. . . . So teach us to number our days, that we might apply our hearts unto wisdom.

O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we might rejoice and be glad all our days. Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil. Let thy work appear unto thy servants and thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.” (vss. 3, 6, 12, 14–17)

Moses is considered the author of this psalm, which is regarded as foundational for God’s people. So that we can grasp the intended meaning, the psalmist reminds us of the fall of mankind from the very beginning. Creation was an intentional result, born from God’s character. Love is considered the highest quality of life—a love that had to be shared. Because genuine love is possible only when there is freedom to choose to love, God gifted us with **free will**.

We were not originally created with an *expiration date*. So long as we followed God’s instruction as intended, we could live in constant fellowship with him. When humanity instead chose disobedience, access to the Tree of Life, the symbolic

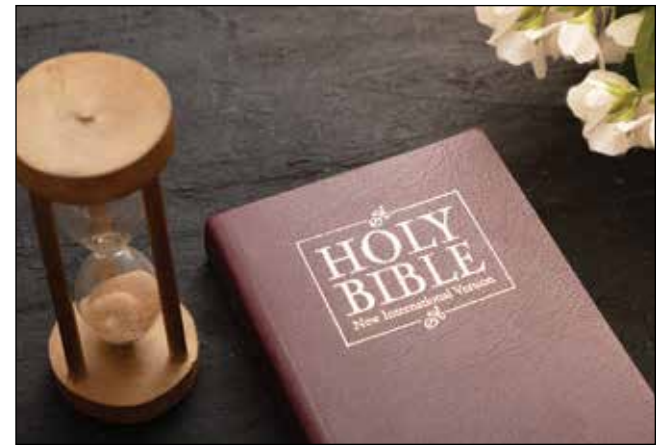
source of immortality, was cut off. It would not be an act of justice to give immortality to a people who denied God’s authority. Disobedience introduced death, turmoil, and suffering into our world.

Yet, God did not abandon us to the dust. His love was too great to dismiss his wayward children. Instead of wiping humanity from the earth, he initiated a plan of redemption—a *full payment* for our disobedience through the sacrifice of his Son. It was the only way to restore us to the fellowship originally intended with him, our Father.

“In the morning it flourisheth and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down and withereth.” Disobedience brought on the curse we all bear. Despite social status, wealth, or personal achievement, all carry this common curse: We are destined to an abbreviated life. That’s humbling.

With this awareness, Moses requests, *“So teach us to number our days that we might apply our hearts unto wisdom.”* Life is short. Our journey together in life has no guaranteed duration. All the more reason to make life count. Moses encourages us to make life meaningful, something we can accomplish only by honoring God: *“O satisfy us early with thy mercy, that we might rejoice and be glad all our days. Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil. Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.”*

The Hebrew the psalmist uses doesn’t describe God as the author of our affliction, but as the One who allows us to experience the burden of affliction as the consequence of our disobedient nature.



He attributes to God a character that allows us to both learn from our wrongs and receive the mercy that leads us back to God.

Our lives often include suffering, sorrows, and pain. But we can understand our trials from a different perspective: They can be a source of wisdom, instruction, and encouragement to learn from and to pass on to those who come after us. By sharing our own experience with others, we can be instrumental in helping them and establishing peace and unity for future generations.

This work is important for all of us. Though we bear death in our bodies, we can learn to depend on our Father in intimate fellowship. This was God’s original plan. This is where we are brought in the passage’s conclusion: *“And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.”*

May we understand our struggles as God’s allowance in our training as his children, as we, God’s people, keep moving the flag forward. Have a great day, my friend. ♦

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Jeremiah 29:11 ESV

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PEOPLE & PLACES

400 Years of History, Buried, Now Brought to Life

Mary King's Close, Edinburgh, Scotland

by Fyllis Hockman

The year is 1645. The most virulent strain of the Bubonic Plague has immobilized Edinburgh, Scotland, claiming the lives of more than half the city's population. The hardest-hit area is Mary King's Close on High Street, a busy thoroughfare full of pubs, shops, and residences. Cries of suffering have replaced the friendly chatter. The stench of death has replaced the pungent aroma of tea and scones.

The place, the time, and the horror have been resurrected as one of Edinburgh's most unusual attractions. Archaeologically and historically accurate, the alleys you walk through, the rooms you visit, the stories you hear are real. This is not a recreation; it is a resurrection of what existed so many centuries ago.

Beneath the City Chambers on Edinburgh's famous Royal Mile lies Mary King's Close, a series of narrow, winding side streets with multilevel apartment houses looming on either side. The close has been hidden for many years. In 1753, the houses were knocked down to make way for new buildings, leaving below several dark and mysterious underground alleyways steeped in mystery—and misery.

Reconstructed as it was then—though without any contagious aspects—the real Mary King's Close provides amazing insight into a period of history with which most are unfamiliar. The authentic environment has been preserved with accuracy that leaves



Above: Historic Re-enactors
Right: Annie's Shrine



commercial historical reproductions far behind.

It's eerie, meandering up and down along dark, circuitous, unpaved passageways, on packed earth surfaces, past room after room, each with its own story to tell—a projection of people who lived in the Close in the mid-sixteenth to nineteenth centuries.

The inhabitants range from those gracing a grand sixteenth-century townhouse, to plague victims of the seventeenth century, to the third-generation saw-makers who departed in 1902, when the last section was finally interred. They are not composites of might-have-beens. These recounted lives are based on real people, gleaned from primary documentation preserved in the Scottish Office of Records.

Lighting conveys the spooky nature of the attraction as much as does the narrative. Only *practicals*—original historical methods of lighting the dwellings—are used, recreating actual lighting conditions of the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries.

Rounding one curve reveals a large window, lit by an unhealthy greenish light. A doctor emerges, tending to bed ridden figures covered with sores, boils, and diseased skin. It's the home of John Craig, a grave-digger who has already succumbed



for such purchases—or order them online.

Back then, if Mother was away, Grandma was almost certainly home. Dad might be nearby grinding feed, repairing a barn wall, or replacing a window in the old hog house. Because we kept more than a thousand laying hens, someone was often working in the large, insulated henhouse or in the little adjacent building where we washed, candled, graded, and packed the eggs into cartons.

In time, we children all grew into those jobs and were appropriately paid for our labor. The primary chores—feeding animals, gathering eggs, and milking cows—never kept us out of the woods and pastures, but they certainly kept us off the streets, so to speak.

Though some frowned on the practice, we called nearly every regular male visitor by first name. Women, however, were treated differently. Dorothy Footit, our county youth adviser who oversaw 4-H and later established a generous county college scholarship, was always “Miss Footit.” A female agent from university extension was known as Mrs. Wilson. The preacher—called simply “the preacher”—was addressed as “Pastor” or “Reverend,” followed by his last name. His wife was always “Missus.”

At church, however, nearly everyone, with few exceptions (Mrs. White, for instance, who had been a schoolteacher, and who had taught

to the “visitation of the pestilence,” his body awaiting “collection.”

Therein lies the tragedy of Mary King's Close: much of its history parallels that of the plague. The epidemic struck its residents fiercely. As the death toll rose, the bodies accumulated outside. Mary King's Close was a pariah in the neighborhood, and it ultimately fell victim to its own diseased fate. It disappeared, as well.

With more than two dozen stops along the tour, each accompanied by an intriguing bit of personal history, I became intimately acquainted with the residents who lived there. Similar stories, some enthralling, others bizarre—all authenticated by original documentation—abounded as we made our way along the windy, up-and-down corridors.

Among the most important, and saddest, rooms there is one in which eight-year-old Annie died of the plague in 1645. Key chains, jewelry, dolls, and stuffed animals line the walls as a shrine to the sad little child who died long ago. “What a sad story,” laments 10-year-old Harriet Peterson, visiting from London. She slowly adds the small stuffed teddy bear she is hugging to the other offerings.

A lot of life was lived in these buildings—and a lot of lives were lost. As one of the most fascinating and unique walks through history that I've ever experienced, the unsettling stories, the ethereal lighting, the serpentine alleyways remained with me, even as I explored the rest of historic Edinburgh. ♦
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my grandfather in Sunday school)—even women in their nineties—preferred to be called by their first names, yes, even by children. Ted and Ora, Blain and Laura, Forest and Charlie, Fred, Merle, and Hattie: we used those names freely, and those dear folks felt equally free to wake us up when we fell asleep during services or offer us spiritual and practical advice, even unsolicited. When they spoke, we listened.

As for the Fuller Brush man, timing was everything. My mother did not go long without a whisk broom, a kitchen brush, or a sturdy upright broom. If the Fuller Brush man failed to appear at the right moment, he lost the sale to the local hardware store.

Still, neighbors somehow seemed to know such amazing details as when a family needed a new broom or brush (maybe from *rubbering* on the party phone line?), and they passed that word along when the Fuller Brush man stopped by their nearby farms. More than once, the Fuller Brush man arrived just after Mother had added something with bristles to her shopping list. Some might just brush off such happenings. To us, it seemed almost uncanny.

Those days will likely never come again. ♦

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Rural Memories



The Fuller Brush Man

I grew up in the 1950s on an isolated hill farm in northwest Illinois. Especially in the summer, aside from the people we saw at church and close relatives, most folks we encountered came to the farm on business.

About a dozen different men visited regularly. Eddie Miller delivered gas. Les Grimm brought feed. John Andes handled the artificial insemination of our dairy cows and always arrived with a pack of chewing gum, making sure each of us five little Siedenburghs got a stick.

Salesmen of many kinds regularly visited farms in those days. The Fuller Brush man could replace anything with bristles: straw brooms, barn brooms (today *deck* brooms), and even the brushes we used to clean milking equipment in the milkhouse. Things have changed considerably since then. Nowadays, many farm families simply drive to Rural King, Farm & Fleet, Walmart, or Big R

LIFESTYLES

SEVENTIES FLASHBACK

Inside The Outsiders

by Randal C. Hill

In the mid-1960s, Oklahoma adolescent Susan Eloise Hinton had a problem with books available to her. “Realistic teenage fiction didn’t exist,” she claimed. “If you didn’t want to read ‘Mary Jane Goes to the Prom,’ there was nothing to read. I wanted to write something that dealt with what I saw kids really doing.”

The book Hinton wrote for herself ended up becoming something for millions of others to read and think about while also struggling to navigate the often-turbulent waters of teen society that sweep students through their hectic high school years.

Born in 1948, the older daughter of a Tulsa door-to-door salesman and factory worker, Susan began composing her novel at the age of 15 and completed it a year later. She wrote much of it in the library at Will Rogers High School, where she was an apathetic student. (She earned a D in creative writing.)

She found her groove with *The Outsiders*, a tale that left out parents, teachers, and any other authority figures. “Every teenager feels adults have no idea what’s going on,” she maintained.

Her gritty narrative detailed conflicts between two young groups in her town. One was the *socs* (pronounced *sōshes*), for *socials*, the privileged Tulsa students who lived in tony neighborhoods

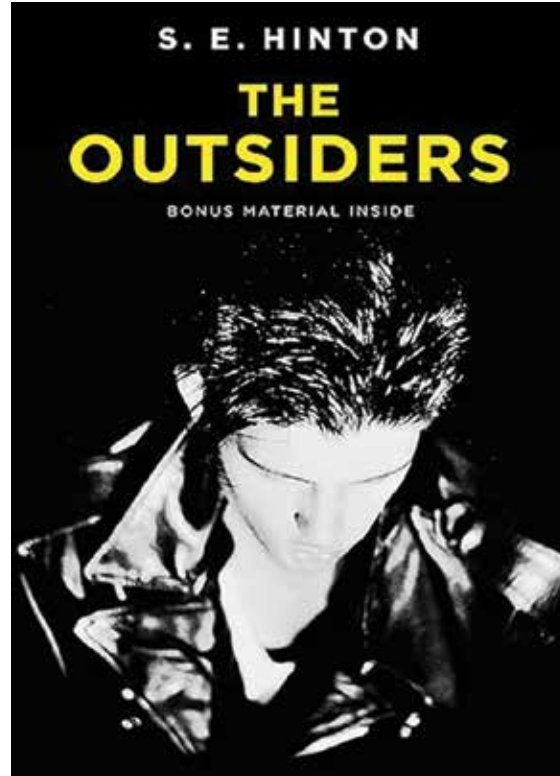
and often took cruel delight in provoking working-class *greasers* who were out walking the streets.

Greasers were poor kids from ramshackle neighborhoods, adolescents who smoked, wore leather jackets, and committed petty crimes—and who dreaded confrontations with the *socs*.

Susan’s working-class neighborhood included lots of greasers, kids Hinton counted among her closest friends. Her inspiration for *The Outsiders* came when a local friend was beaten after leaving a movie theater one night. She focused her story on a tough but sensitive 14-year-old greaser nicknamed Ponyboy Curtis.

Susan took care to craft characters with good and bad traits from both groups. “I had friends on the rich side of town, too,” she said. “They had their share of problems, also.”

She later showed her manuscript to a friend’s mother, who wrote children’s books. The lady helped Hinton shop *The Outsiders* around, and it



was snapped up by Viking Press, only the second publisher to look at it.

Viking recommended that Susan use her initials to hide her identity as a female writer.

The Outsiders was ignored at first, and S. E. Hinton’s first royalty check was for a paltry ten dollars. Viking considered axing the publication until the company realized that teachers and librarians were the main people ordering copies—over time, lots and lots of copies. Today it’s a mainstay in many school English classes, although controversy has followed the work

due to its portrayal of gang violence, family dysfunction, and use of strong language and slang.

Susan’s groundbreaking work has now sold over 15 million books. Honored as the first YA (Young Adult) novel—and the best-selling work ever from that genre—*The Outsiders* continues to sell about 500,000 copies each year. ♦

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MONEY MATTERS

SUSTAINABLE INVESTING

by Darrold A Kennedy

When you invest, you want your money to grow. But maybe you also want to make a positive difference in the world while you pursue your financial goals. That's the foundation of *sustainable investing*—an approach that considers environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors, along with traditional financial analysis.

Sustainable investing lets you support better business practices through investment choices. It considers how companies address issues ranging from climate change to worker well-being to corporate ethics. At its core, it's about aligning investments with personal values, while still focusing on long-term financial outcomes.

Here are the three main areas of sustainable investing:

Environmental considerations include how companies respond to climate change, use natural resources, and manage pollution.

Social factors address workforce well-being, product safety, and efforts to reduce social inequities. **Governance** focuses on corporate behavior, ethics policies, and financial transparency.

You might wonder whether investing sustainably means sacrificing returns. Research suggests it doesn't. New York University's Stern Center for Sustainable Business reviewed more than 1,000 studies from 2015–2020 and found that incorporating ESG factors does not inherently diminish returns, and that, in many cases, it is associated with improved financial performance. As with any investment approach, it's important to focus on high-quality investments that help support more consistent longterm returns.

Sustainable investing can take several forms: **ES-Gintentional strategies** spread out your investments and have clear goals for choosing companies that follow strong environmental, social, and governance practices.

Sustainable thematic strategies focus on specific issues, such as clean energy or water conservation.

Impact investments go a step further, targeting measurable environmental or social outcomes. Because they prioritize narrower, more specific objectives, they might carry higher volatility and potentially lower returns.

One concern you might hear about is *greenwashing*, something that happens when compa-

nies or funds exaggerate environmental efforts. To help prevent this, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission created a rule in 2023 that requires any fund with ESG in its name to keep at least 80% of its assets in ESG-aligned investments.

Another challenge is data consistency. Today, 99% of S&P 500 companies report ESG metrics, according to the Center for Audit Quality, but different rating providers use different methods. Still, looking at relative rankings can help you compare companies and mutual funds in a more consistent way.

Deciding whether to include sustainable investments in your portfolio should depend on your values and financial goals. You can build a well-diversified portfolio with or without them. A qualified financial advisor can help you understand whether adding sustainable investments fits your overall strategy and makes sense for your situation.

As more companies disclose ESG data, and more funds offer sustainable options, investors have increasing opportunities to align their portfolios with their values—without sacrificing their financial objectives. ♦

This Edward Jones article is provided through your local Edward Jones Branch financial advisor, Darrold A. Kennedy, AAMS: Edward Jones, 1912 Round Barn Road, Suite E, Champaign, IL 61821; phone (217) 398-6562; toll-free number (800) 203-5679; fax (888) 819-2146.

Hola

你好

Hello

Bonjour

Perfect Spanish Cognates

(Same meaning and spelled the same in English and Spanish)

| Spanish | Pronunciation | English meaning |
|----------|----------------|-----------------|
| animal | ahn-ee-MAHL | animal |
| color | ko-LÖR | color |
| doctor | dök-TÖR | doctor |
| hospital | ös-pee-TAHL | hospital |
| original | ō-ree-hee-NAHL | original |

WOW!

LOOK AT THE COVERAGE!

FAMILY OF STATIONS

- Beardstown 93.5 FM
- Bloomington 90.3 FM
- Bloomington 104.7 FM
- Carlinville 90.1 FM
- Central Illinois 89.7 FM
- Central Illinois 107.3 FM
- Central Illinois 1370 AM
- Clinton 97.1 FM
- *Decatur 100.1 FM
- East Central IL 89.3 FM
- East Central IL 102.5 FM
- Jacksonville 93.5 FM
- Keokuk, IA 90.9 FM
- Lincoln 100.1 FM
- Lincoln 105.3 FM
- Macomb 96.7 FM
- Macomb 89.7 FM
- Petersburg 88.1 FM
- Springfield 105.3 FM
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LIFESTYLES

Patience

continued from A-1

fearing that I would give the fun task to someone else, or that others would not wait for her, resulting in inner pressure to take the opportunity first and early, instead of in its proper time.

Could I apply the concept to other relationships? If I trust that my husband knows my desire to finish the window trim, and that he cares, then I know he is trying to get to it when he can. If I can trust that my kids are working hard to mature, then I can be patient with the process. If I trust that a business representative is doing her or his best with my service request, I can be patient with a frustrating situation.

Ironically, there's one small piece of the equation that must happen before the trust can occur: the request must be made. For how can the other person know what I want, if I never express it? How can my husband know I want the trim fixed if I don't tell him? How can my kids know my desire for them to mature without my correction and guidance? How can the business representative help find a solution without my making the initial request? Real humans aren't generally mind readers—is it even fair to have *any* expectations without the initial request? The more clearly I express my request (and its inherent expectations), the more empowered the other individual is to meet the request.

But when people *don't* meet the request, when they *aren't* trying their best, when they *don't* actually see, know, or care? Then I can express my requests to God, and trust that *God* sees, knows, and cares—even when his timing isn't my preferred solution. And I can find patience after I trust.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God” (Philippians 4:6 ESV). ♦

Copyright © Esther Aardsma. Champaign County native Esther resides in Philo with her busy family. Passionate for creativity, especially with words, she shares her love through editing, coaching writing one-on-one, and presenting to groups. Find her at writewithesther.com.



More Confusables

Maybe if English hadn't had so many parent languages, we wouldn't have such a mishmash of similar-sounding words. On the other hand, who knows? Mandarin has entire identical sentences that can mean two completely different things.

Common confusables are, of course, words or groups of words that sound alike, look similar, and might even have somewhat related meanings, but differ in proper usage, meaning, or nuance. Choosing the incorrect member of a pair of confusables often subtly undermines clarity of expression.

A good example is *their*, *there*, and *they're*. I'm told that a grammarian who throws a fit can be comforted by patting him or her on the back and saying, “Their, there, they're.”

There is a possessive pronoun (“their house”); *there* (which can serve as a grammatical expletive [*there* is another one], adverb, pronoun, adjective, or even as an interjection) refers to a place or idea (“there, beside that bush”), and *they're* is a contraction of “they” and “are.”

Another pair of confusables is *your* and *you're*. *Your* is a possessive pronoun; *you're* is a contraction for “you are.” Confusion occurs when a speaker pronounces both identically, and few take the trouble to carefully distinguish between these words in pronunciation.

The confusables *affect* and *effect* are frequently used improperly: As a verb, *affect* means “to influence;” the verb *effect* means to cause or bring about, as in “effect a change.” The verb *affect* refers to the act of producing a change. The verb *effect* means to make that change.

The noun forms have distinct pronunciations: *Affect* is stressed on the first syllable, *effect* on the second. Someone who shows no facial emotion can be said to have a *flat affect*. That *affect* (impression) could be the *effect* (result) of an injury, an illness, or a mental disorder.

There's a joke about a man who's eating free popcorn in a restaurant while awaiting his meal and beverage. Every once in a while, a voice says, “Wow! You sure clean up nice.”—or, “Looking good!” The man finally asks the waiter what's going on. “It's the popcorn,” the waiter explains: “It's complimentary.”

Complimentary can mean that it gives compliments or that it's free. *Complementary*, on the other hand, means that something completes, or goes well with, something else.

Avoid or repair such errors through awareness and careful proofreading. Read sentences aloud, review simple grammar rules, and practice with examples. These are just words—but using them correctly strengthens writing and ensures that you precisely convey your intended meaning. ♦

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Puzzle Answers

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| U | N | D | E | R | | M | I | L | D | | B | C | C | | | | | | |
| P | E | E | L | E | | A | E | R | I | E | | A | H | H | | | | | |
| T | R | A | F | F | I | C | L | A | N | E | | L | O | U | | | | | |
| O | D | D | | | | L | A | O | | | M | U | S | I | C | | | | |
| | | | | | | W | A | L | K | I | N | T | H | E | P | A | R | K | |
| | | | | | | T | R | U | E | | | R | E | D | S | | | | |
| M | O | O | L | A | | A | J | A | R | | | P | T | A | | | | | |
| H | U | N | D | R | E | D | A | C | R | E | W | O | O | D | | | | | |
| O | R | G | | | | S | O | N | Y | | M | I | L | E | S | | | | |
| | | | | | | A | S | A | P | | I | P | A | D | | | | | |
| K | A | B | U | | | K | I | T | H | E | A | T | E | R | | | | | |
| A | L | E | X | I | | A | N | T | | | O | A | T | | | | | | |
| R | I | A | | | | F | O | U | N | D | F | A | M | I | L | I | | | |
| M | A | C | | | | F | U | M | E | S | | N | A | D | I | R | | | |
| A | S | H | | | | S | I | P | S | | I | N | S | T | A | | | | |

Crossword puzzle on A-6

Jumble on A-8

Jumbles: FLOOR ISSUE HAGGLE POETRY

Answers: She fell asleep on the couch, turning it into a — “SLEEP-HER” SOFA

Sudoku on A-8

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 3 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 9 | 7 |
| 9 | 2 | 5 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 3 |
| 1 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 9 | 5 | 2 | 8 | 6 |
| 2 | 9 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 7 | 5 |
| 4 | 8 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 9 |
| 7 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 1 | 4 | 8 |
| 8 | 1 | 9 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 6 | 2 |
| 3 | 6 | 2 | 7 | 8 | 1 | 9 | 5 | 4 |
| 5 | 4 | 7 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 8 | 3 | 1 |

Scrabble Grams on A-6

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------|-----------|--|--|--|--|
| SCRAMBLE GRAMS SOLUTION | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C ₃ | L ₁ | U ₁ | B ₃ | M ₃ | A ₁ | N ₁ | RACK 1 = | <u>69</u> | | | | |
| D ₂ | O ₁ | V ₄ | I ₁ | S ₁ | H ₄ | | RACK 2 = | <u>13</u> | | | | |
| B ₃ | E ₁ | G ₂ | U ₁ | I ₁ | L ₁ | E ₁ | RACK 3 = | <u>70</u> | | | | |
| A ₁ | E ₁ | R ₁ | O ₁ | B ₃ | I ₁ | C ₃ | RACK 4 = | <u>61</u> | | | | |
| PAR SCORE 155-165 TOTAL 213 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <small>Hasbro and its logo, SCRABBLE®, associated logo, the design of the distinctive SCRABBLE brand game board, and the distinctive letter tile designs are trademarks of Hasbro in the United States and Canada. ©2024 Hasbro. All rights reserved. Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.</small> | | | | | | | | | | | | |

LIFESTYLES

The Day My Knee Predicted the Weather

by Cynthia Germain

Ah, the wonderful journey of aging. They say age is just a number—but that number has a way of announcing itself through stiff joints, sore muscles, and the occasional reminder that our bodies are keeping score. As the years add up, so do the little surprises that come along for the ride.



more accurate than most meteorologists on the morning news.

The medicine cabinet makeover.

There was a time when the medicine cabinet held a few basics. Now it's a carefully curated collection: creams, supplements, prescriptions—and a myriad of remedies with names you never thought you'd know. You learn what works, what doesn't, and which item is worth keeping within arm's reach.

Pace yourself!

You start to understand the value of pacing yourself. It's not about doing less, it's about doing things differently.

There's a certain mystery to the aches and pains of aging. You wake up with a sore shoulder and can't quite trace it back to anything you did. Did you sleep wrong? Lift something? Blink too aggressively? It's as if your body kept a running tab of everything you've ever done and decides, at random, to collect.

The soundtrack of movement!

Once upon a time, movement was silent. Now? Knees crack, hips pop, and backs creak, like an old farmhouse in the wind. Getting up from a chair sometimes requires a strategy, or maybe a small pep talk. You start to notice a new choreography of everyday life: the careful stretch before standing, the slow turn instead of a quick pivot, the pause before taking that first step.

Weather? Or prophecy?

You used to check the forecast online. Now your joints handle that for you. Rain coming? Your knee knows. Temperature dropping? Your hands have already filed a complaint. It's not exactly a superpower you asked for, but there it is,

You plan your day with intention, build in time to recover, and recognize that rest isn't a luxury: It's part of the plan. There's wisdom in that, even if it took a few sore mornings to learn it.

And yet, even with the creaks and cracks, there's something grounding about it all. These aches? They tell a story. Of years lived, work done, people cared for, places gone. The body may slow a bit, but the perspective it brings? That only gets stronger.

So, here's to the stretch before getting out of bed, the careful step, the laugh when something pops unexpectedly. Aging comes with its share of discomfort, but it also comes with resilience. And a little bit of humor goes a long way. Because if nothing else, we've earned the right to both groan and grin. ♦

Cynthia Germain, who has her MBA, is knowledgeable about aging, nonprofit community-based organizations, and the meaningful services they can provide.

Okinawa

continued from A-1



American Village in Okinawa, Japan © Roméo A. / unsplash.com

trees blossom in February.

Visiting Okinawa is about enjoying the rhythm you experience there—festival energy, quiet castle mornings, coral reef adventures, playing on and surfing from beaches, mountain or island hikes, or just zoning out at a seaside cabin, watching sunsets.

You get the opportunity to enjoy a slower-paced life, eat and drink healthfully, enjoy local cuisine, and gain health and longevity. Okinawa rewards travelers who slow down and let the islands and the Okinawans set the pace. ♦

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