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Refreshed magazine brings home awards

During the annual Evangelical Press Association convention held in early April, Refreshed magazine received six awards for work published during 2014, our first year of publishing in a magazine format.

First place awards were won for Best Humor Article, written by humor columnist Joanne Brokaw, and Best Short Article, written by Tim Walker.

Joanne's article, "Insomnia: Questions that Keep Me Awake at Night," appeared in the September 2014 issue.

The judge said: "...imagination that has run amok... the story is funny and allows a pause in someone's hectic day that allows them to forget their troubles for a while and be entertained."

Tim's contemplative piece, "Colliding with God," was published in October 2014.

The judge's comments included: "Excellent! The author had a premise, supported his premise with excellent content, and wound it all up with a call to action... Poor Tim, I and the rest of your readers could feel your pain. You used humor for its emotive quality. We don't all have to weep to get a point across."

The magazine was awarded third place in the Fiction category for a Christmas short story, "Morning Mail," published in December. The heartwarming story was written by Mary Moody and illustrated by Mary Hart.

A fifth place was awarded in the Standing Column category for Doug Trouten's Plugged In column that appears regularly in the Minneapolis/St. Paul edition.

In the Christian Ministry overall category that encompasses the entire

magazine, with judging based on both content and design, Refreshed was awarded Awards of Merit in both the print and digital divisions for finishing in the top five of each division.

The judge said, "A lively publication that focuses in a compelling way on human-interest articles that highlight the issues and concerns of its readership."

Although it just missed placing in the Best Cover category—sixth out of 50 entries—the judge said the cover makes it "feel like a real newsstand magazine and that's not faint praise. So many entrants can't (identify) the basics of magazine covers, but this one knows all of them. The cover is designed with classic design principles and handles all of them well."

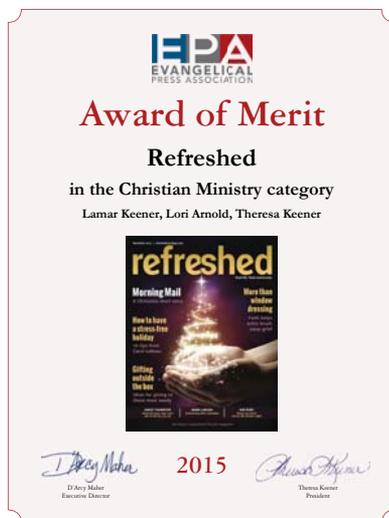
Published by Selah Media Group, Refreshed magazine

was launched in January 2014 to replace the Christian Examiner newspaper.

ChristianNewsJournal.com, launched last July by Selah Media Group, won an Award of Excellence as the best online Christian news site.

The Evangelical Press Association is the professional membership organization for Christian periodicals in North America. The 300-member association includes publications from such notable organizations as Christianity Today, World Vision, Focus on the Family, Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Compassion, and The Salvation Army.

At the EPA convention, held April 8 to 10 in Denver, Selah Media Group owner Theresa Keener completed her term as the president of the Evangelical Press Association. Theresa is the web developer for both refreshedmag.com and christiannewsjournal.com.



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Psalm 139:14

Don't miss the moment

One of my colleagues saw me walking through the hallway and motioned me toward his door.

"You gotta see this," he said.

When I got to his door I saw that he was pointing to his computer.

My stomach dropped a little. I'm never interested in looking at what other people think is interesting on their computers.

It's usually a video of cats set to music or a mashup of news anchors whose broadcasts are edited to sound like they're singing a rap song. It's even worse if it's video of one of their kids or grandkids singing "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star." Seen it. Don't need to see it again. Life's too short.

"What's up?" I tried to feign politeness.

"It's a clip of when my wife and I took our grandkids to Disneyland."

I'm one of the only people I know who doesn't like Disneyland. But friendship is friendship. I pulled a chair up to his desk.

The video showed my friend and his wife walking through the entrance of the happiest place on earth. My friend was holding their 8-month-old granddaughter. Off camera I could hear the father of the baby say, "Let's get a photo of you three with the castle in the background."

The grandparents turned toward the son-in-law and posed. The video, being taken by their daughter, kept rolling.

"Okay, hold still," the off-camera voice said. "Smile everyone! No wait. I need to turn the camera on."

My friend, his wife and the grandbaby waited. Posing.



"Okay, I think I've got it now," the voice said. "Smile real big now! Wait, there's some shadow on your faces. Let me turn the flash on."

The posing continued.

The video showed my friend's face harden into a forced smile. He and his wife could barely hide their frustration that this wasn't happening fast enough. While they stood, with now artificial smiles that resembled grimaces, the video also picked up their audio, and captured what the two of them thought was a private conversation about the incompetence of the photographer.

Here's what else the video showed: While my friend and his wife focused on becoming statues in a wax museum, waiting for the expected thing to happen, and while the photographer was audibly on the verge of a meltdown because he couldn't get his camera to work, the baby turned to my friend's face and started touching it with her tiny hands. We could hear those beautiful baby vowels, oos and aaas, while she touched his face. The baby smiled and even leaned in to put her mouth on my friend's cheek. Then the baby turned and stroked her grandmother's face.

And my friend missed it because he was too busy posing, trying to fulfill someone else's expectations.

"Look at all the love I missed," he said to me. "The love that came to us unannounced and unexpected and undeserved. It was there for us, but we missed it."

It was a love they didn't initiate, and it was there whether they recognized it or not.

"What is essential is

to know that the Christian life is mostly what is being done to you, not what you are doing," said Eugene Peterson, pastor, scholar and author of *The Message* translation of the Bible. "You don't begin the spiritual life, the Holy Spirit does. And it began a long time ago. It was his idea before it was yours."

Our everyday activities provide us with ample opportunity to see the activity of God—if we pay attention. It's all around us, in the ordinary, everyday experience of life. Jesus used even mud to help a man see.

"We are not here to show something to God," said Robert Benson, an author specializing in prayer, silence and spirituality. "We are here because God—who wants to be completely known—has something to show us."

Maybe even at Disneyland.



Dean Nelson directs the journalism program at Point Loma Nazarene University in San Diego. His book about seeing God in everyday life is "God Hides in Plain Sight: How to See the Sacred in a Chaotic World."



Kimberly Hunt: Beyond the anchor desk

Faith, family help newscaster in her coveted role of mom

by LORI ARNOLD

During her 27 years behind a San Diego anchor desk, Kimberly Hunt has covered sitting presidents, interviewed high-profile celebrities like Oprah Winfrey, covered the Oscars live and helped viewers navigate the ravaging firestorms of 2003 and 2007, but her favorite assignment? Mom.

“I think it’s like any other mom,” Hunt said in an interview in her Del Mar home. “I think ‘The Mom’ part of you is not at all affected by anything else that affects your life or what you do for a living or the fact that someone may watch television in the evenings and recognize my face as a news anchor in town. When you turn to the other part of your life, which is wife and mother, the mother part, that just plays no part in your relationship. It only affects your schedule.”

It’s been a crazy schedule.

Since coming to ABC affiliate KGTV from a Monterey, California station in 1987, Hunt has anchored the nightly news. She stayed at Channel 10 for 15

years, co-anchoring with her long-time friend Carol LeBeau before heading to KUSI in 2002. She returned to Channel 10 and LeBeau in January 2008. LeBeau retired in 2009.

Hunt’s evening work duties meant she was not home when daughter, Savannah, got from school. She was also in the studio for sports practices, homework and most weeknight dinners. Those duties, she said, were masterfully orchestrated by her husband, former San Diego Chargers linebacker Billy Ray Smith. After his 1992 retirement from the NFL, Smith became a sports broadcaster, working the morning drive time as part of The Scott and B.R. Show.

“It worked out perfectly for a parent, mother or father, always being with Savannah,” Hunt said of her now 23-year-old daughter. “We never had to have any kind of substantial day care other than the occasional person that helped out when we wanted to do something or had an event.”

Kimberly Hunt shares how she learned to balance a demanding work schedule while being a mom. She has been an evening news anchor in San Diego since 1987.

The schedule meant that Hunt would catch about five hours of sleep after getting home around 12:30 a.m. Smith would head off to his station by 4:30 a.m. Hunt was up an hour or so after that to spend time cooking breakfast with Savannah before driving her to school, a ritual that continued until late into high school when the teen insisted on driving herself.

“My sleep didn’t matter,” Momma said. “That was the only thing that suffered. Time with her didn’t suffer.”

When school ended for the day Smith would pick her up and take her to volleyball practice. He helped her as needed with homework and any other school-related tasks. For dinner, he would pull out carefully packaged meals that Hunt prepared and labeled several days in advance.

“It makes all of the difference in the world because she couldn’t be in better hands than Daddy when I’m not home,” Hunt said. “He did a fantastic job.”

Treasured time

The routine also complemented each of their interests. Hunt was able to instill her affinity for health and nutrition; Smith was able to pass on his passion for sports and even coaching (when it came to homework).

Several nights a week Hunt tried to arrange her schedule so that she could drive home to share a meal with her family, something that current work demands wouldn’t allow now.

“It was like God kind of oversaw that being manageable and, about the time she went off to college, I really wouldn’t be able to come home to dinner like I did back then,” she said.

The weekends were devoted to family time, often attending Savannah’s games. They also frequently did charity work together. As a high-profile couple, they



PHOTO BY SARAH TOLSON PHOTOGRAPHY

have received thousands of requests to emcee fundraisers and benefits. Their commitment to charity work came naturally, as the couple first met while co-hosting a United Cerebral Palsy telethon in the late 1980s.

“He invited me to lunch and we never stopped dating until we were married,” the newscaster said.

The couple will celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary in June.

“Everything we do charitably is a decision we make on our own time or as a family,” she said.

Last year alone, Hunt was involved in 59 charitable projects.

“It’s a lot when you work five nights a week,” she said.

Her charitable work has benefited, among others, the San Diego Rescue

Mission, Burn Institute, Mama’s Kitchen, Room to Read, and Opportunity International.

After watching her parents model the giving spirit around San Diego,

Savannah traveled as a young teen to Vietnam with her mother, where they worked on a school library project for underprivileged children.

After returning from the trip, Savannah started her own charity, raising money to help poor families furnish their homes. She also helped with tutoring. For her 16th birthday Savannah raised \$20,000 for Opportunity International after asking her friends to give to the charity in lieu of gifts.

Parental legacy

Although Hunt has enjoyed her vol-



Kimberly Hunt celebrates International Women's Day with the two most important women in her life: her daughter, Savannah, and her mother, Vesta.

unter work with the various social agencies, her heart is particularly close to those benefiting various law enforcement organizations, which she supports as a tribute to her father Harry Hunt, a retired investigator with the California Highway Patrol, and her grandfather, also named Harry Hunt, an Ojai Police Department constable who was killed in the line of duty in 1943.

"I could not have seen a more committed work ethic," Hunt said of her father, who lives in Napa, where he and his wife, Vesta, raised Kimberly and her two siblings, Glenn and Debi. "I have a hardworking, trust-worthy, loyal, good father."

Early on, Hunt adopted that same work philosophy as her own, a trait also exhibited by her husband.

"You make do with the small connections and the every couple of nights me dropping in for dinner until you can get to the weekend," she said. "I was thinking that I was just fortunate that life was working out this way."

In addition to the strong work ethic, Hunt credits her mom and dad with modeling the skills that she, in turn, used to parent her own child. At the center of it all, she said, is an enduring faith.

"They are so lovely how they go together," she said. "They are two people of faith, integrity and character and joy. They are always there. They have never

in my life, ever, not been there when they've needed to be."

Her dad provides the sound spiritual foundation, while her mother complements that with sheer strength.

"When something happens that rocks my world and I know, 'OK this isn't good news,'" Hunt said that's her cue to call home.

"My father cries and my mom is a rock, like a ROCK, but a positive rock. (With) my mom this positive comes out with this strength. My dad has to cry that someone hurt me. Once he pulls himself together then he goes to the Bible and then he gives me the verses: protection, blessings, overcoming, persevering, plans for your life."

Spiritual heritage

In many ways, the mommy instinct was passed on from her own mother; their closeness revealed through Hunt's own misting eyes.

"I learned everything, *everything* (from her)," the journalist said. "I couldn't have ever had a more loving, giving, generous, honorable, selfless, gracious, beautiful, faith-filled mother."

"Faith plays a role in everything that has ever been a part of my life. Every decision I ever make, every reaction I have to news, every person I choose, the way I raise my daughter, how I navigate change in life, the unexpected bumps in

life. It affects everything."

It's a way of life that was cultivated even more with the shared values of her spouse.

"I will say having that mirror as a husband is invaluable because I think that, clearly, if I hadn't had a husband all those years that was that kind of a person and if I had someone who wasn't that, it wouldn't have worked."

Their faith also provided a grounding that helped to temper some of the pitfalls that can come to children of high-profile parents.

"I feel like the minute we walk in that door that doesn't exist anymore," the newscaster said of their public jobs. "She was raised in a conservative home, two parents with standards and expectations and love and support."

Hunt said that fans of their work frequently inquire about Savannah and have been particularly kind to their family, often greeting them while still maintaining appropriate boundaries.

"It's been a wonderful blessing not only for us, but for Savannah," Hunt said. "They have cared about her because they have heard about her through us and knew we had a daughter and they are just caring and wonderful."

No empty nest

Hunt said she believes the strong familial foundation, faith and a network of girlfriends who provided another layer of role models for Savannah helped to shape her into a self-motivated young woman who is now working in New York City's hotel industry after graduating earlier this year from Cornell.

Two years before graduating from high school Savannah had already set her sights on the university in Ithaca, New York, the only college to which she submitted an application. In preparation for the application process Savannah re-

Newscaster at home with TV role

by LORI ARNOLD

searched all of the entry requirements and determined extra steps she could take to improve her chances of being accepted, including landing a job in a field related to her course of study. Before she completed high school she had already visited Cornell three times.

“She’s always learned how to and always wanted to learn how to figure it out herself,” her proud mom said. “It’s her responsibility and we’re here to be parents and to assist and do what parents do.”

Savannah’s elation at earning admission to Cornell served to cushion her mom from the trauma of empty nesting.

“I helped her move into the dorm and there was nothing but excitement,” Hunt said. “Every girl and boy that came in and met her, the freshman orientation, every professor we met, the building we walked into and the grass we walked on. She was absolutely so beautifully happy and excited and doing what she wanted to do.”

“I’m removed from that now. Now, do I boo-hoo that she’s not home with me? If she had been home with me, that wouldn’t have worked out for her. That’s what she wanted. So when I came home I just lived in her excitement.”

Although her motherly role of mom has adapted with time and Savannah’s own personal development, Hunt said she’s still proudly mom. Thanks to cell phones and texting, they are only a moment away from each other. In early April Savannah was home to celebrate Easter with her parents.

“I feel like I’m like all the moms,” she said. “We love our kids to death and there’s nothing that brings us more joy in this world and we work hard for them and we protect them and we try to teach them and we try to let them grow. We try to be there for them during their ups and downs. I just feel like that’s kind of collectively what we moms do.” ■

Kimberly Hunt watched with fascination when her father spread out the contents of his briefcase as he tried to make sense out of the investigative pieces of a pending case. As an investigator with the California Highway Patrol, Harry Hunt often brought his work home, a behind-the-scenes pursuit of justice first instilled in him by his own namesake and father, a constable with the Ojai Police Department who was killed in the line of duty when Harry was just 9.

Raised with a legacy of lawmen, Kimberly Hunt decided at age 15 to contribute to the cause, but from a different angle: informing the public about public safety needs.

“We’re not first responders by any stretch, but getting out information is helpful,” she said. “You become an appendage of first responders.”

Just like law enforcement, journalists typically see life from both ends of the spectrum, meaning that anchors have to master the art of the even keel, despite the type of news being delivered.

“With the heinous stories we have

to cover—and they are frightening and they are threatening—there is always a flip side. Every time you see the evil in man there is a good side.”

Hunt prepared herself for journalism at San Francisco State University. Before graduating she interned at CNN’s San Francisco bureau and filled her weekends with radio broadcasting.

After earning her degree Hunt was hired by ABC News to serve as a researcher for World News Tonight anchor Peter Jennings, providing background information for the network’s coverage of the 1984 Democratic National Convention. After the convention closed Hunt accepted a position as an associate producer for ABC’s Monday Night Football.

Hunt landed her first television news job as a weekday anchor for the CBS affiliate in Monterey, California. A year and a half later she was promoted to evening anchor. In 1987 she moved to San Diego to take the evening co-anchor job with KGTV Channel 10. Except for a five-year stint at KUSI, Hunt has remained a primary anchor for the local ABC affiliate.



PHOTO BY SARAH TOLSON PHOTOGRAPHY

Kimberly Hunt married former San Diego Chargers linebacker Billy Ray Smith in 1990. In June they will celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary.

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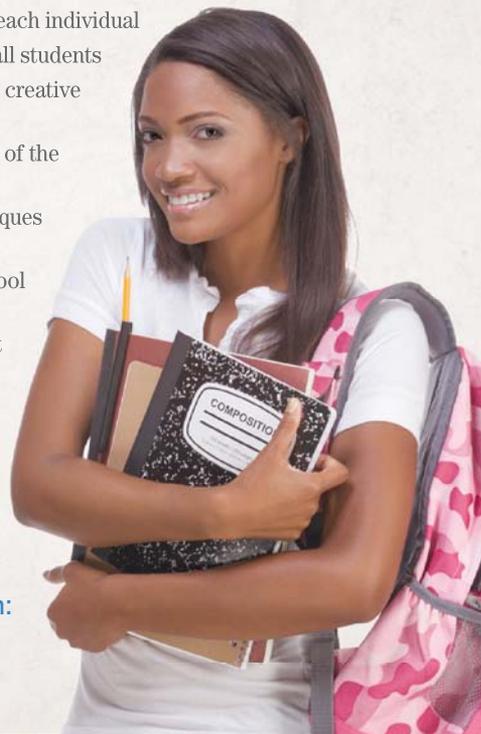
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During her career, Hunt has covered catastrophic news, including the 2001 terrorist attacks.

“That’s something that none of us (journalists) will ever put in a place of being over,” she said.

Hunt has also anchored coverage of high-profile murder cases, untimely deaths of community icons, political scandals and a host of natural disasters, including the 2003 and 2007 firestorms. Like many in San Diego, Hunt’s family was evacuated during the fires and with 24/7 news coverage, she found herself separated from her daughter, Savannah, for days.

“It hits you at your core when those around you are affected like that.” Hunt said. “It’s horrific and it’s sad, the people affected by it and the people whose lives are changed, and all those outcomes that we report from those things, but then simultaneously there is always the good in man that risks their own life to try to help that person standing next to them.”

The heart of San Diego

Although the stories she covers change, Hunt said San Diego’s response to them has remained consistent: a community known to rally around those who are suffering or in need.

“You just see that rushing in almost simultaneously as the unthinkable is playing out,” she said. “The goodness is rushing in.”

In those moments of evil, Hunt said she digs deep to provide an anchor when people need it most. It’s only later, off the air, that she will process the news on her own.

“I’m modeling what my dad did in law enforcement,” she said. “At the time of the tragedy and you have a job to do, you have a job to do. All of the hurt and the pain and the emotion, as much as you can—I’m not saying it didn’t eke out a bit—but, for the most part, in order to do

your story as a professional, you have to have a place to put it so you can do your job, because your job is helping people.

“People deserve it. They’ve turned on the television for some hope or for some guidance. They deserve for me to tell them in a professional manner and not make things worse for them.”

Balance at home

As a media mom, Hunt admits that she has struggled throughout her career in creating the proper balance in determining just how much of what she knows and has experienced as a newswoman is appropriate to share with her daughter. That instinct has not waned even though Savannah, now 23, is living and working in New York City.

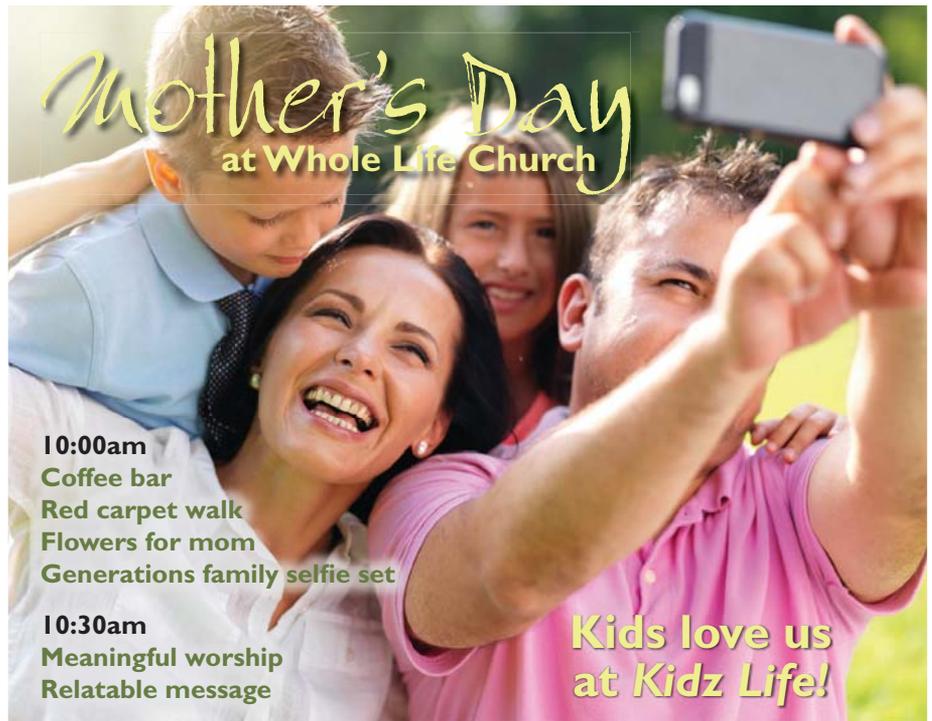
“I’m thinking of everything. I am so far ahead of her about what could happen, who to be with, who not to be with,” she said. “I realize that I need to tell her enough, but then just trust her that she is making the best decisions that she can and then you just have to kind of have a little more peace about it. You can constantly—because of what you do and what you know is possible—drive yourself a little nutty.”

Nutty or not, Hunt said her career has never been so rewarding, especially in an era where social media has changed the workload beyond regularly scheduled newcasts.

“It’s not, ‘Wait until 5 o’clock and I’ll tell you,’” she said. “It can be something where you have to find little pockets of time and give yourself a break.

“I love my work. I am doing what I’m passionate about. I feel fortunate to be doing it here and being a part of the community for so long.” ■

Follow Kimberly Hunt on Twitter at twitter.com/10NewsHunt or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/KimberlyHunt10News.



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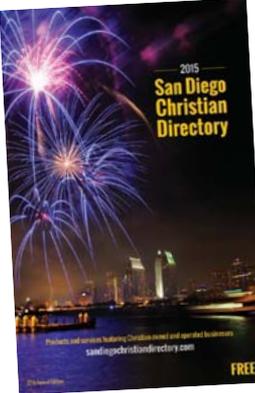
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Fostering a new life

Former troubled teen leverages his past for good

by LORI ARNOLD

By the time most of his peers were ready to exert some independence with their own driver's licenses, Shane Harris had bounced around between eight foster homes, even living on the streets.

"It was not for an extended period of time, but it was long enough," said Harris, now 23. "At the time I felt like I was

the scum of the earth, like nobody would care, really."

Predictably, he turned to drugs and gangs.

"I was looking for family elsewhere and so I figured I could find it in the street life," he said. "For me it was just survival."

His search for a substitute family began at age 8 after his father died of cancer. His mother, addicted to drugs, was ruled unfit so social services made Harris a ward of the court.

"It was very challenging," he said. "You are never stable. You are always being taken from one place to another place. ... There was abuse and neglect and all of that. "You know, you just do it. You do what you have to do. That's what my attitude became."

Although he was assigned social workers and interacted with teachers, Harris realized, "there was never really a person that was going to be there consistently."

At age 16, about the time police found his mother dead of a drug overdose, Harris walked into New Creation Church, where his then-foster mother attended.

After returning the second week, Harris heeded the congregational call to come to the altar.

"I was a little scared, but I really felt Christ calling me to Him," he said. "From that moment on I decided to accept Christ into my life. I really felt that He had a path for me that would turn it all around, and He did."

There were still early struggles in his



Shane Harris, who grew up in the foster care system, is pursuing a bachelor's degree in sociology, with a minor in biblical studies. The coursework, which he plans to expand to eventually include master and doctorate degrees, will enable him to do community-based social justice issues while also serving as a pastor.



Shane Harris speaks at the Just In Time for Foster Youth's annual gala, "Walk the Talk," which was held March 14 at the Prado in Balboa Park.

faith walk, especially in light of his mother's death.

"That, along with the experience of receiving Christ, was the wake-up call," he said. "There were two ways it could have (gone) because I was actually struggling with suicide as well, because I didn't feel that it was necessary for me to be here."

Making connections

Harris immersed himself in Scripture, ultimately exchanging the death and darkness for life and light.

"It was through my conviction in Christ that I found new vision, new insight, new family," he said. "I was able to eventually drop that life out there and to really walk into this new family within the church."

As Harris approached 18, when he would officially be dropped from the foster system, Harris was referred to New Alternatives Foster Family Agency, which enrolled him in a housing program and with Just in Time Foster Youth, which helped fund his deposit and secured basic furnishings for his apartment. Those and other resources helped transition him from an isolated minor into a thriving adult who now serves as the outreach director for Just in Time.

"I would still be building a foundation to go ahead and work from," he said. "Along with my faith, to have this backing, also meant that I had some resources that I was able to utilize."

Don Wells, executive director of Just in Time, said Harris is motivated by empathy.

"Because he endured so much loss in his life, I believe Shane has been searching for purpose and meaning to make sense of his pain," Wells said. "Once he discovered a connection to faith, it gave Shane a place to channel his energies and a perspective that resonated in a core place. The healing he found for himself became a powerful desire to give healing to others."

A pastor emerges

Under the guidance of his two spiritual mentors, Dr. Andre Evans and Dr. John Ringgold, senior pastor of Bethel Baptist Church, Harris purposed those traits into a two-year degree in biblical studies from Southern California Seminary. He is working on his bachelor's degree in sociology and a minor in biblical studies from Azusa Pacific University and plans to follow the same course of study for his master's.

After an intense eight-month training program under Evans and Ringgold, Harris and three others planted the non-denominational City of Destiny Church about a year ago. Today the congregation draws 50 people who are committed to community outreach. For Thanksgiving, the church hosted 150 homeless people for a downtown lunch, while their Sponsor Christmas campaign assisted needy families.

"We were able to bless 10 families with a Christmas tree, some presents and just bringing joy into their home," said Harris.

Mentoring others

Through his own journey, Harris said he's discovered the significant drawbacks to isolation.

"I think the biggest lesson has been how connections and

May is National Foster Month

National Foster Month was first observed in 1988, by then-President Ronald Reagan. The month-long observance is designed to raise awareness of the foster care system, foster parents and the children they serve. According to the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System, more than 402,378 children were in the foster system in the United States as of September 2013, the most recent statistics available.

Other statistics from that report:

- Those age 10 or younger: 62 percent
- Median age: 8.2
- Male: 52 percent
- Female: 48 percent
- Number waiting to be adopted: 101,840
- Those in foster care with a relative: 28 percent
- Those in foster care with a non-relative: 47 percent
- Those in an institution: 8 percent
- Those in a group home: 6 percent
- Those slated for reunification: 53 percent
- Those slated for adoption: 24 percent

Source: www.acf.hhs.gov

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relationships impact your journey and how you cannot do things by yourself," he said. "If you have the right connections and relationships, then you can accomplish what most people say you must wait until later to accomplish."

Moving forward, Harris said he plans to redeem his story by inspiring others.

"When I was younger, because of the trauma, I was a very angry, bitter, kid," he said. "Teachers would even say, 'You know, there's no way that this kid is going to make it anywhere.' So, at the time, I really felt like I was confirming—and affirming—other people's predictions of failure. It was God turning that around in my life for me."

He is convinced that with God, and other resources such as Just in Time, other teens can also leverage their past for good.

"To me, it's being able to offer life to others going through that process," Harris said. "It was offered to me and now life is extremely important, mostly so I can go ahead and give back and be able to put others in position to achieve and complete goals, as well as overturn predictions." ■

SAN DIEGO FOSTER CARE AGENCIES

- Angels Foster Family Network
www.angelsfoster.org
- Just in Time for Foster Youth
www.jitfosteryouth.org
- Koinonia Family Services
www.kfh.org
- New Alternatives Inc.
www.newalternatives.org
- Promises 2 Kids
www.promises2kids.org
- Thessalonika Family Services
www.4kidsfirst.org
- Trinity Youth Services
www.trinityys.org
- Voices for Children
www.speakupnow.org
- Walden Family Services
www.waldenfamily.org

The costly work of peacemaking

The world is swirling with issues.

Picking up my phone and opening my news app each morning is being met with more and more dread each day.

When something hits the news, it is fascinating to watch people jump onto social media and begin “yelling” out their answers for how to heal our broken systems.

Of course, there are almost always at least two completely different opinions for how these problems should be fixed, which typically leads to people drawing lines in the sand, picking their stance and not budging. Relationships often fracture and a polarized world gets more polarized, rendering it immobilized for the work of reconciliation.

Whether it’s on our Facebook page, Twitter feed or around our table, I assume most of us can think of an interaction where this unhelpful and potentially destructive reality played out.

So, does this “yelling” of our opinions actually help heal the broken systems and the people whom those systems are breaking?

I’m all about using our voices to call out injustice. By offering a critique of power and a hope for those on the underside of it, the ancient prophets did this beautifully throughout history.

But, in a globalized, virtually interconnected world, I’m concerned we have too many self-appointed prophets (which, by definition is NOT a prophet), and not near enough practitioners. Far more constructive than a verbal or written argument is actually doing something.

I don’t think the world needs more armchair advocates...especially when our arguing or defending leads to the fracture of real life relationships. I’m

not saying we all need to passively waltz around the world’s issues. No, I’m proposing we actively engage them in two ways:

1. Healthy, constructive discourse that doesn’t require that we all agree to remain in relationship.

2. We spend less time talking, and use our best energy to actually do something.



What this world needs are people who are willing to roll up their sleeves and get dirty. And not for a week or a month or a year, but for the long haul.

The world needs people embedded in the center of these conflicts equipped with the practices that make for peace. These people don’t have time to debate solutions on social media because they are already hard at work making the solutions a reality. They don’t have to transplant themselves to the center of the issue, because they are already embedded in it. They don’t have to seek the approval of their constituency, because it’s not about their reputation, it’s about the flourishing of those they have been called to serve.

- They are sharing meals with the forgotten in their neighborhood.

- They are building lasting, mutually beneficial relationships with those of other faiths who we are often taught to

fear.

- They are sitting at the hospital bedside of the family who is suffering loss at the hands of unjust people and systems.

- They are in the churches, schools and homes of our black and brown communities to listen, learn and support.

- They are in detention centers and deportation shelters to pray with and look in the eyes of those in our society’s shadows.

- They are encouraging and walking with our faith and political leaders as they navigate the potentially compromising positions of power.

It’s a way of life that is costly. It is not glamorous. And it often comes without our desired outcomes being met in the short term and, potentially, not even in the long term.

This is the work of a trained, strategic and intentional community of Jesus followers who are prepared to move to the center of our society’s conflicts with the weapons to transform rather than destroy. It’s the gritty, subversive and costly work of peacemaking.

More than ever, I believe the work of peacemaking is discipleship. It’s the long, hard road of the cross that will lead to the flourishing of others and allow our deepest calling to meet the world’s deepest needs.

May it be so.



Jon Huckins is the co-founding director of The Global Immersion Project, Missional Leadership Coach with Thresholds, family man, speaker and author of “Thin Places” and

“Teaching Through the Art of Storytelling.” Follow his blog at www.jonhuckins.net.

Gridiron grit



PHOTO COURTESY OF REUTERS/ADREES LATIF

Former Buffalo Bills quarterback Jim Kelly is all smiles after being named to the 2002 Class of Enshrinees by the Pro Football Hall of Fame on Feb. 2, 2002, in New Orleans.

Football great Jim Kelly's faith sustains a family tested by trials

by KIM LAWTON
Religion News Service

Pro Football Hall of Fame quarterback Jim Kelly is considered one of the NFL's best quarterbacks. He led the Buffalo Bills to a record four consecutive Super Bowls in the 1990s — and they famously lost all four. Nonetheless, he earned a reputation for a gridiron grit that became known as “Kelly tough.”

But for Jim and his wife, Jill, that Kelly toughness was tested most profoundly by what followed off the field: a terminally ill son, problems in their marriage and Jim's struggle with cancer.

“You can only be tough so much. And I've just been very blessed that I have an open heart now,” Kelly told the PBS program “Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly.”

“Those things that we go through that cause us to be tested, or to doubt, or to fear,” his wife added, “those things make us stronger in our faith.”

The thing that sustains them, they

say, was and is their evangelical faith.

The Kellys met and married at the height of Jim's football career and enjoyed the celebrity that came with it. They had a daughter, Erin, and then in 1997, just a few weeks after Jim retired from the Bills, their son, Hunter, was born. Daughter Camryn came along in 1999.

When Hunter was just 4 months old, he was found to have a genetic disease called Krabbe Leukodystrophy, which affects the nervous system. The Kellys were told he likely wouldn't survive to his second birthday.

Both Jim and Jill had been raised Catholic, but neither was very religious. Jill said her devastation over the diagnosis sent her on a desperate spiritual search that ultimately led her to become a born-again Christian.

“It was Hunter's suffering that caused

me to seek after God,” she said. “Everything changed then.”

Jim Kelly said that at the time, he was angry with God and told his wife not to push her newfound beliefs on him. “I didn't come to faith until after Hunter passed away,” he said.

Neither of their daughters has Krabbe. The Kellys were determined to help Hunter live the best life possible. They launched the Hunter's Hope Foundation to promote awareness and research about the rare disease.

In 2004, the Kellys and the foundation helped found the Hunter James Kelly Research Institute at the University at Buffalo. Through their efforts, more and more newborns are now screened for Krabbe so they can be given an umbilical cord blood transplant in the narrow window of time when progression of the disease can still be slowed.



© WICKEDGOOD | DREAMSTIME.COM - JIM KELLY BUFFALO BILLS PHOTO

Quarterback Jim Kelly led the Buffalo Bills to a record four consecutive Super Bowls in the 1990s.

“The bottom line is, you want to make a difference,” Jim Kelly said.

Beating all medical expectations, Hunter lived until 2005, when he was 8 and a half, although he was never able to walk or talk.

“God used him in so many ways,” said Jill Kelly. “We learned patience and love, unconditional love, selflessness, all of the things that you don’t learn in books, and that neither of us had learned up to that point in our lives as an adult.”

Jim Kelly calls Hunter a role model: “Talk about people that you admire, I admired his toughness in what he went through, and how he changed my life.”

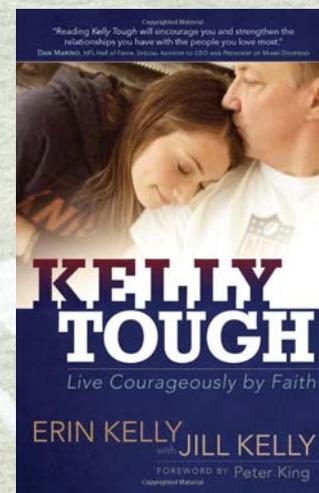
The Kellys have been open about their marital problems. They don’t speak about it in detail, but in Jill’s 2010 book “Without a Word,” they describe how after Hunter’s death, Jim confessed he

had been unfaithful. He sought pastoral counseling and decided to embrace his wife’s newfound faith for himself.

“I wanted to be able, for my two daughters, to walk in that front door and when they do, to look at their daddy with respect. I was losing all that,” Jim Kelly said during a recent appearance at Liberty University. “I knew that if I didn’t change my life, I was going to lose everything that I worked so hard for.”

The Kellys still live in western New York, where they attend The Chapel, a large nondenominational church. They say their faith has been crucial in dealing with their latest battle. In June 2013, Jim was found to have cancer of the jaw. After surgery, he was proclaimed cancer-free. Last year, more cancer was discovered in his nasal cavity, and more aggressive treatments followed.

From the perspective of Jim Kelly’s wife, Jill, and oldest daughter, Erin, “Kelly Tough” is a deeply personal account of the love a family can have for each other during the darkest times.



At first, Jim didn’t want to go public about their latest ordeal. But he said his wife convinced him the family needed as many prayers as possible. Jim’s former teammates and the western New York community have rallied around them. Although Jim still has some lingering health issues, a recent MRI declared him again cancer-free.

“I live every day to its fullest,” he said. Jill and their eldest daughter, Erin, have written a forthcoming book about the family’s experiences. Called “Kelly Tough,” the book was scheduled for release May 1.

“It’s not, ‘Oh, look at the Kellys.’ It’s ‘Look what God has done,’” said Jill Kelly. “Even though it’s our story, it’s really about the greater story.” ■

Kim Lawton is the managing editor of PBS’ Religion & Ethics Newsweekly.

‘Where Hope Grows’ shatters Down syndrome stereotypes

by MICHAEL FOUST

One of my best friends of all time has what the world would call a “disability.” He has Down syndrome, and if statistics are correct, then 90 percent of babies in the womb diagnosed with his condition never make it to full term. They’re aborted.

That’s tragic, yes, but also incredibly sad.

If only those moms had met my friend, perhaps they would have made a different decision. He is 28 and healthy, and while he may be slower than you or me in a few areas, he surpasses all of us

with a bigger heart, a warmer personality and an incredible smile. He has lots of interests: texting friends (yes, he can read and write), music (he knows nearly every Christian song on YouTube), playing Wii (he can beat me in most any game), and swimming (he whips me in that, too).

Meeting him changed my perspective on life—and I’m certain I’m not the only one who can say that.

I thought about my friend when I watched a screener for the upcoming movie, “Where Hope Grows” (Godspeed Pictures), which hits theaters May 15 and tells the heartwarming story of a man with Down syndrome whose positive outlook on life changes everyone around him, including a former professional baseball player who is down and out after being sent to early retirement.

It’s an inspiring movie that could transform our society’s views of people with Down syndrome. That’s because the star of the movie—David DeSanctis—isn’t simply an actor who was hired to *pretend* he has Down syndrome. DeSanctis *has* Down syndrome, and he is shattering every stereotype that exists about people born with his “disability.”

DeSanctis plays “Produce,” an enthusiastic grocery clerk who has two personal goals at his job: encourage everyone he meets, and win employee of the month. Sadly, though, he gets passed over each month for the honor ... but he still maintains a solid attitude.

I laughed and cried while watching the movie and walked away uplifted—much like I do each time I talk to my friend.

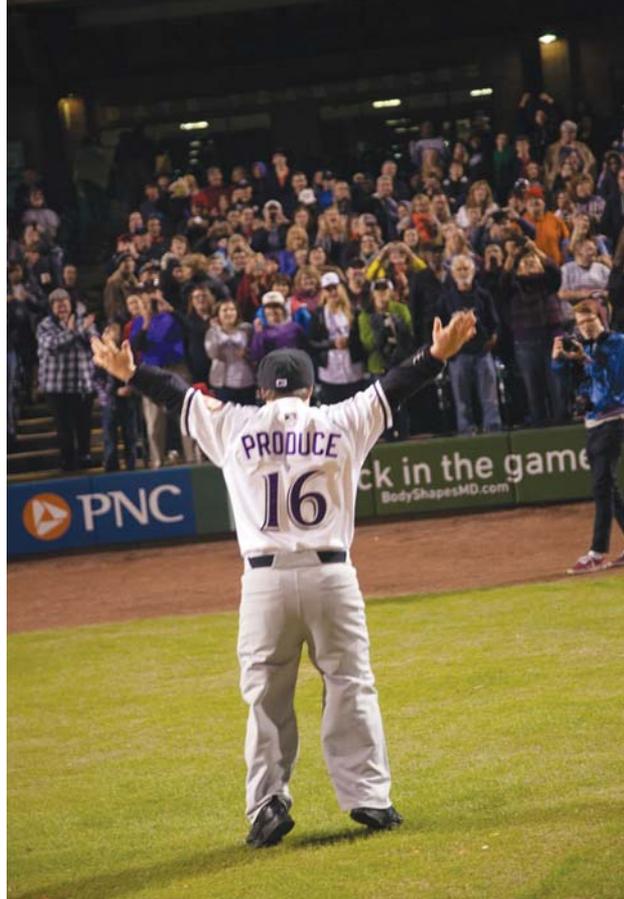


PHOTO BY TOM LECOFF

Produce (David DeSanctis), a young man with Down Syndrome, shares a moment with the crowd in a scene from “Where Hope Grows.”

The crew chose DeSanctis for the role not knowing if he could read the lines, but he proceeded not only to read them but also to quickly memorize all 300 of them. And he delivered them as well as any actor I’ve seen on the screen. He’s truly talented.

DeSanctis told Refreshed that he “was extremely excited and pumped” when he got the role and that by the end of the film shoot, he and the other cast and crew members were “like a family.”

“It was tiring,” he said during a phone interview, referencing the 12-hour work days. “One thing I had to learn was patience.”

But he doesn’t regret it. In fact, he wants to act again in other movies. DeSanctis said he wants the movie to change how people view those with Down syndrome.

“I want them to look at my abilities instead of my disabilities.”

“Where Hope Grows” is rated PG-13 for thematic issues involving drinking and teen sexuality, and for brief language and an accident scene. I counted two curse words, neither involving God’s name. The movie contains a pivotal scene involving a sexual assault at a public venue, although nothing explicit is seen.

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Rapping for a virtuous woman

Dedicated Music Group has released the EP album “P31” by rapper Murk. The project is based on the themes found in Proverbs 21 and covers such topics as self-esteem, forgiveness, grace, inner and outer beauty, and finding one’s worth in Jesus alone.

The P31 title track inspired the entire project and its bold lyrics refreshingly share the standards by which a virtuous woman of God should live.

“It teaches women to respect themselves while also teaching men to respect women and their values,” a news release said. “It is the ultimate celebration of receiving salvation and a divine spiritual makeover from Christ.”

Cash releases duet album

Gospel music legend Joanne Cash, sister of country music icon Johnny Cash, released her 30th album, *Breaking Down the Barriers*, on April 1.

The project features Cash in 14 Gospel-driven duets, including songs Rosanne Cash, Tommy Cash, Larry Gatlin, T. Graham Brown, The Fox Brothers, Razy Bailey, George Hamilton IV and Riders in the Sky’s Ranger Doug and Christian rockers Kevin Max (dc-Talk, Audio Adrenaline), Dan Haseltine (Jars of Clay), Rick Florian (Whiteheart) and John Schlitt (Petra).

A featured song is the Tommy Cash duet, “My Lord Has Gone,” which their famous brother Johnny Cash wrote before his death.

“These sessions, often done in Joanne’s home, pair Joanne with artists from all walks of life and genres,” says producer Chad Randall Crow. “Each of these songs was hand-picked for this inspirational



work. Like her brother’s American Recordings sessions, these performances will stand the test of time.”

The album is produced on the indie label Proverbial Excellence and is distributed by Elevate Entertainment and Syntax Distribution.

Tree63 kickstarts new album

South African rock band Tree63, fresh off of a seven-year hiatus, has raised more than \$20,000 through a Kickstarter campaign in advance of the band’s seventh full-length album. The band plans to release *Land* sometime this summer. Fans who participated in the online fundraiser were given a free download of “The Storm,” the group’s first single

“Many of the new songs on *Land* are about being on a long and treacherous journey and finally seeing our rescue in the distance,” said lead vocalist/guitarist John Ellis. “There is no more treacherous a journey than one at sea, and the ocean is often a really effective metaphor for

our spiritual journeys. ‘Land’ is the single most hoped for event for a sailor on a stormy sea, and likewise on our journey with God we long for some sense of certainty that God is all we imagine and hope for. Of course, we never quite make it this side of eternity, but we can have courage in the fact that land is in sight!”

The group, which last worked together in 2009, headed back into the studio after a series of reunion events last year in their native country. In 2005 they won “Worship Song of the Year” award at the 36th GMA Dove Awards for their rendition of Matt Redman’s song “Blessed Be Your Name.”

Online music university

Music industry veteran Michael Smith—whose client list includes Restless Heart, Jaci Velasquez, Salvador, Chonda Pierce, Yancy, Denver & the Mile High Orchestra, Go Fish and comedian Brad Stine, has launched his own online university.

The Michael Smith & Associates University is billed as a one-of-a-kind online training program for those seeking a full-time career in the music industry.

Smith designed the school for those seeking a career as an artist manager, as well as for artists and musicians who want a better understanding of the industry and proven tools to move themselves forward. His first 10-week course launched in early April.



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PHOTO BY JOSH BERNARD

Switchfoot's annual Bro-Am charity surf contest draws large crowds to Moonlight Beach in Encinitas.

Switchfoot Bro-Am returns

ENCINITAS — Switchfoot will host its 11th annual Bro-Am charity surf contest on July 11, with a pre-contest kick-off Auction Night Soiree, set for July 8.

The Soiree will include silent and live auctions, opportunity drawings, signature tastes from leading local restaurants and a live performance by Grammy-award winning Switchfoot. The location for the evening event will be announced at a later event.

The main course, the free Bro-Am surf contest, will be held July 11 at Moonlight Beach. In addition to the adult surfing competition, the Bro-Am will offer live music, a Nerf surf jousting exposition and the 4th annual Rob Machado Bro Junior, for competitors 16 and under.

The surf contest runs from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with live music scheduled from noon to 5 p.m.

Both events benefits local at-risk youth and humanitarian causes through the Switchfoot Bro-Am Foundation, which the rock band launched last year as a way to direct their funding to local charities. Since its 2005 inception the Bro-Am has raised more than \$1.15 million for San Diego-based children's charities that serve at-risk, homeless and street kids.

Learn more at www.switchfoot.com/bro-am.

Creation museum fundraiser

SANTEE — The Creation & Earth Museum will hold "A Taste of Creation" fundraiser on Saturday, May 30. The event will feature appetizer and dessert stations and a silent auction to benefit the ministry of the museum.

Tickets are \$40 for individuals and \$65 per couple.

Tickets may be purchased at www.creationsd.org.

On June 6, the museum's monthly Creation Club workshop will focus on the topic of "Creepy Things."

To register for workshops or classes call (619) 599-1104.

The museum is located at 10946 N. Woodside Ave.

Future Conference to feature 50+ speakers

LA MESA — Skyline Church will host a four-day conference, June 14 to 17, with more than 50 speakers speaking on a theme of "What You Thought Was Coming... Is Here Now."

Topics to be addressed include the culture, poverty, racism, economics, persecuted Christians, reaching millennials, Israel and radical Islam, religious liberty, terrorism, prison reform, civil government, fasting & prayer, civil disobedience, media, entertainment, emergency preparedness, radical evangelism, marriage, pornography, and human trafficking.

Notable speakers include Bishop Harry Jackson, Star Parker, former Congressman Bob McEwen, Mat Staver, Ted Baehr, Tony Perkins, former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, and Lou Engle.

The conference will be led by Pastor Jim and Rosemary Garlow.

Although there is no admission fee, pre-registration is requested at www.futureconference2015.com.

Annual Spring Fling returns

SAN DIEGO — The women's ministry department at First United Methodist Church of San Diego will present its 20th Annual Spring Fling for Women at 11 a.m. May 9.

The event will feature internationally known inspirational speaker Jane Rubietta, who will present her timely tips on how to "Worry Less and Live More!" Her presentation is described as providing both laughs and tears.

"As she shares her own zany battles

with worry, Jane invites you to leave behind your heavy heart and experience joy and rest in the pleasure of a God who delights in you—and has all your tomorrows under control," the event website said.

The musical guest will be Marla Reid and her Spirit-filled presentation of Gospel music.

A highlight of the event is a generous raffle featuring baskets loaded with goodies.

The event concludes with a luncheon buffet.

Then, don't worry—be happy! A luscious luncheon buffet awaits you in Linder Hall.

Tickets are \$25.

The church is located at 2111 Camino del Rio South.

Learn more at www.fumcsd.org/springfling or by calling (619) 297-4366.

Worship gathering

SAN DIEGO — "Just Worship," a monthly musical gathering, will be held at 5 p.m. May 16 at the Martin Luther King Recreation Center.

Rachel Reid, of Power of Music Ministries, will be the featured musician.

The gatherings are held the third Saturday of every month.

The center is located at 6401 Skyline Drive.

Learn more at www.foundation61.com.

EVENTS ONLINE

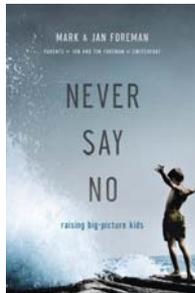
For more Community News and an online Calendar of Events for San Diego County, please visit www.refreshedsandiego.com.

Switchfoot parents pen book

SAN DIEGO — Mark and Jan Foreman, parents of Switchfoot band brothers Jon and Tim Foreman, will soon release the book “Never Say No: Raising Big Picture Kids.”

Published by David C Cook, the book offers an inside look into the early childhood of the two rockers.

“Our purpose as parents is identical to our child’s: to live creatively beyond ourselves, bringing the love, beauty and nature of God to this world,” the couple said in a news release. “As parents encourage kids to explore God’s massive creative plan, they raise the ceiling on how their children can positively impact this world. Let the adventure begin.”



“In Never Say No,” the Foremans explore practical parenting concerns, such as how to encourage holistic learning while cultivating specific gifts, how to nurture creativity in a media-saturated culture, how to balance structure with individual choice and why mistakes are always allowed.

The book also explores personal, real-life experience, including Jon’s near drowning at age 2.

“In my life, my parents have been equally counselors, companions, navigators, co-conspirators and friends,” Jon’s brother, Tim, said. “They’ve been a source of wisdom not only for me, but also for our entire extended community. I’m excited that the simple parenting truths they’ve learned can reach even further through this book.”

Mark, the author of “Wholly Jesus,” is lead pastor of the 4,000-member North Coast Calvary Chapel in Carlsbad. Jan

is a teacher and artist who also facilitates partnerships with underprivileged women and children both here and abroad.

Learn more www.davidccook.com.

Organizing women

SAN DIEGO — “Launch into Summer Success!” is the theme for the May luncheon meeting of Professional Women’s Fellowship. The event will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. May 28 at the Handlery Hotel and will feature author Marcia Ramsland.

Ramsland’s topic is “5 Ways to Get Organized and Have an Easy, Breezy Summer!”

The luncheon is \$25 for members, \$35 for non-members. At-the-door tickets are available for \$40. Online registration is available.

Learn more at www.pwfsd.org.

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MARK LARSON

Rise of the robots

There are so many good things to do in life, along with a never-ending stream of challenges. If, however, technology is going to eventually do everything for us, why even bother getting out of bed in the morning?

That sounds a bit extreme, but consider some of the latest news about the “rise of the robots.” In what seems to be an increasing number of warnings, experts tell us how it won’t be long before most jobs will be performed by machines.

Some of the headlines I’ve seen recently include “The Robots and Your Job” and “The Future Has Lots of Jobs, Few Jobs for Humans.” Scary stuff, but sometimes muted with an occasional blurb about how robots are not really threatening *your* job.

So what is reality?

No doubt rapid advances in technology have tremendously changed our lives, most often for the better. Think about iPhones, Droids, iPads, all kind of things that didn’t exist a few years ago. We’re addicted to texts and social media, too.

Still there are a bunch of jobs that have already gone the way of the dinosaur, replaced by a variety of new gadgets. ATMs come to mind; they’ve replaced many bank tellers. Positions for typists, travel agents, factory workers and more have also disappeared.

Companies with assembly lines long ago embraced automation of any kind to cut costs, with machines never demanding a raise, sick leave or a fat pension.

The process never

stops. New advances in technology lead to all sorts of ideas, some practical and others downright far-fetched.

WIRED magazine recently had a story about a multi-tasking robot (aka “bot”) that can make and flip a burger, and a gourmet one at that, in 10 seconds. It could replace an entire fast food crew.

They also noted that researchers at a major university predicted close to half of American jobs could be automated over the next 20 years. Yikes.

And get a load of this headline: “Robots Will Treat Humans Like Labradors.” Swell. A machine will take me for an afternoon walk. And I will have to fetch the iPad (instead of an old-fashioned newspaper) for my mechanical master.

Much of the march to an all-tech life is our fault. As consumers we demand more of everything, wider choices and more instant gratification. In the midst of our busy daily world we often don’t notice that we now interact with screens and keyboards more than other humans. In other words, we’re getting used to this sort of thing as it sneaks up on us.

There is some good news, though.

The *Washington Post* featured a story about “droid dread” dating back generations. In fact, fear of high-tech advances taking over may go back hundreds of

years. Much of what is feared (or hoped for) never happens. Or it takes on less threatening forms.

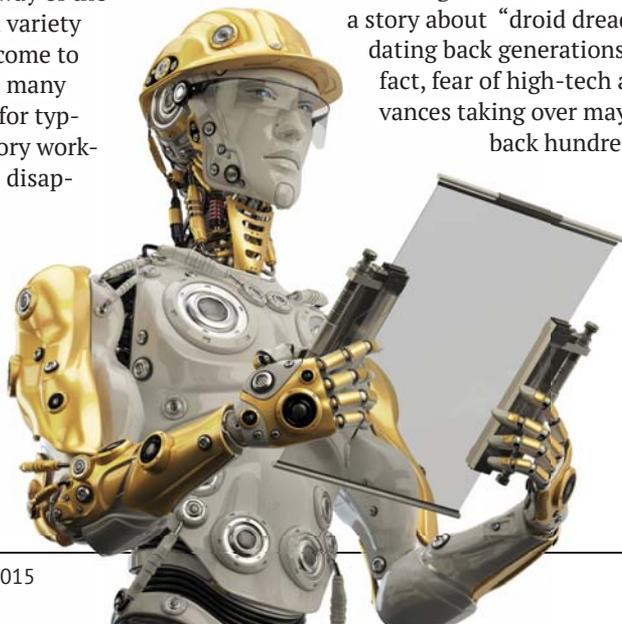
Every generation has aspirations and dreams, and the road ahead is always filled with bumps and surprises and wonders. And when technology replaces something outdated, new opportunities arise for those who want to seize the day. Sure, it takes work—and maybe new training—but it’s possible to find new success.

And that’s really the point. We can make the choice each day to let news and future predictions and worries overwhelm us, sometimes making us feel fatalistic. Or we can make the effort to take a fresh look at what’s around us, enjoying life and our blessings.

I was thinking about this as I’m writing this column. Outside my window is a little hummingbird nest. A couple of weeks ago there were tiny eggs in there. Today, it’s two fast-growing birds developing beautifully colored feathers, about ready to take off and display God’s amazing ability to create things beyond compare.

That helps me remember that there’s a bigger picture here: Life is what we choose to make it, and God is still in charge. Whatever happens in the future (or fear of what might be) should not steal the joy in today.

So why bother rolling out of the sack in the morning, taking on the day? *Because we can.*



Larson is a longtime Southern California radio/television personality. His voice is heard on KPRZ 1210AM and his weekday talkshow airs 6 to 9 a.m.

on AM 1170 “The Answer.” He’s also a news analyst on KUSI TV. Learn more at marklarson.com.

“God, thank you for the letter B, the letter D, and the number 3.”

3 simple ways to teach kids to pray

Children were a focus of Jesus’ ministry. He used the loaves and fish from a boy to feed the 5,000. He healed at least one sick child and raised another one from the dead. He told his followers to have the humility of a child. He even took children into his arms and blessed them when his disciples wanted to send them away.

I think about Jesus’ view of children often when my three children pray some of the most heartfelt, inspiring and even entertaining prayers I’ll ever hear.

Consider, for example, my oldest son’s prayers when he was 3.

When I told him we should thank God for *everything* in life, he took it seriously, even providing God plenty of detail.

“God, thank you for my train table and those two plates on the wall that are next to the smoke alarm,” he said one night while lying in bed, describing two colorful ceramic birthday plates that, yes, were right next to the smoke detector in his bedroom.

On other nights, he felt a bit more academic.

“God, thank you for the letter B, the letter D, and the number 3.”

And on some nights, he was feeling a bit theological.

“God, thank you for crushing Satan’s power,” he said, quoting, verbatim, what he had read in one of his storybook Bibles.

But there are plenty of times in which my children refuse to pray—when we go around the table at suppertime, finding no volunteers. Just like me, and perhaps you, too, they can be stubborn when facing spiritual matters. If we want our children to pray, we ourselves

must first believe in the power of prayer (James 4:2-3)—and then set the example.

Here are three specific ways to do that:

Give thanks during “normal” times

Scripture tells us to pray “without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17), but



you’ve got to begin somewhere. An easy starting point for children is—you guessed it—mealtime. (And after that, bedtime.) The Bible paints a vivid picture of food being a marvelous blessing, and it still is, despite our tendency to take it for granted. When my youngest kids were 1 and wanted “seconds,” they’d fold their tiny hands together and look around, as if to say, “We’re ready to pray again—and eat more food.”

Give thanks during “abnormal” times

What’s that? That’s the time between breakfast, lunch, dinner and bedtime—the 23 hours of the day when we so often place God on the back burner. If we rarely discuss God other than when we “say grace,” then what do we expect our children to do as they grow? Turn the day into an out-loud conversation with God and involve your kids along

the way.

“God, thank you for letting us make that stop light.”

“God, thank you for that beautiful sunset.”

Once I prayed out loud, “God thank you for that yummy ice cream we ate today,” to which my then-4-year-old son replied, as sincerely as could be, “And, God, it’s

not really ice cream. It’s frozen yogurt.” He had mastered the conversation part.

Intercede for others

It’s one of the best ways to destroy selfishness in your child—and you, too. Pray for the sick, and do so immediately and out loud, if possible. Pray for those who are sad, for those who have lost loved ones, for those who are lost. And pray for your child’s friends and “enemies,” too.

A few months ago when I sensed my oldest son was growing too self-centered in his daily actions, we launched a nightly bedtime tradition: praying for a classmate of his. He initially rebuffed the idea but eventually began volunteering information—even including specific prayer requests.

One final idea: Make it a big deal when God answers prayers—that is, answers it in a way that we can physically observe. My toddler son prays each time he’s sick. And if he’s healed, you’ll know it. “God made me better!” he’ll shout. We probably all could learn from him.



Michael Foust is the father of three small children, a writer and editor, and blogs about parenting at www.michaelfoust.com.

JANICE THOMPSON

Practically speaking... Time for a new car?

Who can resist the tantalizing advertisements that portray a happy family, successful businessman or beautiful couple driving into the sunset in a shiny new car—all for “just dollars” a month? A new vehicle decision is often an intimidating process with a lot of unknowns. Since a vehicle purchase is rarely considered a “good investment,” let me give you several important questions to consider when making this decision.

Why this particular vehicle?

Are you trying to minimize your annual costs? Provide comfort or safety? Achieve a dream of owning a particular vehicle? Your motivation will typically drive the decision down a path that suits your desired outcome.

For example, if owning the car of your dreams is your motivation, it can be tempting to ignore financial prudence because you would do just about anything to drive that car off the lot.

For the record, I’m not suggesting owning a car of your dreams is right or wrong, rather that you consider your motivation and then evaluate if this is a wise decision. From a strictly financial perspective, my research points to the considerable financial advantages of buying a newer *used* car and driving it for eight to 10 years. This avoids some of the immediate depreciation that occurs when you drive a new car off the lot. I’ve also seen a new car purchase make sense, however, if negotiated carefully and you drive it for a long period of time.

When should a vehicle be replaced?

There are three basic economic reasons for replacing a car. *Time*, when it requires too much of your time to keep it repaired. *Repairs*, when it costs more to fix the vehicle than it is worth. *Safety*,

when you or your family’s well-being is at risk.

How should you pay for it?

I generally advise paying cash, when possible, both for the psychological and economic benefits. Cash typically causes people to make better decisions because it’s a reality check—you’re about to trade an important part of your life (hard-earned money) for something you’ve found worth trading it for. It forces you to answer this opportunity cost question: Is the vehicle *really* worth it? This is especially true for those prone to replace cars often. It’s much easier to borrow tens of thousands of dollars because you can make “easy monthly payments.” If you aren’t at least willing to pay cash, I’d pause and evaluate the value of the decision.

Do you need to finance?

I have seen some offers in this low-interest rate environment that may make me bend my *pay cash* guideline a bit. For example, when the interest rate charged by the lender is about half of what can be earned through short-term financial investments, borrowing *some* of the funds may be an acceptable alternative. My caution here is to negotiate carefully and work toward being able to eventually purchase your next vehicle with cash because interest rates may not be this favorable in the future. It can take many years to get to the point of being able to pay cash for a vehicle outright, but with discipline and perseverance it can be done. Make a commitment now to pay your vehicle off as quickly as possible and then continue to



save that monthly payment for your next replacement.

So what about leasing?

Let me give you the bottom line—leasing will rarely be more advanta-

geous than paying cash or financing under favorable terms. A lease is set up primarily for convenience to the consumer. Yes, it does save you some hassles and you avoid having to re-sell your vehicle, but you *will* pay for it. If that is acceptable and you are looking at leasing purely for the convenience, go into it knowing that convenience does have a cost.

When it is time to replace your car, it is often tempting to think in terms of a monthly payment rather than the long-term impact of the financial decision you are about to make. Acquiring a highly depreciating asset like a car is a decision that should be made cautiously, not impulsively. Use wisdom and care as you consider this important, but expensive, necessity in your life.

With all this caution, am I *driving* you crazy yet?



Janice Thompson is a certified financial planner and co-founder/CEO of One Degree Advisors, Inc. A frequent speaker on financial topics and mentor for financial

professionals, she also serves on the board of directors for Kingdom Advisors. Learn more at www.onedegreeadvisors.com.

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Turning the relational battleship

Turning a battleship 180 degrees while moving ahead at 30 knots is no easy endeavor. The “turning circle” is the shortest distance that a warship can turn around without keeling over.

Some battleships are very maneuverable with an 800-yard turning circle, while larger ships take well over 1,000 yards to do an about face. The size of the ship and the speed it is moving forward must be taken into consideration in making the turning circle calculation.

Momentum carries objects forward in the direction that they have been going, and it takes a lot of force to make them change, according to Isaac Newton’s First Law of Motion. For example, to stop a really large vessel, such as an oil supertanker, it takes 5.5 miles and the turning circle is over 2 miles.

Apparently this First Law of Motion applies to nonphysical things as well, such as trust levels in a relationship, reputations in a group or even our perspectives of reality.

For example, I once counseled a married couple who believed they knew each other very well, and yet how they saw each other was 180 degrees different from their own self-perceptions. Getting the couple back into alignment was like trying to turn a battleship—it took a lot of force.

According to the wife, her husband was a liar, and every word out of his mouth had to be questioned and closely examined. She knew that he

had cheated on a previous spouse, and she knew that he had lied to her before, so everything he now said had to be questioned with skepticism.

The husband adopted a passive role in the relationship. He did not want to face conflict, so he rarely revealed his true motivations or intentions to his wife. However, the more he hid, the more she felt alienated, and so the problems only escalated.

To make matters even worse, the husband was passive-aggressive. The repressed anger he felt for his wife’s controlling and condescending behaviors seeped out in subtle and manipulative ways that were designed to infuriate her further. Like most passive-aggressive individuals, he was not fully conscious of how his actions provoked her anger.

But, once they started therapy and were instructed to focus more upon their own feelings and behaviors, things

started to slowly change. He became more expressive of his anger in direct and appropriate ways. She began to feel like she was seeing the real person in her husband, rather than a factitious façade. There were many setbacks along the way, but like a turning battleship, trust slowly returned.

Changing one’s behavior to promote trust is hard work, but changing one’s mind about our partner is much more difficult.

Even if a husband stops lying to his wife, there may be months or even years before she changes her mind about his integrity.

“He will never change.”

“She’s always been this way.”

These kinds of statements make the battleship of our mind move full steam ahead rather than turn in the direction of trust. If you refuse to see the good, even if it is an incremental change in the right direction, then you are the one who is subverting positive change.

Emotional pain creates a powerful momentum that slows down the process of forgiveness and the rebuilding of trust. By talking about the pain, in a safe and controlled environment, we can shorten that turning circle significantly. Conversely, if hurts and resentments are ignored or denied, then changing your perception of your partner will be very difficult.

It is so much easier to keep the status quo in our most important relationships. Trusting again means being vulnerable again, and probably suffering again. But what are the alternatives? They aren’t nearly as pleasant as repairing the relationship.

Changing the reality of your relationship is partly up to you. *Change can and does happen, but you can only change yourself.* Try disputing the negative beliefs you have about your partner and see if your feelings turn the corner in a more positive direction.



Daniel Jenkins, Ph.D. is a licensed clinical psychologist at Lighthouse Psychological Services in Mission Valley. He is also a professor of psychology at Point Loma Nazarene University. Learn more at www.lighthousepsy.com.

MATT HAMMETT

A life worth imitating

Do you have a life worth imitating?

I was at a gathering of church leaders when I was first challenged with that question. Like many of you, I am driven. I tend to work to a point of exhaustion, neglect my need for rest, then crash. My default is Work. Exhaustion. Crash. Wash. Rinse. Repeat. We live in a culture that does its best to convince us that our true value and worth is based on what we accomplish instead of who we are.

This promotes a frenzied pace of life that ultimately leads to unhealthy stress and burnout. When I ask people what keeps them from the kind of life they want to live, the number one response is “I am too busy.” How are you doing? Busy. How is life? Busy. How’s the family? Busy. Work? Busy. We have become human “doings” rather than human “beings.”

I get it. I have a beautiful wife, four active kids and a ministry I love pouring myself into. How’s my life? Busy. As I considered that question and my own frenetic pace of life, I had to pause. I may be doing the right things—following God’s call to lead our ministry and caring for my family—but if I am exhausted and stressed, I am not modeling a healthy rhythm of life.

Maybe you have always wanted to start a business, spend more time with your kids, develop your relationship with God or invest more in friendships but feel that you simply don’t have the time. The reality is that God has given us all the time we need for the things that matter most. The key is learning to develop a healthy rhythm of work and rest.

God desires us to have a life worth imitating. He doesn’t want us to be driven but to be drawn by Him. I love Jesus’ invitation in Matthew 11:28-30 (MSG), “Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show

you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”

The model Jesus demonstrates to us is a rhythm of productive work and meaningful rest. Developing a healthy rhythm of life requires intentionality. There is an on-going tension in developing a healthy life rhythm and none of us will do this perfectly. Over the past six months I have begun observing a weekly Sabbath, a day each week where I seek to engage in meaningful rest and activities that are re-creational for me.

Another way of understanding rest is the word “re-creation.” What re-creates you? What breathes life into you when you are feeling weary? What refreshes your heart and mind when life feels hectic? For me, I might attend one of my son’s basketball games, go on a hike with my family, read, spend time in Scripture and prayer, take in a movie or take a nap.

Even though God commands us to Sabbath, at first I felt guilty setting aside a day of rest. It felt selfish. After all, there are many things I “could or should” be doing.

It’s easy for people to ignore this Top Ten from God, but God’s commands are for our benefit. He knows we need meaningful rest, regularly. He ranks it right up there with do not steal, do not kill, and do not commit adultery, yet we continue to put off his command to rest.

Our Creator, our Dad who loves us, understands what we need in order to live well. Practicing this weekly rhythm



has been life-giving for me and my family. Working from a place of rest instead of resting from work has been a game-changer.

If you are not physically rested, it is hard to be spiritually connected and attentive to God. Have you ever fallen asleep when you are trying to pray?

On the flip side, it is hard to physically rest when you are spiritually/emotionally anxious. It is difficult to have one without the other.

As you consider this, what is God’s invitation to you? What would it look like to receive the meaningful rest that God wants to give you?

First, identify any time-wasting or unfruitful activities in your schedule. Ask God for the wisdom and discipline to say “no” to these things. Then, choose one or two consistent, healthy rhythms you feel drawn to put into practice. Daily Scripture reading, exercise, consistent sleep, a weekly Sabbath, a family getaway?

Ask yourself what re-creates you and what is God inviting you to in order to live a life marked by productive work and meaningful rest, a life worth imitating.



Matt Hammett is the lead pastor of Flood Church, which is launching its third campus in San Diego this year. Flood developed out of Matt’s passion and vision to see an emerging generation hear and respond to God in a creative and diverse worship environment.

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JOANNE BROKAW

Home improvement, Netflix-style

One of the benefits of being a writer is that I can justify almost anything I do as research. Spend the afternoon at the used bookstore? Research. Visit the zoo on a Tuesday morning? Research.

Do some Netflix binging? Definitely research.

The current topic I'm researching is home improvement, in the form of shows like "Property Brothers," "Flip Flop" and, my favorite, "Love It or List It." Darling husband and I spend hours watching decorators and contractors rehab houses to make them more modern and functional.

We've lived in our 88-year-old house for more than 20 years, and in that time we've made few changes. Well, there was that time the upstairs bathtub leaked down into the kitchen, and we had to remove the kitchen ceiling panels so darling husband could investigate the problem. He poked around a bit, shrugged his shoulders and said he couldn't see anything wrong. We left the hole uncovered for several years; one afternoon we decided that since we'd never had another leak, he could put the ceiling tiles back up.

That little project was pretty motivating—I mean, we fixed a bathroom leak, for goodness' sake—so we started looking for more things we could do to bring Casa de Brokaw into the 21st century. Most of our ideas include things like painting walls, installing new kitchen cupboards, refinishing the hardwood floors and re-tiling the bathroom shower. No major demolition. Just some refreshing and decluttering.

Good thing we found those shows on Netflix. Turns out we know nothing about making home improvements.

For example, modern houses require something called Open Sight Lines. Apparently, parents are no longer allowed to go into the kitchen and leave

their children to play in the living room unsupervised. If you can't see your children while you're chopping vegetables or pouring a cup of coffee, you're committing child abuse.

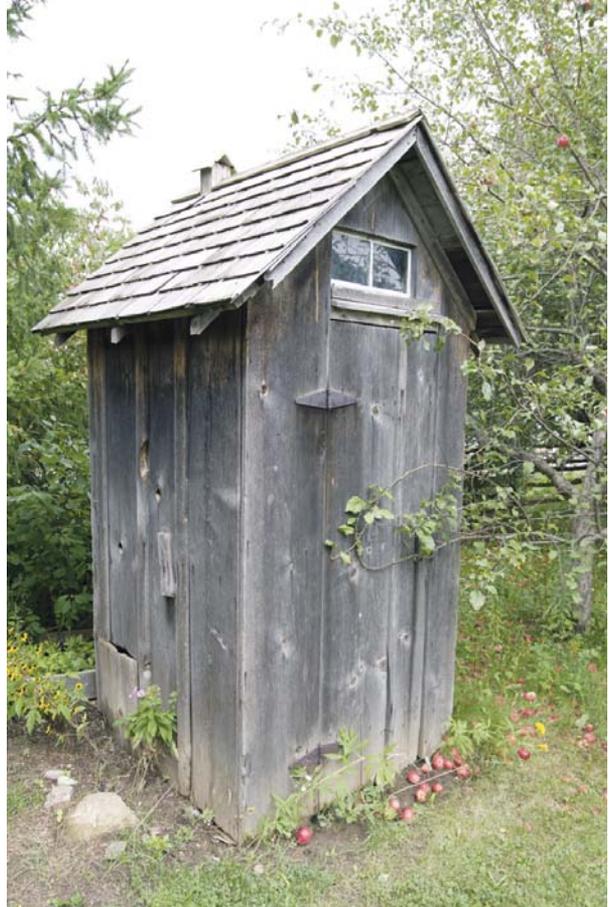
Having Open Sight Lines means that the entire first floor must have an Open Floor Plan. No walls, no posts, no doors or anything else that will restrict the above mentioned Open Sight Line. Happy homeowners should be able to see from the back of the house right out the front door.

In other words, there's no place to hide. Right now, if I'm in the kitchen baking a cake and watching reruns of "The Middle" while darling husband is in the living room watching a hunting show, we just close the doors between the rooms and turn up the volume on our respective TVs. According to modern home design, that's a crime punishable by life imprisonment in a room with an Open Floor Plan.

Ironically, while families are required to share one big open space on the first floor, it's inhumane for them to share a bathroom. Growing up, our family of four shared one toilet, one sink and one bathtub with a shower. Imagine my surprise when I learned that this was an unacceptable way for civilized humans to live.

How did I ever survive childhood?

It's also an abomination to actually leave your bedroom to walk down the hall to use the bathroom. In the olden days, if people had to potty in the middle of the night, they trekked to the backyard to use the outhouse. Fortunately, all of that was made more convenient with the invention of the



flushing toilet. (Look, Ma! We can pee in the house!) But apparently having a bathroom 20 feet away is too strenuous a journey for modern homeowners. Now, it seems every master bedroom (and yes, you must have a master bedroom) must be equipped with an *en suite*, which is a fancy word for a bathroom that's basically an extension of the bedroom. Before I found HGTV on Netflix, I didn't even know what an en suite was, let alone that I need one.

Well, as they say, knowledge is power, and the more we watch, the longer our To Do list gets. I think we'll start with an easy project: changing a light fixture in the hallway, which I now know will require rewiring the entire house, upgrading the furnace and replacing the roof. We'll get started once I do a little more research. Netflix just added a new season of "Buying and Selling."



Award-winning freelance writer Joanne Brokaw spends her days dreaming of things she'd like to do but probably never will—like swimming with dolphins, cleaning

the attic and someday overcoming the trauma of elementary school picture day. She lives with two dogs, a cat, six chickens and one very patient husband. Learn more at www.joannebrokaw.com.

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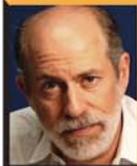
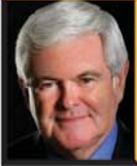
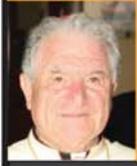
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