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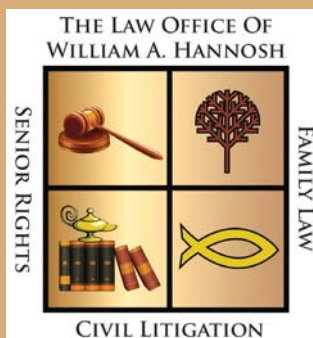
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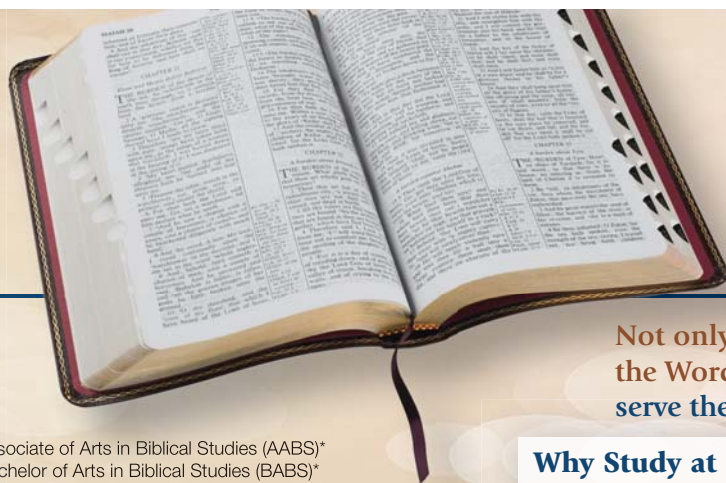
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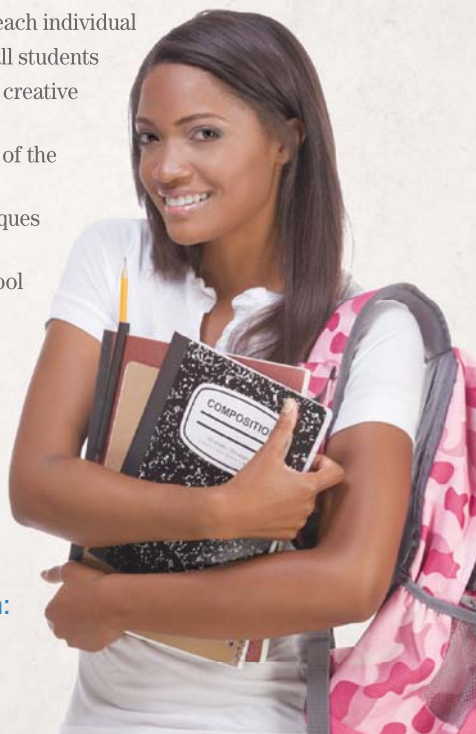
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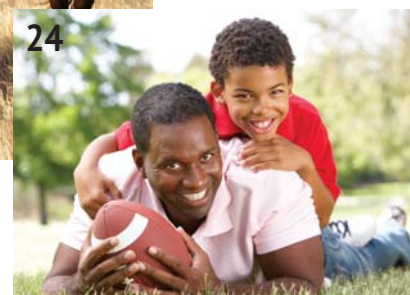
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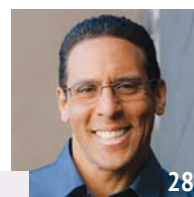
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# Living beyond code compliance

It's baseball season, and whether you find the sport the most divinely inspired game that makes America the beautiful or you think it's more boring than watching the outfield grass grow, you can't deny that the season is upon us and that its presence—at least where I live—reminds us that there is an annual tension between hope and experience. The teams I have rooted for in my lifetime are mostly the Minnesota Twins and the San Diego Padres.

Draw your own conclusions.

But it's not team misery that I'm thinking about right now.

Great teams and awful teams have some things in common. The one I'm thinking about is that all teams, when their side is up to bat, place a coach near third base. That coach relays what are supposed to be secret signals to the batters and to the base runners. The coach might tell the batter, for instance, that he should bunt the next pitch, or he might tell the runner on first base to steal second base. But the coach doesn't want to tell the other team what he's telling the batter or runner, so he tries to put his instructions in code. All teams do this.

The way the coach secretly instructs his players is through a series of hand motions—a hand to the belt, thigh, ear, bill of his cap, or a brushing motion against his chest. They all mean something. Or not. The other team uses the exact same motions. So it's necessary to disguise when the coach “means it” or is using the motions as a way to confuse the other team. To let his team know that the signal is for real, the coach has

what is called an “indicator” signal. He might touch his hand to his cheek, and that tells the player that the next signal is “on,” and not a fake. It's all very confusing.

Unless you're sitting on the bench, with time on your hands.

Many years ago I played on my college baseball team. We weren't particularly good, and to put my own talent in context, I was not a starter. To quell the boredom of watching our miserable team get shellacked each game, I took interest in our opponents' third base coaches.

It was a practice I picked up while riding the bench in high school and in Little League earlier in my unremarkable athletic life.

I would watch the third base coach of the other team go through the gyrations I previously explained, until I broke the code. Then I would inform our players, and they could adjust for the coming bunt, steal or other play. It is highly unethical to do this, according to some players and coaches, but mine were grateful. Challenging circumstances create new ethical standards. Think Enron. We needed every advantage we could get.

I think we treat the continuous ways God breaks into our lives the same way we look at baseball team signals. They are hidden, secret, and only for insiders like the clergy, or those with a lot of time on their hands, like the infirmed or elderly. And sometimes the signals throw us off because we don't know which one was the “indicator.” It is as if God is there, but He is hiding until we can figure out the signals He's sending. Of course this isn't true.

At the beginning of his Gospel account, John describes Jesus as being in the world without the world recognizing Him. He's already present. Whether we see Him in all things is a different matter.

“Life is this simple,” Catholic writer Thomas Merton said. “We are living in a world that is absolutely transparent, and God is shining through it all the time.”

**And sometimes (God's) signals throw us off because we don't know which one was the “indicator.”**

How would our lives be different—better—if, instead of trying to decode God's signals, we simply see him where He always is, which is everywhere?

Eugene Peterson describes the process of fixing our eyes on the unseen, as opposed to the seen, this way:

“We happen upon, we notice, we reach out and touch things and ideas, people and events, and among these the Holy Scriptures themselves, that were there all along but that our ego-swollen souls or our sin-blurred eyes quite simply overlooked—sometimes for years and years and years. And then we do notice: we sight life, we realize God and hear His word, we grab the sleeve of a friend and demand, ‘Look! Listen!’”



Dean Nelson directs the journalism program at Point Loma Nazarene University. His book “God Hides in Plain Sight: Seeing the Sacred in a Chaotic World,” is

published by Brazos Press.



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# A father's love



## Single dad cleans up life to raise his son

by LORI ARNOLD

**M**ark Heuslein was 29 and sleeping on a friend's couch. He had no place to live because he didn't have a job. He didn't have a job because he couldn't keep a car. By that point, the police had seized at least five cars, the exact number lost in the haze of booze and drugs. Heuslein had racked up \$22,000 in fines from 18 failure-to-appear warrants, many tied to driving with a suspended license. He couldn't clear the warrants to get his license back because he didn't have a job.

"I was living with the assumption that what I was doing was cool and fun and exciting," Heuslein said. "Living for the moment kind of thing, rather than the future."

But the future blazed into the present when he caught wind that his estranged and expectant girlfriend—snared by her own addictions—was giving birth in a local hospital and about to sign the infant over to adoptive parents without his knowledge.

But he had been moving toward another goal. In anticipation of his child's arrival, Heuslein spent the previous few months getting fatherhood training from the couple who had opened up their home to him. Taking his own baby steps, the out-of-work party expert began making plans on how recapture a young life

once full of promise.

Heuslein and the couple raced to the hospital where he "raised a ruckus," prompting security to drag him out twice. At the urging of his friends he refused to give up, finally accessing the hospital through a side entrance. He passed a man and a woman just outside of his ex's room, not knowing they were to be the baby's adoptive parents. He entered the room planted himself in a chair.

"I just can't imagine my kid going to somebody else," he said. "It just wasn't feasible. Even though I didn't have an answer, that was not possible for me."

Although he was too late to see his son's birth, he refused to leave. Security was summoned a third time.

"OK, here we go again," Heuslein said he was thinking. "Now, I'm not letting go of that chair. They carried the chair out with me in it. Now we are going out the front door with me in that chair and I'm making up even more new cuss words."

"I went home, grabbed the Jack Daniels—which was breakfast sometimes, if not lunch and dinner—off of the refrigerator and then my friend's wife said, 'You can't do that, you're a dad now.' I said, 'Nah, I ain't no dad.'"

The phone rang.

His ex was on the other end.

"The adoptive parents didn't want

a psycho dad after them," she told him. "Come get your baby."

As a teen Heuslein had it all figured out. He planned to be an architect and had designed a nuclear reactor, building a model out of balsa wood, while still in high school. He graduated a year early with a 3.8 GPA and by 21 he was studying architectural design in college while working full time as a draftsman. He already had his own secretary.

"I was smart, I had goals," Heuslein said. "I had life pretty much figured out when I was young until I actually, really, did get out on my own and then hung around with the wrong guys. I was trying to do things on my own I guess."

Like many addictions, Heuslein said his mess was percolating long before he realized he was cooked.

"It was just doing a little bit at a time, hanging around guys saying, 'Here, wanna try this?' Trying it and liking it and then staying with it and then having the type of personality that says I need to be the best I can at it," Heuslein, now a painting contractor, said. "So now I want to learn how to sell it. Then I want to learn how to acquire a lot of quantities and to sell a lot of it to make money."

Eventually he was waking up in the





With his 21-year-old son fully engaged in college, single father Mark Heuslein is adjusting by spending more time on his horse, Krystal. Heuslein was addicted to drugs and alcohol when he made a dramatic hospital stand blocking his son's mother from placing their newborn up for adoption. He cleaned up his act after finding his faith and a supportive community.

PHOTO BY BRYAN MEYER/MINDS EYE PHOTOGRAPHIES





PHOTOS BY BRYAN MEYER/MINDS EYE PHOTOGRAPHIES

As a single father, Mark Heuslein made raising his son, Aaron, a priority in his life. Now, 21, Aaron says he is grateful for the foundation of faith he learned from his father.

wee hours of the morning to smoke half a joint before going back to bed. He would get up for work at 6 o'clock and smoke the other half before he left.

"I had a high expectation in life until I started using dope and that changed everything," he said.

He switched to beers at lunchtime and added hard alcohol chasers to the beer menu at night.

"A lot of times (I was) not working because it's hard to hold a job with that type of lifestyle," he said.

At one point he began hanging with a club that was manufacturing high quantities of methamphetamine. While not a member, Heuslein said he willingly participated on the fringes, and yet club leaders gave him a pass after their hangout was raided by police.

"They let me out. They *let* me out," Heuslein said, his deep breath resonating the awe, even now, of grace he received from weathered street criminals. "They said that I didn't have anything to do with it. They let me go and I got out of it and I stayed out of it. The Lord had his hand in the whole thing all the way through, as much as I dragged Him through that mess."

Even as Heuslein learned how to change a diaper and acclimate his body to the energy-depleting demands of middle-of-the-night feedings, he began riding a bike to odd painting jobs trying to supplement the government aid he received for Aaron while he inched toward

stability. He hired a lawyer who worked to consolidate his legal mess.

The judge was firm, warning the defendant that he faced more than four years on the suspended license charges alone, which represented just half of this outstanding warrants.

"He said, 'I make you a promise, if you promise to raise that baby right and never come back in my court again, I will erase everything except for the first one. You do time for the first one. Does that sound like a deal?'"

Heuslein accepted the sentencing deal and on the night of his son's first birthday reported to work furlough. He was released early after serving 52 days. He arranged to work off his mandated 490 hours of community service at Lakeside Wesleyan Church, where a friend attended.

"I asked the pastor if I could work it off there," he said. "He raises his hands and says, 'Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!' I said, 'If you do that again I'm out of here. We're not going to have any of that. I don't want to have anything to do with God or the Lord, or anything. I just want to come and work.'"

During those days Heuslein said he was still using alcohol, though the frequency ebbed as he slowly sloughed off the habits and people that muted his heart and potential.

As he continued to whittle down his court-mandated hours, the pastor worked to build a relationship with the single father.

"One day he said to me 'The Lord

wants you on his team' and the light bulb went off," he said. "It made sense this time."

From the start, Heuslein jumped into his faith with the same committed desperation he showed in taking on fatherhood.

"He restored me," the El Cajon resident said. "I was on the fast track. Just like doing that (drug) stuff, I wanted to be the best. When I started going to church I started sitting in the front. I wanted to be splashed by the Holy Spirit. I couldn't get enough. I started applying what the pastor was saying and, slowly but surely, I started getting new grooves in the record player. There were some old ruts I fell into, but it takes time.

"When I was desperate for help and crying out to Him, something clicked and He took it away," he said. "So little by little as I gave up those things and gave them to Him, He took them and then removed them from me and they are still gone as far as the east is from the west."

After being mentored by a man strong in the faith, Heuslein developed new friendships with people who shared his evolving values. He now leads two Bible study groups at Shadow Mountain Community Church; one has been going for five years, the other for eight.

"I believe it is a testimony to the power of God to change a person," said Marcial Felan, a longtime friend of Heuslein's and the former family ministries pastor at Shadow Mountain. "God has transformed Mark's life from where he was to where he is now and who he was



to who he is now as a child of God and his consistency as a single father and a servant in our church and to the men of our church.”

Twenty-one years after Heuslein was hauled out of the hospital in a chair he refused to surrender, and a trail of profanity spewing from his lips, the boy he made the scene over is chasing his own dreams. A sophomore at Cuyamaca College, Aaron is studying the humanities and plans to take his talent for basketball to a league in Europe. Ultimately, he hopes to work with the children, modeling for them the things he learned from his dad.

“My dad has always been there for me, been to every game and done all he could to be there and love me through everything,” he said. “I haven’t needed a mom. Praise God for my dad.”

Although he admits missing the comfort and love that comes from a mom, he said his father more than compensated by demonstrating leadership, perseverance and composure.

“Through him I have learned that every little thing matters and that it is a 24/7 job. No days off.

He is also grateful for the foundation of faith he learned from his father.

“God has proven himself to my dad and me every single day,” he said.

His son’s grounding, Heuslein said, reinforces his own belief that every struggle and sacrifice—including an intentional decision not to marry so that his attention remained focused on solely on Aaron—was made smoother through faith in Jesus and living in a supportive community.

“I knew that I couldn’t raise that baby by myself, on my own,” he said. “When you *really* give your life to Him and you turn yourself over like a child—melted like butter in a microwave is how I explain it—then God can work in your life. So, for me, when I put Christ first, now I have Him helping me make my decisions.

“(Christ) is my wife and He is my son’s mother and He is happy to fill that position, even though it’s a dysfunctional family in the world’s eyes.”

As Heuslein faces an empty nest, he’s finally able to give his company, Hi-Tech Painting, more attention. Launched in 1999, he has eight employees and has landed major clients, including Sea-World.

“I have not taken this company 100 percent serious because I put Aaron before my work,” the father said. “So my main focus was on raising him and being there for his games and being there for his school, being there for his homework and being there for him growing up, especially without a mom, trying to raise

him correctly.”

And despite the company’s small size, Heuslein said he’s been invited to bid jobs along with some of the major players in the industry.

“That’s just huge and there is no other explanation other than when you put Christ first and let Him organize this,” he said.

“I don’t care about the money and the riches and all that. I care about my relationship with Him and what He wants me to do, because in the long run when I get to point B from point A and look back, I say, ‘WOW! Before I was facing these mountainous deserts or the waves are overwhelming, but if I look behind me it’s just a nice, smooth trail that He’s cut through.’” ■

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A hhhhhh, summer in San Diego! Few things in life are as fun as growing up in America's Finest City with the great weather and summer sun. But even the two-plus months of freedom from school can get a little monotonous without a few diversions. Fortunately, there is no shortage of special programs for children to keep their minds and bodies occupied during the warm recess. We've compiled just a sampling of the offerings from a variety of options.

## Beach days

**Youth Venture**, which operates teen centers in El Cajon, Santee and Lakeside, ramps up its weekly offerings during the summer to take advantage of school vacations. Returning this year is the ministry's beach days, offered most Tuesdays in July and August.

Children 10 to 17 are allowed to participate in the free adventures, which will include swimming, surfing and body surfing. A barbecue is also provided. Students are bused to La Jolla Shores for the outings.

In August, the centers will also host a four-day overnight camp to San Onofre State Beach. The camp is only open to members, but Youth Venture membership is free, but requires the completion of several courses. The cost of the camp has not been set, but is usually about \$25.

"We try to keep our activities free or really cheap because the kids we work with can't afford it," said Jeremy Miller, director of operations for Youth Venture.

In addition to the activities, each cen-

ter is open from 3 to 8 p.m. weekdays and noon to 6 p.m. on the weekends.

## Music camps

**Carlton Hills Lutheran Church** will hold its 10th Annual Make a Joyful Noise Music & Arts Summer Camp from July 7 to 25. This year's theme is Around the World.

The camp is open to children in pre-kindergarten through the seventh grade.

The sessions run from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday, with child care available before and after.

Campers don't need to have a music or art background, but individual music lessons on piano and guitar are available. Friday is a Splash Day, which includes a water slide, other water games, and pizza. In addition to the arts, organizers said students are exposed to opportunities to

Summer camp is an amazing opportunity for children to socialize, learn personal responsibility and read God's word.

**The Kroc Center School of the Arts** offers music and voice instruction in both group and private settings. Sessions are offered throughout the year, including this summer. The June to August session includes classes in guitar and piano.

In addition to music, the center offers classes in art (drawing, painting and ceramics), dance (ballet folklórico, hula, hip hop, tap, ballet) and theater (on acting, improvisation and auditioning).

Registration deadline for summer session is June 9.

## Sports camps

**San Diego First Church of the Nazarene** holds its annual VBS Sports Camp 2014 from 9 a.m. to noon July 14 to 18.

The camp is open to children who will be between the ages of 4 and 11 as of Sept. 1. In addition to the sports camp, the church also offers a destination camp in Idyllwild Pines from July 28 to Aug. 1.

**Fellowship of Christian Athletes** will run numerous Walking on Water surf camps over the summer. Although the national youth ministry offers a wide range of camps focusing on leadership, teams and power athletes, the San Diego chapters are only offering surf camps in this region. Volleyball camps for fourth- to eighth-graders will be offered in June in Costa Mesa and Huntington Beach.

Co-ed day camps for children ages 6 to 14 will be held at 15<sup>th</sup> Street Beach in Del Mar on June 16 to 20, June 23 to 27 and July 28 to Aug. 1.

A single co-ed junior high overnight camp is set for July 7 to 11 at Point Loma Nazarene University for students in grades six to eight. High-schoolers get their opportunity for a co-ed overnight camp at PLNU from July 14 to 18.







**Maranatha Christian Schools**, affiliated with Maranatha Chapel, offers a variety of sports camps throughout the summer, including strength and conditioning, basketball, soccer, cheer, flag football and full contact lacrosse. Ages, times and costs vary by sport.

In addition to teaching skill fundamentals, the coaching staff also works with children in developing character, emotional control, mental preparation and team building. All camps are co-ed. The school also offers band and theater camps as well as special preschool and high school summer programs and summer enrichment.

## Day camps

**Shadow Mountain Community Church** will host its annual Summer Blast on from July 14 to 18. Held on the church campus located at 2100 Greenfield Drive in El Cajon, the 2014 program features the Project U theme geared to challenging kids to build a life that pleases God and to apply Biblical concepts to their lives. The day camp will feature hands-on teaching, crafts, games, dramas and special guests.

The camp is free and open to ages 4 through eighth grade.

**City View Church** will host a week-long summer day camp on its campus from 9 a.m. to noon Aug. 4 to 8.

This year's theme is SonTreasure.

Children who are 5 years old or entering kindergarten through the sixth grade are invited to attend.

Activities include wacky games, songs, crafts and Bible stories.

## San Diego Model Railroad

Fans of rail travel may delight in three different half-day camps for children of-

fered by the San Diego Model Railroad Museum.

Train Town provides first- and second-graders a behind-the-scenes tour of the museum's five permanent layouts. In addition, campers will conduct several experiments with energy and motion to learn how trains run.

For those in the third and fourth grades, the Wild, Wild West Camp will help participants discover how the railroad came to California and its continuing impact on our lives. Campers will also learn how to design and create their own layout after watching the museum's operators in action.

Fifth- through eighth-graders enrolled in the We are Model Railroaders Camp will work together as a club to design and build a layout that might be chosen for a future display at the museum.

Dates run from June 16 to Aug. 15.

## SeaWorld

What could be better than spending a summer day at SeaWorld? How about five straight days at the water park as part of its age-appropriate day camps?

"Shamu Adventures," for children entering kindergarten or the first grade, finds the young pirates, polar explorers and safari leaders trekking across SeaWorld. Young adventurers meet sharks and parrots, brave the cold North and South Poles, search for sea lions and bat rays, and "dive" into the world of the sea to discover colorful fishes.

"Holy Mackerel! What's for Lunch?" is the program for second- and third-graders. Participants will learn such things as: How does a killer whale catch 200 pounds of fish every day? Does anything eat a shark? What is a mackerel anyway? In addition to teaching how animals

catch prey, instructors will share how the water's critters avoid predators.

"Xtreme Sea Creatures" is designed to help fourth- through sixth-graders discover the truth about sharks and other ocean animals with dangerous reputations. Campers will learn how stingrays, jellyfish, sharks and killer whales not only survive in their extreme habitats, but thrive! A highlight of the camp is a kayaking excursion on Mission Bay to search for the extreme animals.

In the "Mysteries of Marine Mammals" camp, for grades 7 through 9, youth, with the help of the Marine Science Investigation team, will investigate marine animal skeletal remains discovered on a San Diego beach. Through labs and animal observation, MSI will solve this mystery while exploring the extraordinary adaptations of SeaWorld's animals. The field investigations include a morning snorkel trip.







## Museum of Photographic Arts

Young shutterbugs have several options at Balboa Park's Museum of Photographic Arts. Each of its camps offers a different theme for kids and includes indoor and outdoor adventures with digital cameras, alternative photographic processes and film-making projects. The half-day camps run from June 21 to Aug. 8. The museum will provide digital cameras during the camp hours. Each camp will conclude with an exhibition of the students' work.

As part of the "Photo Mystery in the



Park!" camp for grades 3 to 5, junior detectives will learn photographic tips and then use them to hone their photographer's eye as they gather clues from secret spots around the park.

For camp "DIY: Zine-Ography," sixth- to eighth-graders will venture beyond selfies and express their unique point of view by producing their own "zine," complete with original content and eye-

catching photographs.

Pint-sized photogs participating in the "Photo Time Travelers" camp for kindergarteners, first- and second-graders will use their own time-traveling passports to snap spots of everything from dinosaurs roaming prehistoric jungles, to famous people frozen in time, to strange creatures of the future.

The two-week "From Darkroom To Digital" camp for high-schoolers will explore both film and digital photography through inspired activities and shooting assignments. The first week includes three days of darkroom work as the students discover the process of developing a roll of film and making their own prints under the red lights. The second week is devoted to the artistic side of digital photography and mixed media processes.

## MotoVentures Dirt Bike Camp

MotoVentures offers two-day dirt bike day camps for kids ages 5 to 17 at its private Rider Training Center near Anza, between Temecula and Palm Springs. The camps, set for July 8 and 9, July 22 and 23, and Aug. 5 and 6, include daily itineraries designed for beginner and novice-level riders. The sessions combine training with trail riding on the 350-acre private property.

Parents or guardians have the option of staying, dropping the kids off, or participating in the training. There is a low kids-to-instructor ratio. ■

### INFO ONLINE

For contact information on all these summer fun options, please visit [www.refreshedmag.com](http://www.refreshedmag.com).

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## Forest Home brings summer day camps to San Diego churches

For 76 years Forest Home Christian Camp and Retreat Center, an idyllic outdoor camp in the San Bernardino mountains, has served oodles and oodles of little people and youth as they search for themselves through confidence-building exercises like rock-climbing walls, skits and Scripture lessons. A little glue and construction paper never hurt, either.

And while the setting among sentinel pines, winding trails and emerald fields play a role in the traditional camp experience, Forest Home officials believe it's possible to bring the mountain-top experience to flatter ground. So this year they have unveiled Forest Home Neighborhood Day Camp, in which camp workers are packing up the retreat essentials, (including a rock-climbing wall), and bringing them to host churches.

"They are not content to be limited by their camp properties," said Carly Jones, Forest Home's director of Off-Site Ministries. "Forest Home decided to launch this program as a way to expand partnerships with churches across the Southwest and serve as a catalyst for outreach in their neighborhoods by bringing camp to them."

This year's tour includes camps at Grace Presbyterian Church in Vista, Community Covenant Church in El Cajon and Skyline Church in La Mesa.

Jones said it is a mistake to label the day camp, modeled after a similar program in the Midwest, as a to-go version of vacation Bible school.

"It truly is camp at the local church," she said. "It is a seven-hour-a-day, five-day experience, in which elementary-aged children will conquer obstacles, play group games, climb a 25-foot wall, interact with nature, jump on a Euro Bungee, tie dye T-shirts, race down a slip 'n slide, and waterslide."

To present the local programs, Forest Home, which also operates a resident camp in Ojai Valley, provides the recreation, curriculum, and staff to implement the camper experience. The host churches are asked to provide volunteers, host homes for the traveling staff, 10 camper scholarships (which are then matched by Forest Home), and at least 100 campers.

Each camp runs from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Campers bring their own lunch and Forest Home provides an afternoon snack.

All of the host sites have been booked this summer, with 11 churches in Southern California and Arizona hosting camps, but signups are already underway for 2015.

"The cost to the church depends on a variety of factors within their control," Jones said. "Some of our 2014 churches have chosen to subsidize the cost for the families, and some are choosing to provide beyond what has been requested for the Forest Home staff and their volunteers."

Learn more at [www.foresthome.org](http://www.foresthome.org).



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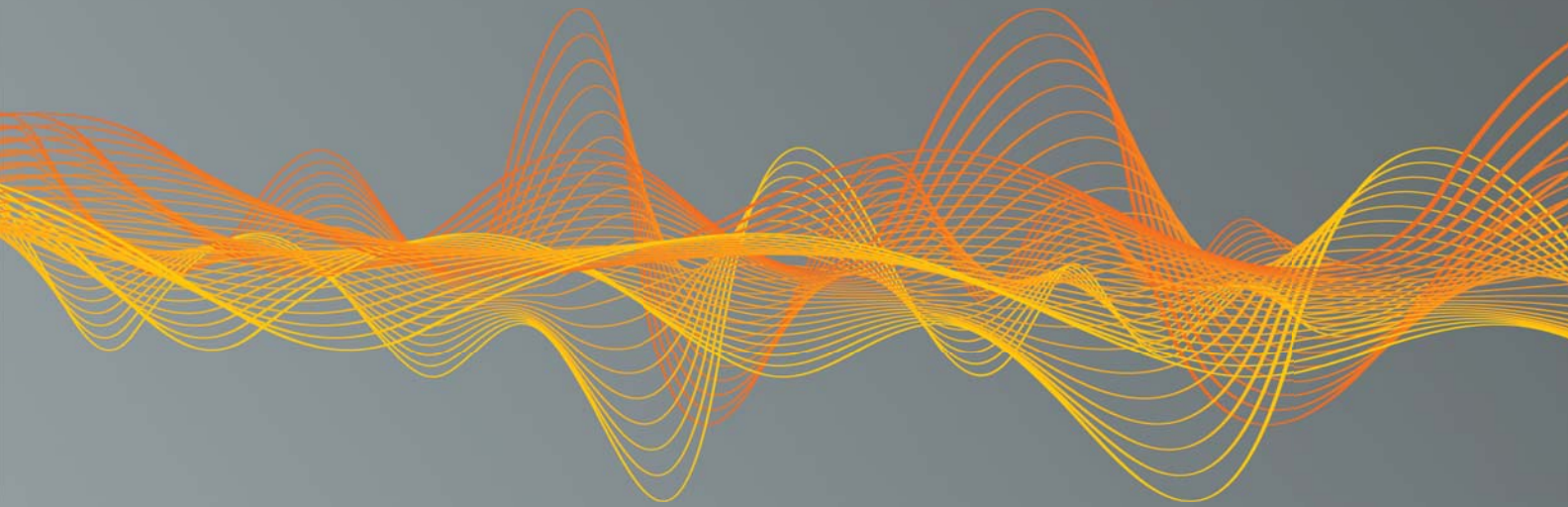
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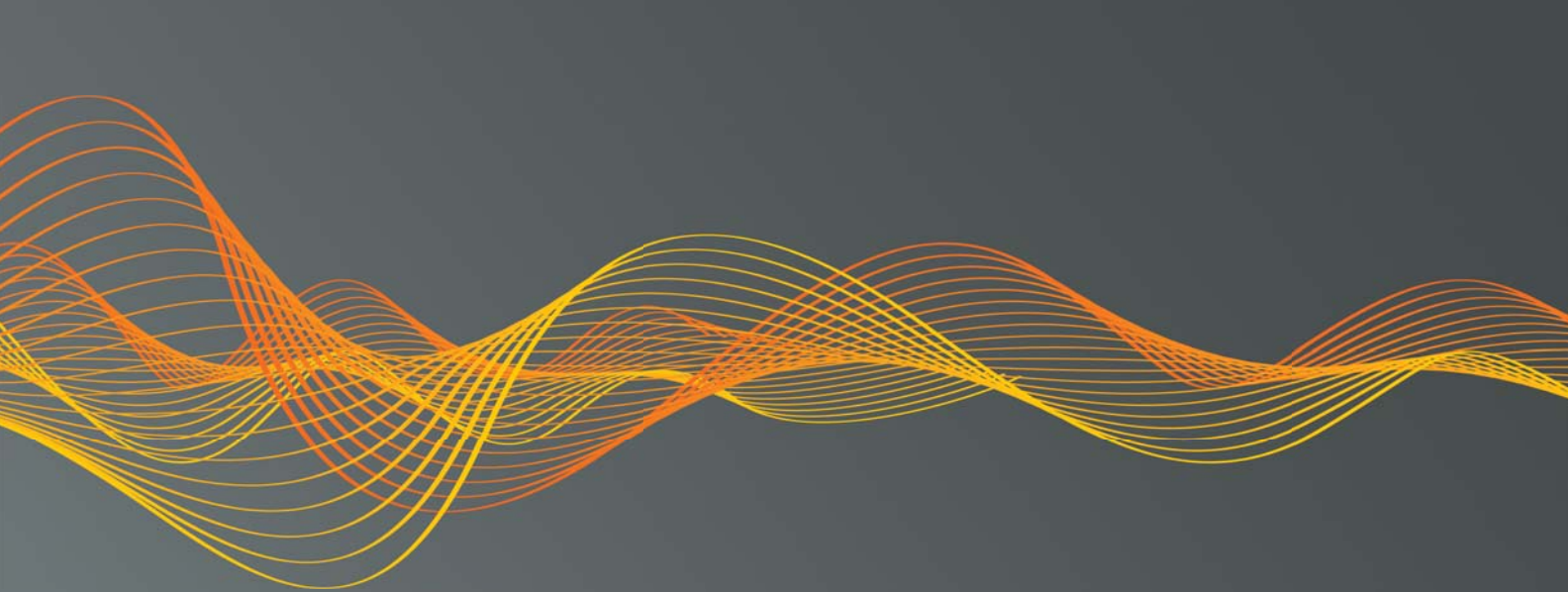




# Listening to the wrong **VOICE**







# Who told you that you were naked?

by TIM WALKER

I don't have a monopoly on words. I realize that I'm not the only writer in the world.

There was a time when that immobilized me. I quit writing because I felt like my words couldn't hold their own in a world where people can so freely express themselves.

But that wasn't the right reason. I write not because I want you to think I'm the best writer in the world. (OK, maybe a little bit.) But the main reason I write is because it's part of who I am. It's how I'm wired.

I am a writer.

And as a writer, I not only like to write words, I also like to read them. Sure most of the time, I prefer to read those words uttered from a superhero in a comic book, but I also enjoy the words of a handful of authors and blog writers.

One of those is author and blogger Jon Cuff. Cuff writes humorously in a way that I hope to emulate, but I'm not even close to there—yet. But despite that enviable skill, my favorite posts are when Jon takes his sharp wit and points it inward.

A couple of years ago, his blog post had a simple title, “Thinking you're naked.” It refers to a question God asked Adam and Eve in the garden after they ate from a forbidden tree. In Genesis 3:11, God asked, “Who told you that you were naked?” (NLT).

I've always heard those words with a

condescending tone. Sort of like when I tell my kids, “Who thought it was a good idea to leave a half-eaten Pop-Tart on the couch?”

But after reading Jon's blog post, I heard it differently. There was more compassion, even empathy in the question.

Almost as if someone called one of my kids a cruel name.

“Who told you that you were stupid?”

“Who told you that you couldn't play?”

“Who told you that you weren't good enough?”

I can't hear that question the same anymore.

It makes my heart ache.

Because when I hear it, I hear a God who already knew how evil and distorted things could potentially be, and never wanted His creation to experience it.

I hear that question from my vantage point as a dad, and it breaks my heart. I don't want my kids' view of themselves to become so distorted. I don't want them to struggle with seeing themselves the way God sees them.

I don't want them to ever think they are less than who God made them to be.

And I think God feels the same about me.

He asks the same question of me, because He knows I'm affected by a world distorted by sin. He asks the question be-

cause He knows I'm a man distorted by my own sin.

He says to you and to me:

“Who told you that you were less of a guy because you can't throw a baseball?”

“Who told you that you weren't a writer?”

“Who told you that you were ugly just because you're not like a magazine cover?”

“Who told you that you had to have washboard abs?”

“Who told you that you had to be a size 2 to be a woman?”

“Who told you that your best days are behind you and you have nothing else to contribute?”

“Who told you that you aren't a good husband?”

“Who told you that you weren't a good dad?”

“Who told you that you're not a good provider?”

The list could go on and on.

But it comes from a God who isn't angry at me. He's angry that I am so deceived, that I don't see the truth anymore.

So how would you fill in this blank: “Who told you you were \_\_\_\_\_?”

And what would God say about it? ■

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*Tim Walker is a husband/father/writer who is navigating faith, marriage, parenthood and mid-life. Follow his blog at [www.timswords.com](http://www.timswords.com).*

Veteran actor Jim Caviezel stars as Coach Bob Ladouceur in Tristar Pictures' "When the Game Stands Tall."

## Standing tall: Life gets gritty on and off the field

Life and loss, victory and defeat take the field—and streets—Aug. 22 with the Tristar Pictures and Affirm Films release "When the Game Stands Tall."

Starring Jim Caviezel ("Passion of the Christ," "Person of Interest"), Michael Chiklis (The Shield, The Commish), Alexander Ludwig ("The Hunger Games," "Lone Survivor") and Laura Dern ("Jurassic Park," "Little Fockers"), the inspirational film is based on the true story of De La Salle High School's storied Spartans football team, and its 151 consecutive victories spanning 12 years.

Although football anchors the story, the movie centers on far more than the Concord, California team's winning streak—an unprecedented feat. The National Football League's longest winning streak, for instance, is 21 games, held by the New England Patriots, and 47 games at the collegiate level, owned by the Oklahoma Sooners.

The screenplay, based on the Neil Hayes book, was crafted by Scott Marshall Smith and David Zelon and focuses on Caviezel's Bob Ladouceur, who coaches his team on not only how to play the game, but also how to succeed off of the gridiron.

The movie will also be supported with a variety of resources that can be used for group studies. Group sales are being handled through Sony and can be made by call 1-877-488-4258.

[www.whenthegamestandstall.com](http://www.whenthegamestandstall.com)

## 'Ben Hur'

Entertainment titans Mark Burnett and Roma Downey, who in recent months have made headlines with the release of "The Bible" and "Son of God," will co-produce a remake of the classic "Ben-Hur," set to release in February 2016.



The power couple is teaming up with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures and Paramount Pictures. Burnett joins producers Sean Daniel (The Mummy Franchise) and Joni Levin (The Way Back), while Downey joins as an executive producer.

"We are thrilled to have Mark and Roma join the production team to bring such an indelible classic story to the big screen," said Gary Barber, MGM's chairman and chief executive officer. "Their unrivaled passion, creativity and success in the faith-based content space, will be a huge asset to the film and we look forward to working together."

MGM and Paramount are currently partnered on the upcoming "Hercules," releasing July 25.

Timur Bekmambetov ("Wanted") will direct the film. The screenplay, originally written by Keith Clarke ("The Way Back"), with revisions by Academy Award-winner John Ridley ("12 Years a Slave"), is based on Lew Wallace's 1880 epic novel "Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ." Downey ("The Bible") and John Ridley will serve as executive producers along with Keith Clarke and Jason F. Brown.

The film returns to the heart of Lew Wallace's epic novel focusing on the nature of faith. The story follows a falsely accused nobleman who survives years of slavery to take vengeance on his best friend who betrayed him. Both must come to choose between retribution or forgiveness.

The couple also announced they are producing "A.D.," a new drama series for NBC, and "The Dovekeepers," a four-hour miniseries on the story of Masada for CBS. Both will air next year.

## Films to go

The home video market has several films releasing now.

### 'The Redemption of Henry Myers'

After robbing a bank, hard-living frontiersman Henry Myers turns on his fellow thieves by fleeing with the take in



PHOTO COURTESY OF TRISTAR PICTURES

this Echolight Studio picture. But they're hot on his trail and shoot him. Left for dead, he's

cared for by a widow (Erin Bethea) and her children. Thriving under the care of the family, Myers must decide which road he will take—redemption or revenge. Releases June 10.

[www.hallmarkmoviechannel.com](http://www.hallmarkmoviechannel.com)

### 'Seven Deadly Words'

The BMG film, inspired by actual events, follows Pastor Evan Bennett who arrives at a Connersville, Indiana church which has no money and is out of touch with the community. As Bennett works to restore the budget and relationships, and begins to challenge several of the congregation's sacred traditions, some of the faithful fire back, "We've never done it that way before." The results are surprising and inspirational. Releases June 3.

[www.sevendeadlywords.com](http://www.sevendeadlywords.com)



### 'On the Edge'

BMG tackles the broader questions of spirituality as college student Vince, reflecting on his own faith journey that began on a skiing trip to Lake Tahoe, bets his college roommate that he can prove that God exists by taking him on a camping trip with a few friends from church. Taking adventure of the great outdoors, the group tackles the tough questions of life as they hike in the mountains and swap stories around the camp fire.

Produced and directed by Rick Garside, "On the Edge" was filmed on location at the spectacular Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks. Featuring the music of BarlowGirl, Bob Carlisle, Debby Boone, and Benny Hester. Releases June 3.

[www.gobmg.com/product/dvove](http://www.gobmg.com/product/dvove)



## Gospel hall of fame inducts four new legends

by LORI ARNOLD

The GMA Gospel Music Hall of Fame has expanded its elite roster by adding a producer, an a cappella sextet, a celebrity gospel band and a late contemporary artist during its April 29 ceremony.

The newest members, Brown Bannister, Take 5, Gaither Vocal Band and Rich Mullins, inducted posthumously, were honored in Nashville on April 29.

Bannister, an audio engineer, producer and songwriter, has won 15 Grammy Awards, 20-plus Dove Awards and been named Producer of the Year five times by the Gospel Music Association. He has produced award-winning albums for Amy Grant, Michael W. Smith, Steven Curtis Chapman, Third Day, MercyMe, Avalon, Point of Grace, CeCe Winans and Twila Paris.

Take 6, an American a cappella gospel music sextet formed in 1980 on an Alabama college campus, has received 12 Grammy Awards and five Dove Awards, as well as a Soul Train award. They were named Vocal Group of the Year by Black Radio Exclusive as well as Best Jazz Vocal Group for four consecutive years in a Downbeat Readers poll. The band's contemporary style integrates R&B and jazz influences into its devotional songs, with a swinging, harmony-rich sound.

The Gaither Vocal Band, launched after an impromptu backstage singing session in the early 1980s, has wowed audiences with its pinpoint harmonies even as its artists have changed over the years. Launched as a contemporary Christian band, the group now specializes in Southern gospel. Bill Gaither, who was inducted into the Hall of Fame as a solo artist in 1983 and as part of the Bill Gaither Trio in 1999, has anchored the band; its past and present membership reads like a "Who's Who" list of the gospel music industry's best-loved voices. In addition to Gaither, the current band, reconfigured after the departure of Mark Lowry and Michael English late last year, includes Wes Hampton, David Phelps,



The Gaither Vocal Band, which has boasted some of the biggest male voices in the industry over the past three decades, is one of four new inductees at the GMA Gospel Music Hall of Fame.

Adam Crabb and Todd Suttles.

The Gaither Vocal Band Homecoming Tours have drawn more than 1.1 million guests over the years, and the group has produced nearly 30 albums. Most of their DVDs and CDs have gone gold or platinum, with total unit sales estimated at 100 million volumes.

Mullins, who was killed at the age of 41 in a September 1997 car crash, was a well-respected singer and songwriter who penned the classic praise chorus "Awesome God." His songs have been performed by Caedmon's Call, Five Iron Frenzy, Amy Grant, Carolyn Arends, Jars of Clay, Michael W. Smith, John Tesh, Chris Rice, Rebecca St. James, Hillsong United and Third Day.

The Gospel Music Association launched its Gospel Music Hall of Fame in 1971 to recognize significant contributions by individuals and groups in the genre of gospel music. Among its previous inductees are Gloria Gaither, Pat Boone, Johnny Cash, Shirley Caesar, James Blackwood, Andrae Crouch, Tennessee Ernie Ford, Aretha Franklin, Larry Norman, Dolly Parton, Al Green, Elvis Presley, George Beverly Shea, Amy Grant, Keith Green and Ricky Skaggs.

Band inductees include the Blackwood Brothers, DeGarmo & Key, The Hoppers, Imperials, Kingsmen, Mighty Clouds of Joy, Oak Ridge Boys, Petra and the Statler Brothers.

Learn more at [www.gmahalloffame.org](http://www.gmahalloffame.org).

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## Future Quest returns June 25

EL CAJON — Future Quest, a training and equipping conference for Southern California youth ministries, will hold its 17<sup>th</sup> annual event June 25 to 27.

This year's theme is "Prevail," which signifies Future Quest's goal of giving students confidence that, by God's power

and love, they can overcome the challenges they face and be an influence in their culture. In addition to its stable of guest speakers, equipping workshops, hands-on outreach training, concerts and a wide variety of free time activities and events.

Returning to the conference this year

will be perennial favorite, Bill Wilson of Metro Ministries in New York, and master illusionist Richard Harris III.

Workshop topics will include "Helping Friends in Crisis," "Missions," "Dating and Purity" and "God and Science."

The conference offers numerous free-time activities including inflatable sports equipment, Airsoft guns, skatepark, DJ lounge, BMX track, paintball, bowling and Boomers Family Entertainment Center.

The vision of the conference is to help teens gain boldness in sharing their faith with their peers, while also learning how to serve others.

"It helped me in a season in my life where I was having a hard time feeling God's love," said attendee Briana Polk. "God revealed Himself to me countless times in the workshops and the meetings, and placed in me a confidence, not only for myself, but also to go and spread God's amazing love to kids that felt hopeless."

Learn more at [www.futurequest.tv](http://www.futurequest.tv).

## Tomlinson 5K and fun run

POINT LOMA — The 2nd Annual LaDainian Tomlinson 5K & One Mile Kids Fun Run will be held June 14 at NTC Park at Liberty Station. Registration begins at 7 a.m. Start time for the 5K is 8:15 a.m., while the kids fun run is slated for 9 a.m.

Sponsored by EDCO, the race proceeds will benefit Tomlinson's Touching Lives Foundation. This year's event will showcase the inaugural fun run for children.

In addition to the race, the family-friendly event will include bounce houses, games, contests and other activities, such as an autograph booth featuring current and former Chargers players and local celebrities, and free food court and drinks, provided by race sponsors.

Those who register for the walk/run will receive a commemorative LaDainian Tomlinson event finisher medal, event T-shirt, free hand-signed LaDainian Tom-

## EVENTS ONLINE

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PHOTO BY TONY AMAT

Former Chargers running back LaDainian Tomlinson greets last year's 5K contestants with his touchdown pose. This year's LaDainian Tomlinson 5K & One Mile Kids Fun Run will be held June 14 at NTC Park at Liberty Station.

linson football card while supplies last, and a race gift bag.

Tomlinson's foundation offers a number of programs designed to promote educational, social and cultural awareness and positive self-esteem to enhance the lives of children, their families and communities.

Learn more at [www.ladainiantomlinson.com](http://www.ladainiantomlinson.com).

## CCT returns to Mount Helix

MOUNT HELIX — "Les Miserables," the award-winning play by novelist Victor Hugo, will be presented under the stars from July 17 to Aug. 13 as Christian Community Theater returns to the Mount Helix Amphitheater after a long hiatus.

The play, directed by Paul Russell, co-founder of CCT, follows the story of a convict in 19th-century France who violates parole and is on the run, even as a revolution breaks out.

To purchase tickets, call (619) 588-0206.

Learn more [www.cytsandiego.org](http://www.cytsandiego.org).

## Brent Jones added for San Diego County Fair Gospelfest

DEL MAR — San Diego County Fair has added recording artist Brent Jones to its 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Gospel Festival, set for 10 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. June 28. Jones will perform at 7 p.m. on the grandstand stage.

Jones, known for his electrifying energy and song styling, is expected to perform "I Can Dance," "Give Him What He Wants," and "Heaven in the Room."

He joins headliner Fred Hammond, who many refer to as "the baby face of Gospel Music" for his diversity, longevity and prolific music-making. The former member of Commissioned has penned the hits "No Weapon," "Call me Righteous," "Show Yourself Strong" and "This is the Day."

In addition to the grandstand performers, the festival and its five stages will feature performances by a variety of gospel groups from throughout Southern California.

San Diego-based M.A.N.D.A.T.E. Records is collaborating on the festival.

Learn more at [www.sdfair.com](http://www.sdfair.com).



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CAROL LEBEAU

# Swimming the deep blue sea



The water is open!

Please forgive me, but as I write this, I've got a little buzz going.

Nothing illegal or mind-altering, mind you. It's just that I'm still high from the invigorating swim I enjoyed this morning in the breathtakingly beautiful waters off La Jolla Cove. What a blessing to live near one of the best locations for open water swimming in the world.

But sadly, while many head to the beach this summer for a little fun in the sun, the vast majority won't ever experience the bliss of stroking through the summer surf. In fact, most beach-goers will remain confined to the sand and shallows—fearful of “what's out there.” Too bad, because beyond the breakers is an ocean of fun and excitement—if you know what you're doing.

Now's the time. Sea temps climb into the high 60s and low 70s during the summer months in San Diego. If you can swim in a pool, then the thrill of a dip in the big pool is not out of reach.

According to La Jolla native and rough water swimming expert, Anne Cleveland, the water is open for everyone. Anne is an amazing athlete, an international Marathon Swimming Hall of Fame inductee who has completed numerous long-distance open water swims around the world. She's swum the Catalina Channel and conquered the English Channel, both one-way and round-trip. As an open-water swim coach, Anne shares her passion for the ocean by helping swimmers, beginners to elite, achieve their goals.

I asked the super-swimmer for a few tips to help get you started on your open ocean adventure and to address some of the biggest concerns about swimming in the deep, blue sea:

**Temperature:** Too cold? Not to worry, says Anne. Make sure you wear a swim cap, either silicone or neoprene. For added warmth, try any of a variety of wetsuits. Or practice going “naked” (Speedo only.)

### LEARN MORE

**Coaching:** To contact Anne for more information or to schedule a coaching session, go to [annecleveland.com](http://annecleveland.com).

**La Jolla Cove Swim Club:**  
[www.lajollacoveswimclub.com](http://www.lajollacoveswimclub.com)

**San Diego Tri Club:** [www.triclubsandiego.org](http://www.triclubsandiego.org)

**Water quality:** [www.sdbeachinfo.com](http://www.sdbeachinfo.com)

**Advisories:** [www.sdcoastkeeper.org](http://www.sdcoastkeeper.org). Click on Learn and then Beach advisory links.

**Weather conditions:** [www.wrh.noaa.gov/sqx/marine/marine.php?wfo=sgx](http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/sqx/marine/marine.php?wfo=sgx)

by slowly acclimating to the water. Anne recommends starting with five minutes then gradually increasing your time in the water.

**Proper gear:** Comfortable suit, cap for long hair, goggles that fit, and fins, if you need a boost through the breakers.

**Swim buddy:** A must! Don't go it alone. Join a group or go with an open water coach.

**Lifeguard:** Ask for advice on conditions. If you're new to the open ocean, let the guard know where you'll be swimming.

**Critters:** We love 'em. Especially at La Jolla Cove where Anne describes her swim experience “like flying over a magical underwater garden teeming with life—bat rays, sea lions, dolphins, leopard sharks (friendly) giant black sea bass, schools of all kinds of fish—even an occasional sea turtle.”

**Critters—the scary ones:** “The ‘man in the grey suit’ is out there,” Anne says of sharks. “But they have an abundant food source in seals and sea lions and aren't interested in us.” A shark attack is extremely rare and, in most cases, it's what Anne refers to as “a case of mistaken identity.”

**Jellyfish and 'rays:** A sting can be treated with a vinegar spray or by just staying in the water. Salt water neutralizes the stings. Avoid stingrays by shuffling your feet when entering the water. Anne advises, “If you get stung, soak in the hottest water you can stand.”

**Motion of the ocean:** Seasickness. It happens. But Anne says you can beat it with non-drowsy Dramamine, Bonine or ginger.

**The kelp monster:** Those “things” that brush up against your legs may be scratchy, even scary. Relax. More often than not, they're just seaweed or bits of floating kelp.

**Sunburn:** Anne uses spray-on sunscreen, “especially for your back.”

**Anne's most important tip:** “Safety...first, second and third,” Anne says. “Never play chicken with the ocean.”

So, are you ready to take the plunge? Come on in, the water is open and beautiful.

Make this the summer you discover the joy of ocean swimming. With a little practice, you can go from your boogie board to the half-mile buoy. (That's how I got started.) With a little practice, you may blow right past the buoy and find yourself entering the famous La Jolla Rough Water Swim in September. “Sea” you at the cove!



Carol LeBeau is a former 10News anchor, Staying Healthy reporter and current Health Champion for Palomar Health, avid runner, bicyclist and ranked, rough water swimmer. Learn more at [www.carollebeau.com](http://www.carollebeau.com).





# Back to the future summer version

It was a magical time and something I will never forget. It was a place where I could explore and dream, and no one cared that I was at the peak of my “nerd phase”... especially my grandparents, who loved me anyway.

At just about this time of year in 1965, I was a dorky 9-year-old, complete with “farmer glasses,” just wrapping up 4<sup>th</sup> grade at Hallstrom Elementary in Rockford, Illinois. I was nursing my third broken arm in a matter of weeks.

That’s right, *three* broken arms. I fell out of a tree showing off to friends, broke my fall and saved my back, but broke both arms. Then on the day I got the last of the two casts off, I went roller skating on our front sidewalk and broke the right arm again. I told you I was a nerd (though I enjoyed not having to do written tests in school while I was recovering).

I was nervous, though. My maternal grandparents (MorMor and MorFar) dropped the big surprise on me months before. Since I was the oldest in our family, they would take me to Washington, D.C. and then New York City for the big World’s Fair. I still remember MorMor saying, “If, Lord willing, *we’re all healthy.*”

Of course I worried that busting an arm could mean blowing plans for the big vacation.

After weeks of demonstrating I was pretty nimble while wearing the awkward cast (even going swimming with it tightly wrapped in plastic), the Great Vacation was underway.

And we drove all the way in the old Chevy sedan, from Illinois to Virginia, then New York and home. Williamsburg was added to the itinerary, so I learned about Colonial America. I was also able to build on my “dork look” by purchasing some fashionable Revolutionary-era garb. Especially handsome was my felt

three-cornered hat, which looked very smart until non-stop rain made it look like mush.

In the nation’s Capital I was deeply impressed with our Congressman John B. Anderson, who took us on tours of important places and to lunch in the Capitol dining room. It was there that he introduced us to his friend, another young representative named Gerald Ford, from Michigan.

Little did I know then than that Mr. Ford would be president one day, or that “John B.” would also run for the big office (losing large to Reagan) in 1980. I also didn’t have any idea that I would come to know them both more personally at future events and on my radio shows.

Other things that made impacts in D.C. were the Smithsonian, the White House and the car that ran into MorFar’s as he drove a roundabout intersection too tightly.

But it was the New York World’s Fair that was the most tremendous. There’s never been another like it, welcoming 51 million visitors. The Flushing Meadows venue was enormous, with brand new Shea Stadium nearby, the shiny Unisphere, endless pavilions and glorious treasures from around the Earth.

We experienced video phones for the first time. Belgian waffles, Billy Graham, the best Swedish food I’d had (other than MorMor’s cooking), a log flume ride and the Ferris wheel shaped like a huge tire.

The Ford Pavilion featured *dinosaurs*, created there not by God but by Walt Disney (inspired with talent from God), animated creatures that live on today at Disneyland, where they were sent when the 1964-65 Fair closed.

## Shaping the future

Little did I know then that one day I would be chairman of the San Diego Air & Space Museum, housed at Balboa Park in the only remaining Ford Pavilion from World Expositions past.

My 9-year-old eyes also saw Mercury astronaut Scott Carpenter’s Aurora 7 capsule. In recent years he became a dear friend, too, before his passing a few months ago. Never in my wildest dreams could I have known such things as a young boy, inspecting that tiny spacecraft.

There was “It’s A Small World” in the Pepsi Pavilion, and Mr. Lincoln robotically orating at the Illinois building. Both also live on in Anaheim to this day.

And there was the excitement and daring of scientific achievements, in-

**...each season brings us experiences that shape us for the future, far beyond anything we can imagine...**

dustrial might and the goal of one day going to the moon. American pride and “exceptionalism” hummed like electricity through the fair.

It was a summer so long ago and, yet, still a big part of my life. Such a clear reminder of how each season brings us experiences that shape us for the future, far beyond anything we can imagine... even *way back then.*



Mark Larson is a veteran Southern California radio/television personality and media consultant. His voice is heard on KPRZ 1210AM, and his weekday talk

show airs mornings 6-9 on KCBQ 1170AM. Learn more at [www.marklarson.com](http://www.marklarson.com).

MICHAEL FOUST

# 5 reasons why fatherhood is far better than football

I remember my first big-time football game as if it were yesterday. I was 13, sitting beside my dad and a friend in a huge stadium.

The game, though, didn't go as I had hoped, and a loss seemed certain—when something amazing happened. With only four seconds left, my team's kicker booted a 51-yard field goal that tied it up, and we all went wild. It was a college game and there was no overtime back then, but we rode home feeling as if our team had won the Super Bowl.

I also remember the birth of my first child as if it were yesterday. I was 36, standing in the delivery room with the doctor and nurses all around, minutes after midnight. Then something amazing happened. I heard a tiny, helpless, sweet cry, followed by a booming voice from the doctor: "It's a boy!"

They placed my son under the warmer and I saw him up close for the very first time. He was full of life, looking all around, squirming from head to toe. It was the most precious sight I had ever seen.

My wife and I drove home two days later, feeling as if we'd won, well, the Super Bowl.

I've been to quite a few football games in my life while spending far more money than I care to acknowledge, and I can say without hesitation: Fa-

therhood is infinitely better than football. This should be obvious, of course, but we do live in a day where too many of us men are making a life out of our hobbies, extending our teen years into our 30s.

Here are five reasons why fatherhood is better than football—or any hobby, for that matter.

## 1. Football won't ever greet you at the door, squealing, "Daddy's home!"

I've always wondered what it would be like to be president—to see your name on signs, to watch your ads on TV, to have people treat you as royalty. But I really already know what it's like. Those few seconds when I enter the house and my three kids go wild as they hug my leg are better than any balloon drop at a political rally. To them, I might as well be president.

## 2. Football won't go on a hike with you.

It also won't play tag or tickle, or go fishing with you, or fly kites, or build sand castles with you. It cares not if you read to it or sing to it or give it a fun bubble bath. A football also won't randomly whisper sweet things in your ear. When my oldest son was 5, he cuddled up near me with people around and said, "Dad, I want to whisper something in your ear." He then cupped his small hands and told me in a soft voice, "I love riding bikes with you."

## 3. Football won't voluntarily kiss you on each cheek with a smile.

That's what my 2-year-old brown-eyed daughter does every day. She and I took our first daddy-daughter date last year. We colored with crayons, and then she ate as many fries as she wanted, and then she drank a milkshake. All while sitting on my lap. Then she kissed my cheeks again. And I kissed hers'.



**4. You can't change a football's diaper.** Surprised to see this on the list? Consider, though, that the Christian life and parenting are all about sacrifice, about giving, about selflessness. We are to imitate Christ. When we change a diaper or clean that spilled milk or wake up at 3 a.m. to give a bottle, we are doing the uncomfortable—and we're growing as a person, as a parent, as a Christian. We're doing the hard. And that's good.



**5. You can't throw a football with only a football.** To play football or baseball or softball or pretty much any team sport, you need a partner. And there's no better partner than a son or daughter. Some of my fondest memories include tossing the football to my oldest son as we played tackle football, in our front yard, in the colorful fall leaves. I let him tackle me over and over, and I gently tackled him some, too. For the most part, he won all those games, but that's OK. I already had won my Super Bowl.



Michael Foust is the father of three small children, a writer and editor, and blogs about parenting at [www.michaelfoust.com](http://www.michaelfoust.com).





# Power up principle: The power of women

Erica called me several months after her husband's tragic death in a work-related accident. Within minutes I realized I was with an amazing woman who was highly intelligent, in control and had lived her life in a financially sound way.

With two children and another on the way, she was on a mission to tackle problems and initiate plans. These great strengths, however, almost derailed her in those early days of adjusting to widowhood. Her assertive confidence led her into a business venture she knew little about. It wasn't long before this business venture turned into a money-losing proposition and she decided to seek help.

Another client, Liz, was 48 when her husband's sudden death left her fearful and broken. Having never touched money in her 25 years of marriage, she had no idea where to start. She came to my office with suitcases full of financial documents gathered from their home. It took almost a year to sort through the financial jungle that had to be cleared so she could begin making decisions with confidence.

These are just two of the many incredible women I have worked with over the years. *And before you men tune out*, I encourage you to continue reading if you have *any* significant women in your lives.

Ready or not, the vast majority of women will someday be compelled to play a more significant role in their financial life. Women are part of a growing and gender-shifting statistic. While men still out-earn women, women are controlling more and more purchasing decisions. With the 2011 Census Bureau reporting that the median age of widowhood is somewhere around age 60, and women projected to control trillions of dollars of wealth over the next decade,

it is not a matter of "if" but "when" you—or a woman you care about—will be forced to navigate this financial maze.

Sadly, many women I speak with are meeting me for the first time in an emotionally diminished state. They have been thrust into this complex financial world as a result of a crisis or unexpected life event. It is as if they are being forced to speak a new language and navigate a foreign country they had no intention of ever visiting!

Experience tells me that women often approach financial matters quite differently from men. Different is not good or bad; different is just, well, different! I find women are often more goal-oriented and process-driven. They tend to make choices very carefully, ask a lot of questions and avoid hasty moves. Incidentally, those traits also tend to serve them well over the long haul. Finally, women communicate about money differently than men. They tend to be more holistic and have deeply rooted emotions attached to financial decisions.

Women also face some unique challenges when planning for their financial future. Many have interrupted their careers to care for children or aging parents, which often means they earn less than men in the same age group. As a result, their retirement accounts, pensions and Social Security benefits are often lower. Women also tend to live longer than men and must stretch those resources over a longer span of time.

## Being proactive

If you are a woman reading this, do you find money matters just too emotional to address? Are you intimidated by financial decisions or lack the confi-

dence needed to make wise decisions? Are you afraid to make decisions because you have had no training? Are you just too busy to stop and prepare for this important part of life? You can do something about it!

Burying your head in the sand and hoping it will go away is not the answer. Seek counsel and find non-threatening ways to become financially educated. Don't be embarrassed if you have a lot of questions. I tell women the only "stupid" question is the one you are too intimidated to ask!

With women earning more, inheriting more and controlling more financial decisions, it is imperative that *you*—or the significant women in your life—be prepared for the responsibility that accompanies wealth management. Surround yourself with biblically-wise counsel from trusted advisors who share your worldview. They will help educate you and assist you with taking appropriate action at the appropriate time.

As you take these steps, you will begin to develop more confidence in your decisions. *And for you men who kept reading*, don't wait until there is a crisis to help ensure the significant women in your life are prepared to deal with this very critical part of life.

Empower them!



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](http://www.onedegreeadvisors.com).

Advisory services offered through One Degree Advisors, Inc.<sup>SM</sup> Securities offered through Securities America, Inc., Member FINRA/SIPC. One Degree Advisors and Securities America are separate companies.

## Success over the stress mess

My patient sits across from my desk and the deep audible bellows from her belly cannot be ignored. It's like a sci-fi soundtrack; intense gurglings and rumbles, then a pitchy squeak. Her doctors are baffled. The intestinal tract, often called "the second brain" has been reflecting her emotional state 24 hours a day for the past two months. She's manifesting her fears in a very real physical way. The final diagnosis: stress.

An estimated 75 percent to 90 percent of visits to primary care physicians are for stress-related complaints.

The body experiences multiple kinds of stress. Positive stress keeps you alert and helps you during the challenges in your life.

When stressors are continually present, however, your body's "fight-or-flight" switch remains turned on. The prolonged activation of this delicate stress-response system can send your system spiraling, resulting in anxiety, depression, digestive problems, heart disease, sleep issues, weight gain and memory and concentration impairment.

So just how does stress manifest itself? Some of the symptoms include increased irritability, worry, eating and/or drinking too much, forgetfulness, aches and pains, nervousness, fatigue, chronic illness and time pressure. If you're experiencing three or more of these symptoms, it is likely that you're experiencing chronic stress.

Dr. Daniel Amen, a renowned psychiatrist and brain expert, teaches that our emotions dictate our behavior, our thoughts affect our emotions (i.e., we choose our emotions), and our brain health (decision-making and choices) are **directly** related to the food we eat. He also believes it's our perception of events that we develop through our self-talk, not the actual events themselves, that cause most of our stress.

Making good food choices, nourish-

ing our body through physical exercise, sleeping at least seven hours a night and appropriately addressing negative thoughts are a few ways to effectively manage stress.

God's instructions for success offer the following: "As a man thinks in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7). Also, "Think on things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, of virtue, and praiseworthy" (Philippians 4:8). Notice it all starts with your thought life?

Consider a few nutritional tools to assist you in both managing stress and keeping your brain sharp.

### Choose 'brain foods'

**1. Feast on oily fish.** Essential fatty acids cannot be made by the body and must be obtained through diet. EFAs are good for maintaining healthy brain function, and more recent research praises the benefits of Omega 3 fatty acids for its effects in decreasing mild depression.

**2. Binge on blueberries.** The consumption of blueberries may be effective in improving or delaying short-term memory loss.

**3. Eat more tomatoes.** Lycopene, a powerful antioxidant found in tomatoes, helps protect against the free radical damage to cells which occur in the development of dementia, particularly Alzheimer's.

**4. 'B' vitalized by vitamins.** Certain B vitamins—B6, B12 and folic acid—are known to reduce levels of homocysteine in the blood. Elevated levels of homocysteine are associated with increased risk of stroke, cognitive impairment and Alzheimer's disease.

**5. Go nuts!** A study published in the American Journal of Epidemiology suggests that the intake of vitamin E might help to prevent cognitive decline, particularly in the elderly. Nuts are a great source



of vitamin E, as are olives, eggs, seeds, asparagus, brown rice and whole grains.

### Focus on the controllable

My husband Brandon, a certified behavioral analyst, trains his clients to reduce stress by realizing there are only five things you can control 100 percent of the time:

What you think

What you do

What you say

What you feel

How you respond to what other people do or say

What physical manifestations of stress might improve in your life if you realized you were not responsible for the actions, behaviors and reactions of others? What would it feel like entering the guilt-free zone?

### Priority of prayer

Finally, reduce stress and anxiety by "praying without ceasing and casting all your cares on the Lord" (1 Peter 5:7, 1 Thessalonians 5:17). God seeks us out and wants us to be in communication with Him. How freeing and uplifting if we really believe it and live it!

Until next month, wishing you peace, rest and joy, my friend. If you have any health questions or wellness topics you'd like me to explore, please feel free to email me at [kim@ucprx.com](mailto:kim@ucprx.com).



Kimberly Ruby, certified nutritionist at University Compounding Pharmacy, has been in the wellness industry for more than 20 years. She has been facilitating one of the

longest running weight management support groups in the nation, meeting weekly in the North County for 10 years. Her health segments have appeared on local news channels.



# 3 ways to love on your wife

Bringing her a box of chocolates on Valentine's Day, sending her fresh flowers on your wedding anniversary—nothing wrong with those decisions, guys, but you may never win the “most romantic husband” award. While it's always helpful to remember the big days and the major events, your overall relationship is more likely to be defined by the small moments and daily graces, not the special occasions.

Small moments and daily graces. That's where you win the heart of your wife. It's the daily life you live, not the occasional grand gesture, that matters the most in the long run, helping you go the distance and finish strong.

Here are three ways to bless the woman you love, without waiting for your anniversary or the next Hallmark-sponsored romantic day.

**Present an unexpected gift at an unexpected time.** Bring home something special for no reason at all, just as a treat for the woman you love. If you're on a budget (and who isn't) this doesn't need to be something expensive. You don't need to fry the credit card just to win points for being romantic. Think small but beautiful: a nice bracelet or necklace, a new ring, or maybe a colorful scarf. The aisles of your nearest department store feature items like these in all price ranges. Head on over to Kohl's, T.J. Maxx or Marshalls. If you're intimidated by shopping of any kind, ask for help or advice. Tell the sales person what your price range is, and tell her about your wife. Look at one thing or 10 things—you're sure to find something you like!



**Give her compliments behind her back.** Take the opportunity to verbally bless your spouse when speaking to her parents, her children or her friends at church. Sometime when she's not around, and when she can't possibly hear you—brag on your wife to other people who know her, especially if they're related. Be sincere, be serious and spare no effort in describing how wonderful your wife is and how much you love her. Here's the surprising thing: Those things you say in private will somehow find their way back to her, sooner or later. You don't need to wonder or worry: If you compliment your wife to her parents, her children or her friends—that news will get back to her one way or another. And when it does, it may bless her even more than something you said to her in person! Praise her when she's not around and when she can't hear you. Trust God to let the praise work its way back to her later.

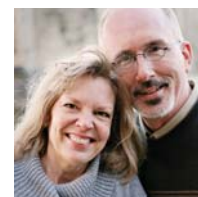
**Do an unexpected chore without asking for any reward.** Let's face it: There are a lot of tasks and jobs to do around any home. Some of those tasks

are “hers” and some of those jobs are “yours.” Look around for one of “her” chores and quietly find a time and a way to accomplish it for her, whether it's housework, yard work, picking up the laundry or putting away the dishes. Try to do this “on the sly” and when she's not around. If she asks about it later, be evasive: “Maybe the dish fairy was here!” You may enjoy this so much that you make it a habit—finding creative ways to do one or two extra chores around the house each week. Remember, you're not trying

to get caught and you're also not trying to get any reward. You're just trying to surprise your wife by doing an extra chore or finishing up a job she dreads doing.

These small acts of grace may not be the classic media definition of romance, but try a few of these ideas and see for yourself! Your wife is unique; she has her own love language and her own values, but somewhere among these suggestions is something that may resonate deeply in her heart. Your goal is to surprise her by being tender and sweet, thoughtful and kind, appreciative and aware.

Give your wife the best gift of all: A caring and creative husband!



Dr. David and Lisa Frisbie serve together as executive directors of The Center for Marriage and Family Studies in Del Mar. They are the authors of dozens of articles and

25 books about marriage and family life, including “The Soul-Mate Marriage: The Spiritual Journey of Becoming One” (Harvest House Publishers).

# Now's the time!

*"He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts..." (Ecclesiastes 3:11 NKJV)*

You live in two time zones. Did you know that? That's because there are two types of time!

Chronos time is chronological and cumulative. Think of the total minutes of a football game. Kairos time is a specific moment—usually a special one. Think of the second on the game clock when a player makes a touchdown. (Can you tell I used to be a professional football player?)

Chronos is the temporal zone, where our time cards get punched. Kairos is the eternal zone, where we walk with God. As humans on earth, we live in both zones.

But listen to this: Both chronos and kairos are "now" in the eyes of God!

That means, with His power, every second in chronos can be converted to a second of kairos. God can take a mundane moment—and make it life-changing! But you need to be prepared for it. Here's what I mean.

Think of kairos as the moment a gap opens in the defensive line. The running back has to be ready to bust through that opening and take off for the end zone. If he's looking to the left or right,

**God can take a mundane moment—and make it life-changing! But you need to be prepared for it.**

he'll never see the opportunity. And if he does see the opening in the line but isn't ready, the opportunity is lost forever! He's got to stay focused and be prepared to act—without a moment of hesitation.

So today, wherever you are, whatever you're doing, I encourage you to get pre-

pared for the Day of the Lord. Be light on your feet, seize the moment, and sprint to the end zone!

The world needs you. It's broken. And you know what's really cool? You've been uniquely equipped through your God-given design and life experiences to serve your community in a specific way. So we encourage you to get out of your comfort zone, find a group of people doing something that interests you, and then get out and be the hands and feet of Jesus.

Volunteering is ministry. As Jesus told His disciples in John 14:12, "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father."

Those "greater works" are YOU, on the street, in the nursing home, at the food bank—wherever it is that God calls you to do. Because your neighbors are in desperate need of love and a helping hand!

We're grateful for all the financial and in-kind donations. But all that would be useless except for one thing: our volunteers. They are the engine that make our massive community events

run. These amazing individuals experience the satisfaction of giving to those in need and continue to help make our vision of spreading pervasive hope throughout

the community a reality.

We, in fact, have amazing ministries and events year-round because of our powerful and committed volunteers.

Remember John 14:12? Jesus told his disciples, "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater

works than these he will do, because I go to My Father." Those "greater works" are our ministries, including our community volunteering.

God has called us, equipped us and empowered us to do to great things. Let's be the hands and feet of Christ through our volunteer efforts.

We must be willing to commit in obedience to anything God calls us to do. Today, we usually embrace the routine of start and stop. We start something and stop when it gets too difficult.

We must be people who fulfill what God calls us to do. You might come in second, or you might come in last. The point isn't winning. The point is to be committed. When God calls you to something, there will be opposition. This thing will require sacrifice, determination and passion. It is not going to be easy; that's a fact.

Jesus is the perfect example of this. He was obedient until death. "And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross." (Philippians 2:8)

No matter what the devil throws at us, we must be people who never stop. We must be people of God, passionate in our obedience from beginning to end.



Miles McPherson is senior pastor of the Rock Church and author of "God in the Mirror: Discovering Who You Were Created to Be." He can be seen Sundays at

11 p.m. on XETV San Diego 6, and heard daily on Rock Radio. He also produces Miles-A-Minute, the 60-Second Daily Video Devotional. Learn more at [www.milesmcpherson.com](http://www.milesmcpherson.com).





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## Happy birthday to me

By the time you read this column, I'll have reached one of life's many milestones: the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my 30<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Or, to be more specific, I turn 350 in dog years.

I'd love to share some words of wisdom about turning 49+1, but publishing deadlines being what they are, as I sit down to write this column I'm still a few weeks shy of the actual Big Day. All I have as a prediction of the coming decade is my past experience. My 40s were significantly better than my 30s, which were much better than my 20s. Each decade has brought with it increasing wisdom and maturity, allowing me to both apologize to and forgive myself for the previous decade.

If that trend continues, I'll be eligible for membership in Mensa. Or sainthood.

Since I have nothing to offer yet on what it means to join the Over the Hill Gang, I turned to my friend Lynda for some thoughts on what to expect. Her birthday was just a few days ago, so the big event is still fresh in her mind. She had a week-end-long celebration that included a night out with the girls, dinner with family and a lot of pictures on Facebook showing that she's barely aged since high school.

When I asked her how it felt to turn 10x5, she mused about a little arthritis in her knees, along with the requisite hot flashes and slightly higher blood pressure. You know, the things people tell me that "women your age" deal with, along with resistant gray hair, memory loss, and those few extra

pounds that won't go away no matter how much you diet or exercise.

Fair warning. The next person who says "women your age" to me will find out that women my age can still give you black eye.

But back to Lynda. She isn't letting a milestone birthday get her down. She has a lot to celebrate this year. She and her husband will be married for 25 years. Their daughter turns 21 and their son starts high school.

"I have a job I love, which I work part time, so low stress," she told me by email. "Two great kids, an awesome husband, a lovable dog, a roof over our heads, living in San Diego, and just came back from the beach, where my son's swim team was taking their team photos."

With characteristic optimism, she added, "We survived the millennium, so it's all bonus years from here on out!"

Maybe she's so upbeat because the birthday cake sugar hasn't cleared her system yet, or she's high on all of that California sun and surf so absent here in Western New York, where I live and write (and shovel snow in May). I needed feedback from someone in my own climate.

My friend Lisa celebrated The Big One last December, during a blizzard. There was a surprise party, although she didn't feel much like celebrating. And it wasn't just the weather. "I'm not where I thought I'd be at this point in my life," she admitted over lunch recently. I understand what she means. I'm still trying to figure out what I want to be when I grow up, while

people I went to high school with are retiring from jobs they've held for 25 or 30 years.

Another friend, Mickey, has a year or two on me and Lisa, and she added this perspective: "When I do realize how old I'll be it amazes me. I'm not where I thought I'd be but it's been a pretty good trip to where I am."

That explains Yvonne's thoughts, too. She said that as the years have passed, "I gained confidence. I gained experience. I gained knowledge. I gained self-esteem." This birthday is when she bloomed. "I moved forward and I've never looked back."

Sounds like the key to aging is to enjoy the journey and not focus on the destination. Good. That means I can throw away all of those mailers from the cemetery offering to help me preplan my funeral.

Today turns into tomorrow, this year turns into the next, and life keeps happening, regardless of how many candles are on your birthday cake. While I haven't made a big deal about my impending leap into old age, it would be nice if everyone else stopped counting. Yesterday the mailman delivered my membership application for AARP.

That led to maybe the best feedback I've gotten so far about turning ... gulp ... 50: "Enjoy it," said my Aunt Mary Ellen. "You'll never be any younger."



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](http://www.joannebrokaw.com).



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