

STORIES

FOR MY CHILDREN

FRANK T. YODER SR.

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2. VILLAGE OF 100

Subject: The Shrunken World-Asian/Pacific Islander/Native American Program

This is an interesting article written by Philip M. Harter, M.D., FACEP, Stanford University, School of Medicine.

If we could shrink the earth's population to a village of precisely 100 people, with all the existing human ratios remaining the same, it would look something like the following. There would be:

57 Asians

21 Europeans

14 from the Western Hemisphere, both north and south

8 Africans

52 would be female

48 would be male

70 would be nonwhite

30 would be white

70 would be non Christian

30 would be Christian

97 would be heterosexual

3 would be homosexual

6 people would possess 59% of the entire world's wealth and all 6 would be from the United States

80 would live in substandard housing

3. THE DOLLAR BILL

Take out a one dollar bill, and look at it. The one dollar bill you're looking at first came off the presses in 1957 in its present design.

This so-called paper money is in fact a cotton and linen blend, with red and blue minute silk fibers running through it. It is actually material.

We've all washed it without it falling apart. A special blend of ink is used, the contents we will never know. It is overprinted with symbols and then it is starched to make it water resistant and pressed to give it that nice crisp look.

If you look on the front of the bill, you will see the United States Treasury Seal. On the top you will see the scales for a balanced budget. In the center you have a carpenter's square, a tool used for an even cut. Underneath is the Key to the United States Treasure. That's all pretty easy to figure out, but what is on the back of that dollar bill is something we should all know.

If you turn the bill over, you will see two circles. Both circles, together, comprise the Great Seal of the United States. The First Continental Congress requested that Benjamin Franklin and a group of men come up with a Seal. It took them four years to accomplish this task and another two years to get it approved.

If you look at the left-hand circle, you will see a Pyramid. Notice the face is lighted, and the western side is dark. This country was just beginning. We had not begun to explore the West or decided what we could do for Western Civilization.

The pyramid is un-capped, again signifying that we were not even close to being finished. Inside the capstone you have the all-seeing eye, an ancient symbol for divinity. It was Franklin's belief that one man couldn't do it alone, but a group of men, with the help of God, could do anything.

"In God We Trust" is on this currency. The Latin above the pyramid, Annuit Coeptis, means, "God has favored our undertaking." The Latin below the pyramid, Novus Ordo Seclorum, means, "A new order has begun."

At the base of the pyramid is the Roman Numeral for 1776. If you look at the right-hand circle, and check it carefully, you will learn that it is on every National Cemetery in the United States. It is also on the Parade of Flags Walkway at the Bushnell, Florida National Cemetery, and is the centerpiece of most hero's monuments. Slightly modified, it is the seal of the President of the United States, and it is always visible whenever he speaks, yet very few people know what the symbols mean.

The Bald Eagle was selected as a symbol for victory for two reasons: First, he is not afraid of a storm; he is strong, and he is smart enough to soar above it. Secondly, he wears no material crown. We had just broken from the King of England. Also, notice the shield is unsupported. This country can now stand on its own. At the top of the shield you have a white bar signifying congress, a unifying factor. We were coming together as one nation. In the eagle's beak you will read "E Pluribus Unum", meaning, "One nation from many people".

Above the Eagle, you have thirteen stars, representing the thirteen original colonies, and any clouds of misunderstanding rolling away. Again, we were coming together as one.

Notice what the Eagle holds in his talons. He holds an olive branch and arrows. This country wants peace, but we will never be afraid to fight to preserve peace. The Eagle always wants to face the olive branch, but in time of war, his gaze turns towards the arrows.

They say the number 13 is an unlucky number. This is almost a worldwide belief. You will usually never see a room number 13, or any hotels or motels with a 13th floor. But think about this: 13 original colonies, 13 signers of the declaration of Independence, 13 stripes on our flag, 13 steps on the pyramid, 13 letters in the Latin above, 13 letters in: "E Pluribus Unum", 13 stars above the Eagle, 13 bars on that shield, 13 leaves on the olive branch, 13 fruits, and if you look closely, 13 arrows, and for minorities: the 13th amendment.

I always ask people, "Why don't you know this?" Your children don't know this, and their history teachers don't know this. Too many veterans have given up too much to ever let the meaning fade. Many veterans remember coming home to an American that didn't care. Too many veterans never came home at all.

4. CANADIAN NEWSPAPER TRIBUTE TO AMERICA

America the good neighbor.

Widespread but only partial news coverage was given recently to a remarkable editorial broadcast from Toronto by Gordon Sinclair, a Canadian television commentator. What follows is the full text of his trenchant remarks as printed in the Congressional Record:

“This Canadian thinks it is time to speak up for the Americans as the most generous and possibly the least appreciated people on all the earth.

Germany, Japan and, to a lesser extent, Britain and Italy were lifted out of the debris of war by the Americans who poured in billions of dollars and forgave other billions in debts. None of these countries is today paying even the interest on its remaining debts to the United States.

When France was in danger of collapsing in 1956, it was the Americans who propped it up, and their reward was to be insulted and swindled on the streets of Paris. I was there. I saw it.

When earthquakes hit distant cities, it is the United States that hurries into help. This spring, 59 American communities were flattened by tornadoes. Nobody helped.

The Marshall plan and the Truman Policy pumped billions of dollars into discouraged countries. Now newspapers in those countries are writing about the decadent, war-mongering Americans.

I'd like to see just one of those countries that is gloating over the erosion of the United States dollar build its own airplane. Does any other country in the world have a plane to equal the Boeing Jumbo jet, the Lockheed Tri-Star, or the Douglas 10? If so, why don't they fly them?

Why do all the international lines except Russia fly American Planes? Why does no other land on earth even consider putting a man or woman on the moon? You talk about Japanese technocracy, and you get radios. You talk about German technocracy, and you get automobiles. You talk about American technocracy, and you find men on the moon-not once, but several times-and safely home again.

You talk about scandals, and the Americans put theirs right in the store window for everybody to look at. Even their draft-dodgers are not pursued and hounded. They are here on our streets, and most of them, unless they are breaking Canadian laws, are getting American dollars from ma and pa at home to spend here.

When the railways of France, Germany and India were breaking down through age, it was the Americans who rebuild them. When the Pennsylvania railroad and the New York Central went broke, nobody loaned them an old caboose. Both are still broke. I can name you 5000 times when the Americans raced to the help of other people in trouble. Can you name me even one time when someone else raced to the Americans in trouble? I don't think there was outside help even during the San Francisco earthquake. Our neighbors have faced it alone, and I'm one Canadian who is dammed tired of hearing them get kicked around. They will come out of this thing with their flag high. And when they do, they are entitled to thumb their nose at the lands that are gloating over there present troubles. I hope Canada is not one of those.”

Stand proud, America

5. The American G.I.

(General Powell's Introduction)

Time Magazine prepared a list of the 10 most influential people of the century in each field to mark the end of the century. The 10 most influential scientists, politicians, entertainers, sports figures, musicians, artists, and industrialists. This month they published the 10 most influential people (overall) of the century. They named "the American G.I." the most influential person of the century. It is the only one that is not a single individual. General Colin Powell wrote the introduction to the award.

As Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I referred to the men and women of the armed forces as "G.I. ." It got me in trouble with some of my colleagues at the time. Several years earlier, the Army had officially excised the term as an unfavorable characterization derived from the designation "government issue." Sailors and Marines wanted to be known as sailors and Marines. Airmen, notwithstanding their origins as a rib of the Army, wished to be called simply airmen. Collectively, they were blandly referred to as "service members."

I persisted in using G.I. and found I was in good company. Newspapers, successful government education program was known as the G.I. Bill, and it still uses that title for a newer generation of veterans. When you added one of the most common boy's names to it, you got G.I. Joe, and the name of the most popular boy's toy ever, the G.I. Joe action figure. And let's not forget G.I. Jane. G.I. is a World War II term that two generations later continues to conjure up the warmest and proudest memories of a noble war that pitted pure good against pure evil and good triumphed.

The victors in that war were the American G.I., the Willies and Joes, the farmer from Iowa and the steelworker from Pittsburgh who stepped off a landing craft into the hell of Omaha Beach. The G.I. was the wisecracking kid Marine from Brooklyn who clawed his way up a deadly hill on a Pacific island. He was a black fighter pilot escorting white bomber pilots over Italy and Germany, proving that skin color had nothing to do with skill or courage. He was a native Japanese-American infantryman released from his own country's concentration camp to join the fight. She was a nurse relieving the agony of a dying teenager. He was a petty officer standing on the edge of a heaving aircraft carrier with two signal paddles in his hands, helping guide a dive-bomber pilot back onto the deck. They were America.

They reflected our diverse origins. They were the embodiment of the American spirit of courage and dedication. They were truly a "people's army," going forth on a crusade to save democracy and freedom, to defeat tyrants, to save oppressed peoples and to make their families proud of them. They were the Private Ryan's, and they stood firm in the thin red line.

For most of those G.I.'s, World War II was the adventure of their lifetime. Nothing they would ever do in the future would match their experiences as the warriors of democracy, saving the world from its own insanity. You can still see them in every Fourth of July color guard, their gait faltering but ever proud. Their forebears went by other names: doughboys, Yanks, buffalo soldiers, Johnny Reb, Rough Riders. But "G.I." will be forever lodged in the consciousness of our nation to apply to them all. The G.I. carried the value system of the American people. The G.I. were the surest guarantee of America's

commitment. For more than 200 years, they answered the call to fight the nation's battles.

They never went forth as mercenaries on the road to conquest. They went forth as reluctant warriors, as citizen soldiers.

They were as gentle in victory as they were vicious in battle. I've had survivors of Nazi concentration camps tell me of the joy they experienced as the G.I. liberated them: America had arrived! I've had a wealthy Japanese businessman come into my office and tell me what it was like for him as a child in 1945 to await the arrival of the dreaded American beasts, and instead meet a smiling G.I. who gave him a Hershey bar. In thanks, the businessman was donating a large sum of money to the USO. After thanking him, I gave him as a souvenir, a Hershey bar I had autographed. He took it and began to cry.

The 20th century can be called many things, but it was most certainly a century of war. The American G.I. helped defeat fascism and communism. They came home in Triumph from the ferocious battlefields of World Wars I and II. In Korea and Vietnam they fought just as bravely as any of their predecessor, but no triumphant receptions awaited them at home. They soldiered on through the twilight struggles of the cold war and showed what they were capable of in Desert Storm. The American people took them into their hearts again.

In this century hundreds of thousands of G.I. died to bring to the beginning of the 21st century the victory of democracy as the ascendant political system on the face of the earth. The G.I. were willing to travel far away and give their lives, if necessary, to secure the rights and freedoms of others. Only a nation such as ours, based on a firm moral foundation, could make such a request of its citizens. And the G.I. wanted nothing more than to get the job done and then return home safely. All they asked for in repayment from those they freed was the opportunity to help them become part of the world of democracy-and just enough land to bury their fallen comrades, beneath simple white crosses and Stars of David.

The volunteer G.I. of today stand watch in Korea, the Persian Gulf, Europe and the dangerous terrain of the Balkans. We must never see them as mere hirelings, off in a corner of our society. They are our best, and we owe them our full support and our sincerest thanks. As this century closes, we look back to identify the great leaders and personalities of the past 100 years. We do so in a world still troubled, but full of promise. That promise was gained by the young men and women of America who fought and died for freedom.

Near the top of any listing of the most important people of the 20th century must stand, in singular honor, the American G.I. .

6. TAPS

We in the United States have all heard the haunting song, "Taps." It's the song that gives us that lump in our throats and usually tears in our eyes. But, do you know the story behind the song? If not I think you will be interested to find out about its humble beginnings.

Reportedly, it all began in 1862 during the Civil War, when Union Army Captain Robert Ellicombe was with his men near Harrison's Landing in Virginia. The confederate Army was on the other side of the narrow strip of land. During the night, Captain Ellicombe heard the moans of a soldier who lay severely wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the Captain decided to risk his life and bring the stricken man back for medical attention. Crawling on his stomach through the gunfire, the Captain reached the stricken soldier and began pulling him towards his encampment. When the Captain finally reached his own lines, he discovered it was actually a Confederate soldier, but the soldier was dead.

The Captain lit a lantern and suddenly caught his breath and went numb with shock. In the dim light, he saw the face of the soldier. It was his own son. The boy had been studying music in the South when the war broke out. Without telling his father, the boy enlisted in the Confederate Army.

The following morning, heartbroken, the father asked permission of his superiors to give his son a full military burial, despite his enemy status. His request was only partially granted. The captain had asked if he could have a group of Army band members play a funeral dirge for his son at the funeral. The request was turned down since the soldier was a Confederate. But, out of respect for the father, they did say they could give him only one musician. The Captain chose a bugler. He asked the bugler to play a series of musical notes he had found on a piece of paper in the pocket of the dead youth's uniform. This wish was granted.

The haunting melody, we now know as "Taps"... used at military funerals was born. The words are:

Day is done...Gone the sun...From the lakes...From the hills...From the sky All is well... Safety rest...God is nigh

Fading light...Dims the sight...And a star...Gems the sky
Gleaming bright. From afar...Drawing nigh...Falls the night...

Thanks and praise...For our days...Neath the sun...Neath the stars...Neath the sky... As we go...This we know. God is nigh

I, too have felt the chills while listening to "Taps" but I have never seen all the words to the song until now. I didn't even know there was more than one verse. I also never knew the story behind the song and I didn't know if you had either so I thought I'd pass it along. I now have an even deeper respect for the song than I did before

Remember those lost and harmed while serving their country, and those presently serving in the Armed Forces.

7. JOHN GLEN SAID

Things that make you think a little:

There were 39 combat related killings in Iraq in January.

In the fair city of Detroit there were 35 murders in the month of January. That's just one American City, about as deadly as the entire war-torn country of Iraq.

When some claim that President Bush shouldn't have started this war, state the following:

- a. FDR lead us into World War 11.**
- b. Germany never attacked us; Japan did.
From 1941-1945, 450,000 lives were lost— an average of 112,500 per year.**
- c. Truman finished that war and started one in Korea.
North Korea never attacked us. From 1950-1953, 55,000 lives were lost ... an Average of 18,334 per year.**
- d. John F. Kennedy started the Vietnam conflict in 1962. Vietnam never attacked us.**
- e. Johnson turned Vietnam into a quagmire. From 1965-1975, 58,000 lives ere lost an average of 5,800 per year.**
- f. Clinton went to war in Bosnia without UN or French consent. Bosnia never attacked us. He was offered Osama Bin Laden's head on a platter three times by Sudan and did nothing. Osama has attacked us on multiple occasions.**
- g. In the years since terrorists attacked us, President Bush has liberated two countries, crushed the Taliban, crippled Al-Qaida, put nuclear inspectors in Libya, Iran, and North Korea without firing a shot, and captured a terrorist who slaughtered 300,000 of his own people.**

The Democrats are complaining about how long the war is taking, but...

It took less time to take Iraq than it took Janet Reno to take the Branch Davidian compound. That was a 51-day operation

We've been looking for evidence for chemical weapons in Iraq for less time than it took Hillary Clinton to find the Rose Law Firm billing records.

It took less time for the 3rd Infantry Division and the Marines to destroy the Medina Republican Guard then it took Ted Kennedy to call the police after his Oldsmobile sank at Chappaquiddick

It took less time to take Iraq than it took to count the votes in Florida!!!!

Our commander-In-Chief is doing a Great Job! The Military morale is high!

The biased media hopes we are too ignorant to realize the facts.

But Wait there is more!

John Glenn (On the Senate Floor)

Mon, 27 Jan 2004 11:13

Some people still don't understand why military personnel do what they do for a living. This exchange between Senators John Glenn and Senator Howard Metzenbaum is worth reading. Not only is it a pretty impressive impromptu speech, but it's also a good example of one man's explanation of why men and women in the armed services do what they do for a living.

This is typical, though sad, example of what some who have never (Senator M Metzenbaum) served, think of the military.

Senator Metzenbaum (speaking to Senator Glenn):
"How can you run for Senate when you've never held a real job?"

Senator Glenn (D-Ohio): "I served 23 years in the United States marine Corps. I served through two wars. I flew 149 missions. My plane was hit by anti-aircraft fire on 12 different occasions. I was in the space program. It wasn't my checkbook, Howard; it was my life on the line. It was not a nine-to-five job, where I took time off to take the daily cash receipts to the bank."

"I ask you to go with me... as I went the other day... to a veteran's hospital and look at those men, with their mangled bodies... in the eye, and tell them they don't hold a job!

You go with me to the Space Program at NASA and go, as I have gone, to the Widows and Orphans of Ed White, Gus Grissom and Roger Chaffee... and you look those kids in the eye and tell them that their Dads didn't hold a job.

You go with me on Memorial Day and you stand in Arlington National Cemetery, where I have more friends buried than I'd like to remember, and you watch those waving flags.

You stand there, and you think about this nation, and you tell me that those people didn't have a job?

What about you?"

For those who don't remember, During W.W.11, Howard Metzenbaum was an attorney representing the Communist Part in the USA.

Now he's a Senator!!

8. FINDING GOD ON THE BATTLE FIELD
A DEAD SOLDIERS CONVERSION

Look, God, I have never spoken to you,
But now I want to say, How do you do?"
You see, God, they told me you didn't exist,
And, like a fool, I believed all this.

Last night from the shell hole I saw your sky—
I figured right then they had told me a lie.
Had I taken time to see things you made,
I'd have known they weren't calling a spade a spade.

I wonder, God, if you'd shake my hand.
Somehow I feel that you will understand.
Funny I had to come to this hellish place
Before I had time to see your face.

Well, I guess there isn't much more to say,
But I'm sure glad, God, I met you today.
I guess the "zero hour" will soon be here
But I'm not afraid since I know you're near.

The Signal! Well, God, I'll have to go
I like you lots, this I want you to know,
Look, now, this will be a horrible fight;
Who knows, I may come to your house tonight.

Though I wasn't friendly to you before,
I wonder God, if you'd wait at your door?
Look, I'm crying! Me! Shedding tears...
I wish I had known you these many years.

Well, I have to go now, God, good-bye.
Strange, since I met you, I'm not afraid to die.

---Found on body of dead soldier

9. SOUTH MILLS BATTLE

South mills-The sound was deafening. Smoke lingered heavily in the air. Shots and shells hissed through the dense woods—a deadly silent thud if they hit a home. Balls whistled, spraying bark from the trees and stripping the land.

In the midst of the firing a young Confederate soldier spotted a woman, heavily burdened by the child she carried in her arms, scurrying towards a lone hut which stood midway between the forces.

Sensing the imminent danger that the woman and child were in, the soldier impulsively dropped his accoutrements and gun and ran in the direction of the shelter.

The date was April 16, 1862. The story to follow probably wouldn't create much stir nowadays, but it was enough then to generate a saga of love, mystery, sorrow and joy that had survived retelling for 117 years.

The source of this account is a story written by R.A. Lewis, M.D. a surgeon for the Third Georgia Regiment in the Civil War and an eyewitness to the event. His story has been published in "Historical Highlights of Camden County. 1777-1977" and entitled "A War Echo From Dismal Swamp."

South Mills During The War

The third Georgia Regiment had been sent forth from Norfolk to South Mills, a "Hamlet on the Dismal Swamp Canal, just where the canal opens into the Pasquotank River."

At the time of the Civil War, South Mills boasted a population of about 200 people, a Methodist Church, two stores, a blacksmith shop, two "so called" hotels and a cobbler.

The tow path of the canal served as main street which then branched into several shorter streets laid out in right angles to the canal.

The Confederates had evacuated Elizabeth City, some drifting to Norfolk, Portsmouth and outlying farms, other to South Mills.

There were several federal gunboats lying in the mouth of the river, a few hundred yards from the wharf, wrote Lewis, and everyday about noon they would steam up to the wharf to reconnoiter, and then drop back to their former position. Two companies of our regiment were stationed in the suburbs of the town, where they were out of sight but could watch the motions of the gunboats and other vessels.

The Third Georgia Regiment was probably the largest regiment in the Confederate State, Lewis said. It included 11 companies consisting of about 100 men each.

Their duties were to protect the locks of the Dismal Swamp Canal from any Yankee force which managed to land in Elizabeth City and attempted to penetrate South Mills.

Because Roanoke Island and Elizabeth City had fallen into the hands of the enemy, several refugees fled to South Mills seeking shelter. Despite war times, Lewis commented that the village was a happy and lively place. Our Regiment had a very good brass band and although it was war time, the little place was very gay, for our band was accommodating, and every night would play for the young people to dance. There were many girls and a whole regiment of men, so there was no end to the fun and frolic while we remained at South Mills, which was from February, until the evacuation of Norfolk.

But the fun and frolicking soon ended. Word came on the morning of April 19, 1862 that a Federal force five thousand strong, with two batteries of artillery—twelve pound howitzers—had disembarked under the command of General Reno, Reynolds and Hawkins—I do not know which was the ranking officer, and were marching directly for South Mills.

The Yankees Attack

There were only two ways that a force landing at Elizabeth City could get out to South Mills—one passage by the Camden Courthouse and one direct road to South Mills.

After the news of the coming Yankees were dispersed throughout the small hamlet, Col. A. R. Wright of the Georgia Volunteers ordered his men together to meet them near the locks.

The line of defense was made about 3 miles below South Mills at the edge of the woods at the north end of Sawyer's Lane.

An east-west trench was dug at the edge of the woods. A heavy rail fence was build on a ridge on the south side of the trench.

Two companies of the regiment guarded the road from Camden Courthouse and nine companies were stationed in the woods. The battery was located where the road enters the woods, and it consisted of four six- ponders.

The atmosphere surrounding the village was one of tenseness and anticipation.

One soldier suggested that as soon as the enemy was in sight, they set fire to the Fence rails boarding the trench. Anything else that would burn was placed into the ditch.

The minute the Yankees were spotted, the fire was ignited so that the enemy could not occupy the ditch. It earned the name "roasted ditch" and is still visible on Highway 343 between two houses owned by Mr. And Mrs. Richard Humphries and Mr. And Mrs. Edward Allen Jr.

A strange occurrence

"I was standing near Captain McComes, who command the battery," recalled Lewis. "He was a soldier as ever drew a saber. As he opened his lips to give a command, a bullet struck him in the mouth, and broke his spine and he fell dead—the only man killed on our side.

"I could see every movement, and hear every command, while we were invisible," continued Lewis. "There was a small house in the open field about halfway between the two forces, through which many shot and shell had torn their way."

It was at this time that the Confederate soldier had spotted the woman and child and rushed to their aid. The two forces were now about 200 yards apart.

"He rushed through a hot storm of shot and shell as the famous six hundred at Belaklava charged," recounted Lewis; "When he got to the house, he found the woman on the bed, dead, a piece of shell having struck her in the face, crushing her skull so fearfully that she was beyond recognition. The little child was sitting beside her, trying to rouse her, her little hands and clothing besmeared with blood."

A round shot crashed through the roof of the house. The soldier picked up the child and ran back to the line amid cheers and slaps on the back from his companions.

The little girl was transported to South Mills by ambulance. At the end of the battle, Lewis made his rounds, treating the wounded. He finally went to the small hut and upon inspection, found a chain and locket around the dead woman's neck. He opened it and gazed at two miniatures carved from ivory, one of a beautiful girl, the other a handsome man. He also removed the woman's gold watch and found a purse containing gold coin and confederate notes.

But he could find no identification of the woman or child. Later the woman was buried in the church yard at South Mills.

All efforts to identify the woman and child proved fruitless, but it was believed that she was from South Carolina and had been living in Elizabeth City until it became occupied by the Yankees. She had then fled and boarded at a home in the country a few miles from South Mills. But even the occupants where she had lived could not identify the woman. Advertisements were printed and dispersed, but all in vain.

The child was taken care of at "The Cherry Tree", which Lewis describes as a "cross between a wayside tavern and grocery store," until the surgeon could carry her to Norfolk and attempt to discover who she was. The confederate soldier who had rescued the child, begged Lewis to care for her because he was in the ranks and far from home.

Who was the Child

Lewis took the child, after gaining his requested furlough, and took her to Norfolk to inquire about her identification. The child said her name was "May" but could give no other clue to her identity. She appeared to be about three years old and Lewis said she was "a sweet, gentle, confiding little creature."

The regiment had wanted to adopt the little girl, but her rescuer had firmly declined asking that Lewis take the responsibility.

The child's story drew many a sight of sympathy from people and some of the ladies in Norfolk provided a wardrobe and everything else necessary for the comfort of the orphan.

Unable to obtain any answers to inquiries about the child's identity. Lewis finally took her to his home in Richmond, where she was gaily welcomed since all his children were boys. More advertisements were included in Richmond papers and throughout the South.

Many people visited the child but did not know who she was.

About the Child Rescuer

His name was Henry Dixon. The only child of a wealthy, aristocratic family from South Carolina, he joined a regiment shortly after the attack on Fort Sumter. He had only been married a year or two, and although his parents and wife were distressed by his desire to join the army, they all bid him do whatever he thought was his duty.

When Henry returned home after the war, he found that "the old home had been right in the pathway of Sherman's march to the sea, and there was no home left. Both the old people died, and were buried beneath the willows in the garden. Looking over the desolation, Henry's one thought was a agonizing perplexity as to his wife and child," wrote Lewis.

The Search

In January, 1962, Henry's wife left South Carolina knowing that he was or had been in Norfolk. She had asked a young friend, home on leave of absence and planning to return by way of Norfolk, to escort her there. She wanted to surprise her husband.

She made it to Elizabeth City, but there her comrade met his death. After gathering all of the information he could from neighbors, Henry set out to search for his wife and child. He had very little money and only a half-starved horse for transportation.

All he knew was that his wife had planned to go to Norfolk "with the hope of giving him a delightful surprise." He was also aware of the death of her escort.

Two years after his wife had planned to intercept him, Henry arrived in Norfolk. But he gained very little information as to the whereabouts of his wife and child.

He returned to South Carolina with a heavy heart, planning to rebuild his life.

A Little Bit Of Luck

Upon arriving home, he received notification that he possessed a considerable amount of money that had been owed to his father.

With a lightened heart, Henry began to rebuild his home, and determined once more to search for his lost wife and child.

He returned to Norfolk, but even after a month had passed, he could still find no clues. Considerably disheartened he again turned for home but went by way of Richmond to visit Lewis and of course, inquire about the little orphan whom he had rescued from the battle.

On the way to Lewis' home he walked past a school which had just dismissed for the day. He could not help but stare at a young girl who bore a striking resemblance to his wife. He hesitantly approached her and asked her name. The child told him "May." He then asked for her last name and she said "May Darling,"

Lewis' family had given her this name, hoping one day to discover her true identity. Henry then asked the young girl where she lived and when she told him, he was "overcome with emotion, for the thought came rushing through his brain, that this was his own child, whom he had saved, and the mangled form on the bed, was that of his wife."

Dixon went home with the little girl and Lewis said that he was "very much agitated, and seemed perfectly dazed."

"After a short time, when he became calm enough to tell what he hoped respecting our little girl," wrote Lewis, "I brought out the locket and chain and watch found on the dead woman. His hands trembled nervously as he pressed the spring to open the lock, but when he opened it his strong frame shook like a willow in the storm. He covered his face with his hands, and the hot tears ran down his cheeks, for there was the miniature of his wife one the one side and his own on the other, and on removing them from the case, which had never been done before, her name and his own were traced in gilt letters on the ivory.

"And now the scene between father and little daughter was too pathetic to describe. Joy and sorrow so mingled in the cup, that it was difficult to tell which predominated.

"It was a great grief to us all to part with her, for we had learned to love her as well as if she was our own child."

10. Run over Rabbit

A man was driving along the highway, and saw a rabbit hopping across the middle of the road. He swerved to avoid hitting the rabbit, but unfortunately the rabbit jumped in front of the car and was hit. The driver, being a sensitive man as well as an animal lover, pulled over to the side of the road, and got out to see what had become of the rabbit.

Much to his dismay, the rabbit was dead. The driver felt so awful, he began to cry. A woman driving down the highway saw the man crying on the side of the road and pulled over. She stepped out of her car and asked the man what was wrong. "I feel terrible," he explained, "I accidentally hit this rabbit and killed it."

The woman told the man not to worry. She knew what to do. She went to her car trunk, and pulled out a spray can. She walked over to the limp, dead rabbit, and sprayed the contents of the can onto the rabbit.

Miraculously the rabbit came to life, jumped up, waved its paw at the two humans and hopped down the road. 50 feet away the rabbit stopped, turned around, waved and hopped down the road another 50 feet, turned, waved and hopped another 50 feet. The man was astonished. He couldn't figure out what substance could be in the woman's spray can! He ran over to the woman and asked, "What is in your spray can? What did you spray on that rabbit?"

The woman turned the can around so that the man could read the label. It said:

(Brace yourself)

Hair spray. Restores life to dead hair. Adds permanent wave.

11. ARTICLES OF FAITH

The Articles of Faith, printed at the end of the Pearl of Great Price, were written by the Prophet Joseph Smith in response to a request from John Wentworth, editor of the newspaper Chicago Democrat. Joseph Smith's "Wentworth Letter" included a brief history of the Church and concluded with the Articles of Faith.

Joseph Smith wrote: "Mr. Wentworth says that he wishes to furnish Mr. Bastow a friend of his, who is writing the history of New Hampshire, with this document. As Mr. Bastow has taken the proper steps to obtain correct information, all that I shall ask at his hands, is, that he publish the account entire, un-garnished, and without misrepresentation." (History of the Church 4:534-536)

Toward the end of the "Wentworth Letter," Joseph Smith wrote: "Our missionaries are going forth to different nations, and in Germany, Palestine, New Holland, Australia, the East Indies, and other places the Standard of Truth has been erected; no unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing; persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done" (History of the Church 4:540)

Then, without further introduction, the Prophet listed what have become known as The Articles of Faith, followed by his signature.

B.H. Roberts wrote A Comprehensive History of the Church (2:131): "Millions of these 'Articles of Faith' have been published; they have been translated into many languages and carried to all the nations of the earth and tribes of men where the New Dispensation of the gospel has been preached. They were not produced by the labored efforts and the harmonized contentions of scholastics but were struck off by one mind at a single effort to make a declaration of that which is most assuredly believed by the church, for one making earnest inquiry about her history and her fundamental doctrines."

In his April 1992, conference address, Elder Joseph B. Withlin of the Council of the Twelve said, "The fact that one heaven-inspired person rather than a council of scholars produced this remarkable document is another evidence of Joseph Smith's divine calling."

In his book the Articles of Faith (Page 6) James E. Talmage wrote: "From the time of their first promulgation, the Articles of Faith have been accepted by the people as an authoritative exposition; and on October 6, 1890, the Latter-day Saints, in general conference assembled, readopted the Articles as a guide in faith and conduct.

12. SONG: BECAUSE I HAVE BEEN GIVEN MUCH;

219 Because I Have Been Given Much

Gently $\text{♩} = 48-58$

Unison

1. Be - cause I have been giv - en much, I too must give;
 2. Be - cause I have been shel-tered, fed by thy good care,
 3. Be - cause I have been blessed by thy great love, dear Lord,

Be - cause of thy great boun - ty, Lord, each day I live
 I can - not see an - oth - er's lack and I not share
 I'll share thy love a - gain, ac - cord - ing to thy word.

I shall di - vide my gifts from thee With ev-'ry broth-er that I see
 My glow-ing fire, my loaf of bread, My roof's safe shel-ter o - ver - head,
 I shall give love to those in need; I'll show that love by word and deed:

Who has the need of help from me.
 That he too may be com - fort - ed.
 Thus shall my thanks be thanks in - deed.

13. TWO NUTS BY THE FENCE

There was a huge nut tree by the cemetery fence. One day, two boys filled up a bucketful of nuts and sat down by the tree, out of sight, and began dividing the nuts. "One for you, one for me. One for you, one for me," said one boy. The bucket was so full that a couple of the nuts rolled out and rested by the fence.

Cycling down the road by the cemetery was a third boy. As he passed by, he thought he heard voices from inside the cemetery. He slowed down to investigate. Sure enough he heard, "One for you, one for me. One for you," and so on. He knew what that meant. "Oh my gosh!" he shuddered, "It's Satan and St. Peter dividing up the souls at the cemetery!"

He cycled down the road and found an old man with a cane, hobbling along. "Come quick!" he yelled, "You won't believe what I just heard. Satan and St. Peter are down at the cemetery dividing up souls."

The old man said, "Shoo, you brat! Can't you see I'm finding it hard to walk as it is?" But after several pleas, the man finally hobbled over to the cemetery where he heard a voice saying, "One for you, one for me. One for you," and so on.

The old man whispered to the boy, "Boy, you've been telling the truth! Let's see if we can see the Devil himself." Shivering with fear, they edged toward the fence, still unable to see anything, but they heard, "One for you, one for me. One for you, one for me. And the last one for you. That's all. Now let's go get those two nuts by the fence, and we'll be done!"

They say the old guy made it to town 10 minutes before the boy did!

14. John Stevens Story: By Frank T. Yoder Sr.

Back in 1976 I knew a brother named John Stevens. He was 21 at the time and married to a beautiful young girl. They had joined the church but were struggling with their testimonies. I received a e-mail in September of this year (2004) and I would like to read some of it to you.

“Here’s some little news. I turn 50 next Friday. September 10th. I was 21 when you and I were together. I was 30 on that fateful night in 1985 when I called you before leaving Pennsylvania for Rhode Island and the church. (He was getting a divorce and was out of a job and feeling very down) Since then I’ve served as Stake Missionary, Ward Mission Leader, 1st Counselor in the Bishopric, Stake High Council and 1st Councilor in the Stake Mission Presidency, Ward Young Men’s President, Assistant High Priest Group Leader, 1st Counselor in the Stake Sunday School for three months before being called in this Bishopric as 1st Councilor almost five years ago. After speaking to you that night I spent six rough weeks of repentance and suffering and was ordained a Priest at the hands of our Bishop. Robert S. Wood. Now an Elder in the Second Quorum of the Seventy. Within 3 years, at 33 years old, I became a high Priest and began service in a Bishopric. At 32 I was sealed in the Washington DC Temple and Charlie Hurdle was one of my Witnesses.)

I wanted to lay that out for you. I’m still challenged with many weaknesses. You had a great deal to do with all of that, my friend. I’m, no dummy. I’m not just saying that. You gave me a blessing that was prophetic and highly important in my life. It took me 9 years to figure it out. I’d like to tell you about it sometime.” I’ve got two more years before I have to move out of the ward to avoid the Bishop call. Although, with my reputation, I’m still a little hard core, I think I’m ok. For a couple of years I had hoped to get that call. I remember advice you gave me years ago. You had a huge impact on me. I’m sure you must realize that. During that talk you told me that if I didn’t become at least A Bishop I will have failed. Now, don’t get excited. I know what you meant. In context it was about me having lots of ability and blowing it on partying and other wasteful things. I spent the time to tell you about the things we’ve done in church to let you know that we accept callings and are a family that at least helps out. My girls help in many ways. I hope I can continue to serve.

I’m grateful to you for being the man and family that you are. I will not un-hook myself from you. Too bad, you’re stuck with me. If I can get myself to Utah I’ll look you up. I knew I needed a few minutes to write back. I had no idea I’d do this much. Well, now you know. Please stay in touch. I might lean on your shoulder again, one of these days. Otherwise, the gospel has blessed us beyond our wildest dreams. It ain’t easy. But it’s worth it. All my love to you, Kathy, and the Yoder clan. ----- John.

15. ACHIEVING THE COMPANIONSHIP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

(Dallin H. Oaks, Pure in heart. Pg 123; emphasis added)

“How do we achieve spirituality? How do we attain that degree of holiness wherein we can have the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost and view and evaluate the things of this world with the perspective of eternity?

We seek spirituality through faith, repentance, and baptism; through forgiveness of one another; through fasting and prayer; through righteous desires and pure thoughts and actions. We seek spirituality through service to our fellowmen; through worship; through feasting on the word of God, in the scriptures and in the teaching of the living prophets. We attain spirituality through making and keeping covenants with the Lord, through conscientiously trying to keep all the commandments of God. Spirituality is not acquired suddenly. It is the consequence of a succession of right choices. It is the harvest of a righteous life.

Through the lens of spirituality we see all the commandments of God as invitations to blessings.”

3 Nephi 9:20

The Lord Himself promised: “And whoso cometh unto me with broken heart and a contrite spirit, him will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost.”

President David O. McKay, “Emotional maturity”, Instructor. Sept 1959, pg 281

People experience (and describe) the influence of the Holy Ghost differently:

“a flash of insight or understanding...”

“a burning feeling confirming what I had heard...”

“a whispering”

“a comforting assurance”

“a strong impression to...”

“it’s like something strumming the most tender strings of my heart”

“that light bulb spark...you know, that ‘Aha!’ feeling...”

“an echo of recognition...a sort of ‘Oh! Yes...’”

“sometimes when I read the scriptures, it was literally as if someone adjusted the clarity of my glasses.. I simply read with a whole new understand, from a whole new perspective.”

“...a voice inside you that says “I wouldn’t do that if I were you!” (my seven years olds perspective)

Galatians 5:22-23

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance...”

16. ACHIEVING THE COMPANIONSHIP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT CONTINUED

Discourses of Brigham Young, pg 431

“Nothing short of the Holy Spirit... can prove to you that this is the work of God. (Any one may dispute it, but there is no one in the world who can disprove it.) Men uninspired of God cannot by their worldly wisdom disprove it, or prevail against it, neither can they by wisdom alone prove it is to be true, either to themselves or to others.... How are we to know the voice of the Good Shepherd from the voice of a stranger? Can any person answer this question. I can. It is very easy. To every philosopher upon the earth, I say, your eye can be deceived, so can mine; your ear can be deceived, so can mine, the touch of your hand can be deceived, so can mine, but the Spirit of God filling the creature with revelation and the light of eternity, cannot be mistaken—the revelation which comes from God is never mistaken. When an individual, filled with the spirit of God, declares the truth of heaven, the sheep hear that, the Spirit of the Lord pierces their inmost souls and sinks deep into their hearts, by the testimony of the Holy Ghost light springs up within them, and they see and understand for themselves.

D&C 50: 19-22, 24; emphasis added

“And again, he that receiveth the word of truth, doth he receive it by the spirit of truth or some other way? If it be some other way it is not of God. Therefore, why is it that ye cannot understand and know, that he that receiveth the word by the Spirit of truth receiveth it as it is preached by the spirit of truth? Wherefore, he that preacheth and he that receiveth, understand one another, and both are edified and rejoice together.... That which is of God is light, and he that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light, and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day.”

Dallin H. Oaks, Pure in Heart. Pg 111

“The pure in heart have a distinctive way of looking at life. Their attitudes and desires cause them to view their experiences in terms of eternity.”

17. THERACE

"Quit! Give up! You're beaten!"
They shout at me, and plead
"There's just too much against you now.
This time you can't succeed."
And as I start to hang my head
In front of failure's face
My downward fall is broken by
The memory of a race.
And hope refills my weakened will
As I recall that scene
For just the thought of that short race
Rejuvenates my being.

A children's race, young boys, young men
Now, I remember well,
Excitement, sure! But also fear,
It wasn't hard to tell.

They all lined up so full of hope
Each thought to win that race,
Or, tie the first, or if not that,
At least take second place.

And fathers watched from off the side
Each cheering for his son
And each boy hoped to show his dad,
That he would be the one.

The whistle blew, and off they went
Young hearts and hopes afire
To win to be the hero there
Was each young boy's desire

And one boy in particular,
Whose dad was in the crowd,
Was running near the head, and thought;
"My dad will be so proud!"

But as they speeded down the field
Across a shallow dip
The little boy, who thought to win,
Lost his step, and slipped.

Trying hard to catch himself,
His hands flew out to brace
And 'mid the laughter of the crowd,
He fell flat on his face.

So, down he fell, and with him hope
--he couldn't win it now—
Embarrassed, sad, he only wished
To disappear some how.

But as he fell, his dad stood up,
And showed his anxious face,
Which to the boy so clearly said:
“Get up and win the race.”

He quickly rose, no damage done,
---behind a bit, that's all—
And ran with all his mind and might
To make up for the fall.

So, anxious to restore himself
--to catch up and to win—
His mind went faster than his legs;
He slipped and fell again!

He wished, then, he had quit before
With only one disgrace.
“I'm hopeless as a runner now:
I shouldn't try to race.”

But in the laughing crowd he searched,
And found his father's face
That steady look that said again;
“Get up and win the race.”

So up he jumped, to try again
--ten yards behind the last—
“If I'm to gain those yards,” he thought
“I've got to move real fast.”

Exceeding everything he had
He gained back eight or ten.
But trying so, to catch the lead,
He slipped and fell again!

Defeat! He lay there silently
--a tear dropped from his eye—
“There is no sense in running more;
Three strikes, I'm out, why try?”

The will to rise had disappeared
All hope had fled away
So far behind; so error prone
Loser all the way.

"I've lost, so what's the use," he thought
"I'll live with my disgrace."
But, then he thought about his dad,
Who, soon, he'd have to face.

"Get up!" an echo sounded low,
"Get up, and take your place.
You were not meant for failure here,
Get up and win the race!"

"With borrowed will get up," it said,
"You haven't lost at all.
For winning is no more than this;
To rise each time you fall."

So, up he rose to run once more,
And with a new commit]ment
He resolved that win, or lose,
At least he wouldn't quit.

So far behind the others now
--the most he'd ever been—
Still, he gave it all he had,
And ran as though to win.

Three times he'd fallen stumbling.
Three times he'd rose again.
Too far behind to hope to win
He still ran to the end.

They cheered the winning runner,
As he crossed the line first place,
Head high, and proud, and happy.
No falling, no disgrace.

But, when the fallen youngster
Crossed the line last place,
The crowd gave him the greater cheer
For finishing the race.

And even though he came in last,
With head bowed low, un-proud.
You would have thought he won the race
To listen to the crowd.

And to his dad, he sadly said,
"I didn't do so well."
"to me, you won!" his father said,
"You rose each time you fell."

And now when things seems dark and hard,
And difficult to face.
The memory of that little boy,
Helps me to win the race.

For all of life is like that race
With ups and downs and all,
And all you have to do to win,
Is rise each time you fall.

“Quit! Give up! You’re beaten!”
they still shout in my face.
But, another voice, within me says:
“Get up and win the race!”

18. WHERE GOD AIN'T!!!

He was just a little lad,
and on the week's first day

He was wandering home from Sunday School,
and dawdling on the way.

He scuffed his shoes into the grass;
he found a caterpillar;

He found a fluffy milkweed pod,
and blew out all the "filler".

A bird's nest in a tree o'er head
so wisely placed on high,

Was just another wonder
that caught his eager eye.

A neighbor watched his zigzag course, and
hailed him from the lawn,

Asked him where he'd been that day,
and what was going on.

"I've been to Bible school," he said, and
turned a piece of sod.

He picked up a wiggly worm and said,
"I've learned a lot of God."

"A very fine way," the neighbor said,
"for a boy to spend his time."

"If you'll tell me where God is,
I'll give you a brand new dime."

Quick as a flash his answer came!
Nor were his accents faint.

"I'll give you a dollar, Mister,
if you'll tell me where God ain't!"

-author unknown

19. Sandpiper to Bring You Joy

She was six years old when I first met her on the beach near where I live. I drive to this beach, a distance of three or four miles, whenever the world begins to close in on me. She was building a sand castle or something and looked up, her eyes as blue as the sea.

"Hello," she said. I answered with a nod, not really in the mood to bother with a small child. "I'm building," she said. "I see that. What is it?" asked, not caring. "Oh, I don't know. I just like the feel of the sand." That sounds good, I thought, and slipped off my shoes. A sandpiper glided by.

"That's a joy," the child said. "It's what?" "It's a joy. My mama says sandpipers come to bring us joy." The bird went gliding down the beach. "Good-bye, joy," I muttered to myself, "hello pain," and turned to walk on. I was depressed; my life seemed completely out of balance.

"What's your name?" She wouldn't give up. "Ruth," I answered. "I'm Ruth Peterson." "Mine's Windy" It sounded like Windy. "And I'm six." "Hi, Windy." She giggled. "You're funny," she said. In spite of my gloom I laughed too and walked on. Her musical giggle followed me. "Come again, Mrs. P," she called. "We'll have another happy day."

The days and weeks that followed belonged to others; a group of unruly Boy Scouts, PTA meetings, an ailing mother. The sun was shining one morning as I took my hands out of the dishwasher.

"I need a sandpiper," I said to myself, gathering up my coat. The never-changing balm of the seashore awaited me. The breeze was chilly, but I strode along, trying to recapture the serenity I needed. I had forgotten the child and was startled when she appeared. Hello, Mrs. P," she said. "Do you want to play?" "What did you have in mind?" I asked, with a twinge of annoyance.

"I don't know. You say." "How about charades?" I asked sarcastically. The tinkling laughter burst forth again. "I don't know what that is." "Then let's just walk" Looking at her, I noticed the delicate fairness of her face. "Where do you live?" I asked. "Over there." She pointed toward a row of summer cottages. Strange, I thought, in winter. "Where do you go to school?" "I don't go to school. Mommy says we're on vacation." She chattered little-girl talk as we strolled up the beach, but my mind was on other things. When I left for home, Windy said it had been a happy day. Feeling surprisingly better, I smiled at her and agreed.

Three weeks later, I rushed to my beach in a state of near panic. I was in no mood even to greet Windy. I thought I saw her mother on the porch and felt like demanding she keep her child at home. "Look, if you don't mind," I'd rather be alone today. She seemed unusually pale and out of breath. "Why?" she asked. I turned on her and shouted, "Because my mother died!" - and thought, my God, why was I saying this to a little child? "Oh" she said quietly, "then this is a bad day." Yes, and yesterday and the day before that and - oh, go away! "Did it hurt?" "Did what hurt?" I was exasperated with her, with

myself. "When she died?" "Of course it hurt!" I snapped, misunderstanding, wrapped up in myself. I strode off.

A month or so after that, when I next went to the beach, she wasn't there. Feeling guilty, ashamed and admitting to myself I missed her, I went up to the cottage after my walk and knocked at the door. A drawn-looking young woman with honey-colored hair opened the door. "Hello," I said. "I'm Ruth Peterson. I missed your little girl today and wondered where she was." "Oh yes, Mrs. Peterson, please come in." "Wendy talked of you so much. I'm afraid I allowed her to bother you. If she was a nuisance, please accept my apologies." "Not at all - she's a delightful child," I said, suddenly realizing that I meant it. "Where is she?" "Wendy died last week, Mrs. Peterson. She had leukemia. Maybe she didn't tell you."

Struck dumb, I groped for a chair. My breath caught. "She loved this beach; so when she asked to come, we couldn't say no. She seemed so much better here and had a lot of what she called happy days. But the last few weeks she declined rapidly. Her voice faltered. "She left something for you. . . if only I can find it. Could you wait a moment while I look?" I nodded stupidly, my mind racing for something, anything, to say to this lovely young woman.

She handed me a smeared envelope, with Mrs. P. printed in bold, childish letters. Inside was a drawing in bright crayon hues - a yellow beach, a blue sea, a brown bird. Underneath was carefully printed:

A Sandpiper To Bring You Joy

Tears welled up in my eyes, and a heart that had almost forgotten how to love opened wide. I took Wendy's mother in my arms. "I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm so sorry," I muttered over and over, and we wept together. The precious little picture is framed now and hangs in my study. Six words - one for each year of her life - that speak to me of inner harmony, courage, undemanding love. A gift from a child with sea-blue eyes and hair the color of sand - who taught me the gift of love.

20. QUALIFICATION TO BE A PROFESSIONAL

The following quiz consists of 4 questions and tells whether you are qualified to be a professional.

The questions are not that difficult

How do you put a giraffe into a refrigerator ?

Ans: Open the refrigerator, put in the giraffe and close the door.

This question test whether you tend to do simple things in an overly complicated way.

How do you put an elephant into a refrigerator ?

Ans: open the refrigerator, take out the giraffe, put in the elephant and close the door.

This test your ability to think through the repercussions of your actions.

The Lion King is hosting an animal conference. All the animals attend except one. Which animal does not attend?

Ans: The elephant. The elephant is in the refrigerator.

This test your memory. Ok, even if you did not answer the first three questions correctly, you still have one more chance to show your abilities.

There is a river you must cross, but it is inhabited by crocodiles, how do you manage it?

Ans: you swim across. All the crocodiles are attending the animals Conference

21. ONE SOLITARY LIFE

He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman.

He grew up in still another village, where he worked in a carpenter shop until he was thirty...

Then for three years he was an itinerant preacher. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never had a family or owned a house. He didn't go to college. He never visited a big city. He never traveled two hundred miles from the place where he was born. He did none of the things one usually associates with greatness. He had no credentials but himself.

He was only thirty-three when the tide of public opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. He was turned over to his enemies and went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While he was dying, his executioners gambled for his clothing, the only property he had on earth. When he was dead, he was laid in a borrowed grave though the pity of a friend.

Nineteen centuries have come and gone and today he is the central figure of the human race and the leader of mankind's progress.

All the armies that have ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned, put together have not affected the life of man on this earth as much as this ONE SOLITARY LIFE.

Jesus was not held to the cross by nails, he was held by love.

22. Processionary Caterpillars

Processionary Caterpillars feed upon pine needles. They move through the trees in a long procession, one leading and the others following---each with his eyes half closed and his head snugly fitted against the rear extremity of his predecessor.

Jean Henri Fabre, the great French naturalist, after patiently experimenting with a group of the caterpillars, finally enticed them to the rim of a large flower pot. He succeeded in getting the first one connected up with the last one, thus forming a complete circle, which started moving around in a procession, with neither beginning nor end.

The naturalist expected that after a while they would catch on to the joke, get tired of their useless march, and start off in some new direction.

But not so!

Through sheer force of habit, the living creeping circle kept moving around the rim of the pot---around and around, keeping the same relentless pace for seven days and seven nights---and would doubtless have continued longer had it not been for sheer exhaustion and ultimate starvation.

Incidentally, an ample supply of food was close at hand and plainly visible, but it was outside of the range of the circle so they continued along the beaten path.

They were following instinct, habit, custom, tradition, precedent, past experience, standard practice, or whatever you may choose to call it, but they were following it blindly.

They mistook activity for accomplishment. They meant well, but got no place.

Do you have a goal?

Present methods
Resistance to change
Standard Practice
Tradition
Opinions
Past experience
The beaten path
Filing practice
Custom
Forms
Habit

Don't be afride to go out in a different direction.

Approach/November 1970

23. FORREST GUMPGOES TO HEAVEN!

The day finally arrived; Forrest Gump dies and goes to Heaven. He is at the Pearly Gates, met by St. Peter himself. However, the Gates are closed and Forrest approaches the Gatekeeper.

St. Peter says, "Well, Forrest, it's certainly good to see you. We have heard a lot about you. I must tell you, though, that the place is filling up fast, and we've been administering an entrance examination for everyone. The test is short, but you have to pass it before you can get into Heaven."

Forrest responds, "It shor is good to be here, St. Peter, sir. But nobody ever tolt me about any entrance exam. Shor hope the test ain't too hard; life was a big enough test as it was."

St. Peter goes on, "Yes, I know, Forrest, but the test is only three questions.

First: What two days of the week begin with the letter T?

Second: How many seconds are there in a year?

Third: What is God's first name?"

Forrest leaves to think the questions over. He returns the next day and sees St. Peter, who waves him up and says, "Now that you have had a chance to think the questions over, tell me your answers."

Forrest says, "Well, the first one – which two days in the week begin with the letter "T"? Shucks, that one's easy. That'd be Today and Tomorrow. The Saint's eyes open wide and he exclaims, "Forrest, that's not what I was thinking, but you do have a point, and I guess I didn't specify, so I'll give you credit for that answer. How about the next one?" asks St. Peter.

"How many seconds in a year?"

"Now that one's harder," says Forrest, "but I thunk and thunk about that and I guess the only answer can be twelve."

Astounded, St. Peter says, "Twelve? Twelve!?! Forrest, how in Heaven's name could you come up with twelve seconds in a year?"

Forrest says "Shucks, there's gotta be twelve: January 2nd, February 2nd, March 2nd...."

"Hold it, " interrupts St. Peter. "I see where you're going with this, and I see your point, though that wasn't quite what I had in mind....but I'll have to give you credit for that one, too. Let's go on with the third and final question. Can you tell me God's first name?"

"Sure", Forrest replied, "its Andy."

"Andy?!" exclaimed an exasperated and frustrated St. Peter. "Ok, I can understand how you came up with your answers to my first two questions, but just how in the world did you come up with the name Andy as the first name of God?"

"Shucks, that was the easiest one of all," Forrest replied. "I learnt it from the song. . "ANDY WALKS WITH ME, ANDY TALKS WITH ME, ANDY TELLS ME I AM HIS OWN. . . "

St. Peter opened the Pearly Gates and said: "Run Forrest, run."

Give me a sense of humor, Lord,

Give me the grace to see a joke,

To get some humor out of life,

and pass it on to other folk.

24. EXPLAINING SEARS LATE PAYMENT

Ms. Susan Bergenon
PRM Federal Savings & Loan Association
1702 Penn Avenue
McLean, Virginia 22720

June 29, 1985

Dear Ms. Bergenon:

This is in regard to the referenced delinquent account with Sears, running three months consecutively.

Upon our review of the dates in questions, it is our belief that our delinquent payments were due to our family circumstances at that time. My sister was undergoing brain surgery, and since her family obligations were so pressing, it necessitated my husband and myself moving to Frederick, Maryland, in order to assist with the children.

However, on the road to Frederick, our moving van, holding all of our worldly possessions, was forced off the road by a tractor-trailer as we were passing over the Potomac River. We plunged over the bridge and landed, miraculously, upright on some soft sand on the banks of the river. However, the tractor-trailer also went over the bridge and in short order landed right on top of us. We were pushed, van and all, twelve feet in the sand, beneath the tractor-trailer. The rescue team, in their heroic efforts at rescuing the unconscious truck driver, forgot all about us, twelve feet into the sand. The truck driver, as we mentioned, was unconscious and unable to indicate that a moving van was buried beneath the truck.

Six hours later we had dug ourselves out of the sand and were working our way through the woods to the road and bridge above. Finally, we reached the bridge and were walking along the sidewalk towards Frederick, when two cars collided head-on and our only recourse to avoid being struck by the cars was to jump over the side of the bridge into the water below. We landed and swam to safety.

At nightfall, we were cold and hungry. We were desperate enough to hitchhike to Frederick, or thereabouts, to a telephone where I could call my sister's family. We were picked up by a rather desperate Iranian man who felt that by holding us hostage he could thereby alter world events in Iran's favor. We were blindfolded and taken to a place of imprisonment somewhere in the mountains surrounding Frederick.

All this while, do not imagine I had for a single moment forgotten about the overdue Sears payment. Oh, no, far from it, but I daily prayed that I would somehow return to Frederick and civilization to make good on that delinquent account.

We were kept hostage for an entire month, until the Iranian realized that there was nothing to be had by keeping us. We told him that he just had to face the fact that we weren't important enough to change the course of history. He eventually let us go, determined to become a holy man, perhaps making a pilgrimage to the Himalayas, or California, or something. It was the least he could do, he said.

We were back on the road to Frederick. We had not been on the road ten minutes when a tremendous boulder rolled down from a nearby mountain and pinned us against a "Frederick- 30 Miles" sign. It was painful and embarrassing. As night grew on we were rather forcefully made aware of this extraordinary situation, when a pack of dogs urinated on Steve's wallet.

Well, we all know what dog's urine can do to paper. Apparently, during the time between the dog incident and the time we were rescued the Sears bill has completely disintegrated inside the wallet. It was truly amazing.

We were rescued by an ambulance, finally. However the ambulance driver was on drugs and drove off the road into a tree and my husband and I sustained head injuries that left us in a coma for the remaining month in question.

When we recovered we were at last able to realize our only dream---that of paying our delinquent Sears bills---three of them by this time. It was a triumphant moment.

We hope that this has been of help in your determining our credit rating. If we can be of service to you, please do not hesitate to call upon us.

25. Campground Bathroom.

*When Fred and Imogene Williams decided to spend a week's vacation at a campground in Arizona, Imogene sent a letter to the owner to check out conditions, particularly the restrooms.

Imogene was a bit proper. However, when it came time, she couldn't bring herself to write the word "toilet" in her letter. After much deliberation, she finally came up with the old-fashioned term, "bathroom commode." But even that, she thought was being too forward. So she rewrote the entire letter and referred to the bathroom commode merely as the "B.C." She wrote, "Does the campground have its own B.C.?"

Well, the campground owner got the letter and had no idea what the woman was writing about. That B.C. business really stumped him. After worrying about it for a while, he showed the letter to several staff members and they were as befuddled as he was. After much consternation, he finally decided she wanted to know the location of the local Baptist Church. Hence this reply:

Dear Mrs. Williams: I regret very much the delay in answering your letter, but I now take pleasure in informing you that a B.C. is located nine miles north of the campground. It is capable of seating 250 people at one time. I admit that it's quite a distance away if you are in the habit of going regularly, but no doubt you will be pleased to know that a number of people take their lunches along and make a day of it. They usually arrive early and stay late.

The last time my wife and I went was a year ago, and it was so crowded that we had to stand up the whole time we were there. It may interest you to know that right now there is a supper planned to raise money to buy more seats. They are going to hold it in the basement of the B.C.

I would like to say it pains me very much not to be able to go more regularly, but it is surely no lack of desire on my part. As we grow older, it seems to be more of an effort, particularly in cold weather. If you do decide to come down to our campground, perhaps I could go with you the first time you go, sit with you, and introduce you to all the other folks. Remember, this is a friendly community.

Sincerely. R. Henry Reynolds

***Barry Johnson, First Community Church, Columbus, Oh. 6-2-91

26. BLACK NOVEMBER
TURKEY STORY

When I was a young turkey,
new to the coop,
My big brother Mike
took me out on the stoop.

Then he sat me down,
and he spoke real slow,
And he told me there was something
that I had to know.

His look and his tone
I will always remember,
When he told me of the horrors
of.....Black November.

“Come about August,
now listen to me,
Each day you’ll get six meals
instead of just three.”
“And soon you’ll be thick,
where once you were thin,
And you’ll grow a big rubbery thing
under your chin.”

“And then one morning,
when you’re warm in your bed,
In’ll burst the farmer’s wife,
and hack off your head.”

“Then she’ll pluck out all your feathers so you’re bald ‘n pink,
“And scoop out all your insides
and leave ya lyin’ in the sink.”

“And then comes the worst part”
he said not bluffing,
“She’ll spread your cheeks
and pack your rear with stuffing.”

Well, the rest of his words
were too grim to repeat,
I sat on the stoop
like a winged piece of meat,

I decided on the spot
that to avoid being cooked,
I’d have to lay low

and remain overlooked.

I began a new diet
of nuts and granola,
High-roughage salads,
juice and diet cola.

And as they ate pastries,
chocolates and crepes,
I stayed in my room
doing Jane Fonda tapes.

I maintained my weight
of two pounds and a half,
And tried not to notice
when the bigger birds laughed.
But 'twas I who was laughing,
under my breath,

As they chomped and they chewed,
ever closer to death.
And sure enough
when Black November rolled around,
I was the last turkey
left in the entire compound.

So now I'm a pet
in the farmer's wife's lap,
I haven't a worry,
so I eat and I nap.

She held me today,
while sewing and humming,
And smiled at me and said,
"Christmas is coming....."

27. BUILDER BUILDING HIS OWN HOUSE.

An elderly carpenter was ready to retire. He told his employer, a building contractor, of his plans to leave the house building business and live a more leisurely life with his wife, enjoying his extended family.

He would miss the paycheck, but he needed to retire. They could get by. His employer was sorry to see his good worker go and asked if he could build just one more house as a personal favor. The carpenter said yes, but it was easy to see that his heart was no longer in his work. He had lost his enthusiasm and had resorted to shoddy workmanship and used inferior materials. It was an unfortunate way to end his career.

When the carpenter finished his work and his boss came to inspect the new house, the contractor handed the front door key to the carpenter.

“This is your house, “he said, “my gift to you.”

What a shock! What a shame! If he had only known he was building his own house, he would have done it all so differently. Now he had to live in the home he had build none too well.

So it is with us. We build our lives in a distracted way, reacting rather than acting, willing to put up less than the best. At important points we do not give the job our best effort. Then with a shock we look at the situation we have created and find that we are now living in the house we have build for ourselves.

If we had realized, we would have done it differently.

Think of yourself as the carpenter. Think about your house. Each day you hammer a nail, place a board, or erect a wall. Build wisely. It is the only life you will ever build. Even if you live it for only one day more, that day deserves to be lived graciously and with dignity.

The plaque on the wall says, “Life is a do-it-yourself project.” Who could say it more clearly? Your life today is the result of your attitudes and choices in the past. Your life tomorrow will be the results of today.

28. \$10,000 A MINUTE TO TALK TO GOD PHONE

A man decided to write a book about churches across the United States.

First, the man visits a church in California. During his tour of the magnificent building he sees a golden telephone on a wall with a sign that reads \$10,000 a minute. Intrigued, he asks about the phone and learns that the golden phone is a direct line to Heaven that can be used to talk directly to God.

Next, the man visits a church in New York. Again, he notices exactly the same type of phone, with exactly the same sign on it. Sure enough, upon inquiry, he discovers that it is a direct line to Heaven and can be used to talk directly to God.

Continuing through many other states, he finds the same phone with the same sign and is told the same story, until, finally, upon arriving at a church in North Carolina, lo and behold, he sees the usual golden telephone with a different sign. This time, the sign reads "calls 25 cents."

He quickly finds a pastor and says to him, "I have been in cities all across the country, and in each church I found this golden telephone, was told that it was a direct line to Heaven and that I could talk to God, but, in all the other churches across the country, it was \$10,000.00 a minute. Your sign reads 25 cents a call. Why?"

The pastor smiles at him and say's "That's very easy to explain. You see, you're in North Carolina now and, of course, it's a local call from here."

29. LIFE'S LESSON FROM A FROG

There once was a bunch of tiny frogs....

.Who arranged a running competition.

The goal was to reach the top of a very high tower.

A big crowd had gathered around the tower to see the race and cheer on the contestants...

The race began...

Honestly:

No one in the crowd really believed that the tiny frogs would reach the top of the tower.

You heard statements such as;

“Oh, way too difficult!”

“They will NEVER make it to the top.”

Or “Not a chance that they will succeed. The tower is too high!”

The tiny frogs began collapsing. One by one...

..Except for those who in a fresh tempo were climbing higher and higher...

The crowd continued to yell

“It is too difficult!!! No one will make it!”

More tiny frogs got tired and gave up...

..But one continued higher and higher and higher...

This one wouldn't give up!

At the end everyone else had given up climbing the tower. Except for the one tiny frog who after a big effort was the only one who reached the top!

Then all of the other tiny frogs naturally wanted to know how this one frog managed to do it? A contestant asked a tiny frog how the one who succeeded had found the strength to reach the goal?

It turned out...

That the winner was DEAF!!!!

The wisdom of this story is:

Never listen to other people's tendencies to be negative or pessimistic.

..Cause they take your most wonderful dreams and wishes away from you. The ones you have in your heart!

Always think of the power words have.

Because everything you hear and read will affect your action!

Therefore:

ALWAYS BE...

POSITIVE!

And above all:

Be deaf when people tell YOU that YOU can-not fulfill YOUR dreams

30. FILE CARDS OF MY LIFE.

In that place between wakefulness and dream, I found myself in a room. There were no distinguishing features save for the one wall covered with small index card files. They were like the ones in libraries that list titles by author or subject in alphabetical order. But these files, which stretched from floor to ceiling and seemingly endlessly in either direction, had very different headings.

As I drew near the wall of files, the first to catch my attention was one that read "Girls I have liked". I opened it and began flipping through the cards. I quickly shut it, shocked to realize that I recognized the names written on each one.

And then without being told, I knew exactly where I was. This lifeless room with its small files was a crude catalog system for my life. Here were written the actions of my every moment, big and small, in a detail my memory couldn't match.

Sense of wonder and curiosity, coupled with horror, stirred within me as I began randomly opening files and exploring their content. Some brought joy and sweet memories; others a sense of shame and regret so intense that I would look over my shoulder to see if anyone was watching.

"A file named "Friends," was next to one marked "Friends I have Betrayed".

The titles ranged from the mundane to the outright weird. "Books I have read", "lies I have told", "Comfort I have given". "Jokes I have laughed at". Some were almost hilarious in their exactness: "things I have yelled at my brothers". Others I couldn't laugh at: "Things I have done in my anger". "Things I have muttered under my breath at my parents". I never ceased to be surprised by the contents. Often there were many more cards than I expected. Sometimes fewer than I hoped.

I was overwhelmed by the sheer volume of the life I had lived. Could it be possible that I had the time in my 20 years to write each of these thousands or even millions of cards? But each card confirmed the truth. Each was written in my own handwriting. Each was signed with my signature.

When I pulled out the file marked "songs I have listened to", I realized the files grew to contain their contents. The cards were packed tightly. And yet after two or three yards, I hadn't found the end of the file. I shut it, shamed, not so much by the quality of music, but more by the vast amount of time I knew that file represented.

When I came to a file marked "Lustful thoughts". I felt a chill run through my body. I pulled the file out only an inch, not willing to test its size, and drew out a card. I shuddered at its detailed content. I felt sick to think that such a moment had been recorded.

An almost animal rage broke on me. One thought dominated my mind: "No one must ever see these cards! No one must ever see this room! I have to destroy them!" In an insane frenzy I yanked the file out. Its size didn't matter now. I had to empty it and burn the cards. But as I took it at one end and began pounding it on the floor, I could not dislodge a single card. I became desperate and pulled out a card, only to find it as strong as steel when I tried to tear it.

Defeated and utterly helpless, I returned the file to its slot. Leaning my forehead against the wall, I let out a long, self-pitying sigh. And then I saw it. The title bore "People I have shared the Gospel with". The handle was brighter than those around it. Newer, almost unused. I pulled on its handle and a small box not more than three inches long fell into my hands. I could count the cards it contained on one hand. And then the tears came. I began to weep. Sobs so deep that the hurt started in my stomach and shook through me. I fell on my knees and cried. I cried out of shame, from the overwhelming shame of it all. The rows of file shelves swirled in my tear filled eyes. No one must ever, ever know of this room. I must lock it up and hide the key.

But then as I pushed away the tears, I saw Him. No, please not Him, Not here. Oh, anyone but Jesus. I watched helplessly as he began to open the files and read the cards. I couldn't bear to watch his response. And in the moments I could bring myself to look at His face, I saw a sorrow deeper than my own. He seemed to intuitively go to the worst boxes. Why did he have to read every one?

Finally He turned and looked at me from across the room. He looked at me with pity in His eyes. But this was a pity that didn't anger me. I dropped my head, covered my face with my hands and began to cry again. He walked over and put His arm around me. He could have said so many things. But he didn't say a word. He just cried with me.

Then he got up and walked back to the wall of files. Starting at one end of the room, He took out a file and, one by one, began to sign His name over mine on each card.

"No!" I shouted rushing to him. All I could find to say was "no, no, as I pulled the card from Him. His name shouldn't be on these cards. But there it was, written in red so rich, so dark, so alive. The name Jesus covered mine. It was written with His blood.

He gently took the card back. He smiled a sad smile and began to sign the cards. I don't think I'll ever understand how He did it so quickly, but the next instant it seemed I heard him close the last file and walk back to my side. He placed His hand on my shoulder and said, "It is finished."

I stood up, and He led me out of the room. There was no lock on its door. There were still cards to be written.

31. Keep your fork

There was a woman who had been diagnosed with a terminal illness and had been given three months to live. So as she was getting her things "in order", she contacted her pastor and had him come to her house to discuss, certain aspects of her final wishes. She told him which songs she wanted sung at the service, what scriptures she would like read, and what outfit she wanted to be buried in. The woman also requested to be buried with her favorite Bible.

Everything was in order and the pastor was preparing to leave when the woman suddenly remembered something very important to her. "There's one more thing," she said excitedly. "What's that?" came the pastor's reply. "This is very important," the woman continued. "I want to be buried with a fork in my right hand." The pastor stood looking at the woman, not knowing quite what to say. "That surprises you, doesn't it?" the woman asked.

"Well, to be honest, I'm puzzled by the request," said the pastor. The woman explained. "In all my years of attending church socials and potluck dinners, always remember that when the dishes of the main course were being cleared, someone would inevitably lean over and say, 'Keep your fork'. It was my favorite part because I knew that something better was coming..."

Like velvety chocolate cake or deep-dish apple pie. Something wonderful, and with substance! So, I just want people to see me there in that casket with a fork in my hand and I want them to wonder "What's with the fork?" Then I want you to tell them: "Keep your fork.... the best is yet to come".

The pastor's eyes welled up with tears of joy as he hugged the woman goodbye. He knew this would be one of the last times he would see her before her death. But he also knew that the woman had a better grasp of Heaven than he did. She KNEW that something better was coming.

At the funeral people were walking by the woman's casket and they saw the pretty dress she was wearing and her favorite Bible and the fork placed in her right hand. Over and over, the pastor heard the question "What's with the fork?" And over and over he smiled.

During his message, the pastor told the people of the conversation he had with the woman shortly before she died. He also told them about the fork and about what it symbolized to her. The pastor told the people how he could not stop thinking about the fork and told them that they probably would not be able to stop thinking about it either. He was right.

So the next time you reach down for your fork, let it remind you, oh so gently, that the best is yet to come.

Friends are a very rare jewels, indeed, they make you smile and encourage you to succeed.

32. STATEMENT ON PRAYER, AT A FOOTBALL GAME

This is a statement that was read over the PA system at the football game at Roane County High School, Kingston, Tennessee, by school Principal, Jody McLoud. I thought it was worth sharing with the world. It shows clearly just how far this country has gone in the wrong direction.

"It has always been the custom of Roane County High School football games, to say a prayer and play the National Anthem, to honor God and Country."

Due to a recent ruling by the Supreme Court, I am told that saying a Prayer is a violation of Federal Case Law. As I understand the law at this time, I can use this public facility to approve of sexual perversion and call it "an alternate lifestyle," and if someone is offended, that's OK.

I can use it to condone sexual promiscuity, by dispensing condoms and calling it, "safe sex." If someone is offended, that's OK.

I can even use this public facility to present the merits of killing an unborn baby as a "viable means of birth control." If someone is offended, no problem.

I can designate a school day as "Earth Day" and involve students in activities to worship religiously and praise the goddess "Mother Earth" and call it "ecology."

I can use literature, videos and presentations in the classroom that depict people with strong, traditional Christian convictions as "simple minded" and "ignorant" and call it "enlightenment."

However, if anyone uses this facility to honor God and to ask Him to bless this event with safety and good sportsmanship, then Federal Case Law is violated.

This appears to be inconsistent at best, and at worst, diabolical. Apparently, we are to be tolerant of everything and anyone, except God and His Commandments.

Nevertheless, as a school principal, I frequently ask staff and students to abide by rules with which they do not necessarily agree. For me to do otherwise would be inconsistent at best, and at worst, hypocritical. I suffer from that affliction enough unintentionally. I certainly do not need to add an intentional transgression.

For this reason, I shall "Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's," and refrain from praying at this time.

"However, if you feel inspired to honor, praise and thank God and ask Him, in the name of Jesus, to bless this event, please feel free to do so. As far as I know, that's not against the law----yet."

One by one, the people in the stands bowed their heads, held hands with one another

and began to pray.

They prayed in the stands. They prayed in the team huddles. They prayed at the concession stand and they prayed in the Announcer's Box!

The only place they didn't pray was in the Supreme Court of the United States of America - the Seat of "Justice" in the "one nation, under God."

Somehow, Kingston, Tennessee remembered what so many have forgotten. We are given the Freedom OF Religion, not the Freedom FROM Religion. Praise God that His remnant remains!

Celebrate Jesus in 2003!

Jesus said, "If you are ashamed of Me before men, then I will be ashamed of you before My Father."

Yes, I do Love God. He is my source of existence and Savior. He keeps me functioning each and every day. Without Him, I will be nothing, but with Him, I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me.

Philippians 4:13

33. INFORMATION PLEASE
BY PAUL VILLIARD

When I was quite young my family had one of the first telephones in our neighborhood. I remember well the polished oak case fastened to the wall on the lower stair landing. The shiny receiver hung on the side of the box. I even remember the number—105. I was too little to reach the telephone, but use to listen with fascination when my mother talked to it. Once she lifted, me up to speak to my father, who was away on business. Magic!

Then I discovered that somewhere inside the wonderful device lived an amazing person--- her name was "Information Please," and there was nothing she did not know. My mother could ask her for anybody's number; when our clock ran down, Information Please immediately supplied the correct time.

My first personal experience with this genie-in-the-receiver came one day while my mother was visiting a neighbor. Amusing myself at the tool-bench in the basement, I whacked my finger with a hammer. The pain was terrible, but there didn't seem to be much use crying because there was no one home to offer sympathy. I walked around the house sucking on my throbbing finger, finally arriving at the stairway. The telephone! Quickly I ran for the footstool in the parlor and dragged it to the landing. Climbing up, I unhooked the receiver and held it to my ear. "Information Please," I said into the mouthpiece just above my head. A click or two, and a small, clear voice spoke into my ear.

"Information."

"I hurt my fingerrrrr..." I wailed into the phone, the tears came readily enough, now that I had an audience.

"Isn't your mother home?" came the question.

"Nobody's home but me," I blubbered.

"Are you bleeding?"

"No," I replied, "I hit it with the hammer and it hurts."

"Can you open your icebox?" she said, I said "I could."

"Then chip off a little piece of ice and hold it on your finger. That will stop the hurt. Be careful when you use the ice pick," She admonished,

"And don't cry." You'll be alright."

After that, I called Information Please for everything. I ask her to help with my geography and she told me where Philadelphia was, and the Orinoco—the romantic river I was going to explore when I grew up. She helped me with my arithmetic, and she told me that my pet chipmunk—I had caught him in the park just the day before—would eat fruit and nuts.

And there was the time that Petey, our pet canary, died. I called Information Please and told her the sad story. She listened, then said the usual things grown-up say to soothe a child, but I was un-consoled: Why was it that birds should sing so beautifully and bring joy to whole families, only to end up as a heap of feathers, feet up, on the bottom of a cage?

She must have sensed my deep concern, for she said quietly, "Paul, always remember that there are other worlds to sing in." Somehow I felt better.

Another day I was at the telephone. "Information," said the now familiar voice. "How do you spell fix?" I asked. "Fix something? F-I-X." At that instant my sister, who took unholy joy in scaring me, jumped off the stairs at me with a banshee shriek—"Yaaaaaa!" I fell of the stool, pulling the receiver out of the box by its roots. We were both terrified—Information Please was no longer there, and I was not at all sure that I hadn't hurt her when I pulled the receiver out.

Minutes later there was a man on the porch. "I'm the telephone repairman," he said, "I was working down the street and the operator said there might be some trouble at this number." He reached for the receiver in my hand. "What happened?"

I told him. "Well, we can fix that in a minute or two," He opened the telephone box, exposing maze of wires and coils, and fiddled for awhile with the end of the receiver cord, tightening things with a small screwdriver. He jiggled the hook up and down a few times, then spoke into the phone. "Hi, this is Pete, Everything's under control at 105. The kid's sister scared him and he pulled the cord out of the box." He hung up, smiled, gave me a pat on the head and walked out the door.

All this took place in a small town in the Pacific Northwest. Then when I was nine year old, we moved across country to Boston—and I missed my mentor acutely. Information Please belonged in that old wooden box back home, and I somehow never thought of trying the tall, skinny new phone that sat on a small table in the hall.

Yet, as I grew into my teens, the memories of those childhood conversations never really left me. Often in moments of doubt and perplexity I would recall the serene sense of security I had when I knew that I could call Information Please and get the right answer. I appreciated now how very patient, understanding and kind she was to have wasted her time on a little boy.

A few years later, on my way west to college, my plane put down at Seattle. I had about half an hour between plane connections, and I spent 15 minutes or so on the phone to my sister, who lived there now, happily mellowed by marriage and motherhood. Then, really without thinking of what I was doing, I dialed my hometown operator and said, "Information Please."

Miraculously, I heard again the small, clear voice I knew so well: "Information."

I hadn't planned this, but I heard myself saying, "Could you tell me, please, how to spell the word 'Fix'?"

There was a long pause. Then came a softly spoken answer, "I guess," said Information Please, "that your finger must have healed by now."

I laughed. "So it's really still you," I said. "I wonder if you have any idea how much you meant to me during all that time."

I wonder," she replied, "If you know how much you meant to me? I never had any children, and I use to look forward to your calls. Silly, wasn't it?"

It didn't seem silly, but I didn't say so. Instead, I told her how often I had thought of her over the years, and I ask her if I could call her again when I came back to visit my sister after the first semester was over.

"Please do. Just ask for Sally."

"Good-by, Sally." It sounded strange for Information Please to have a name.

"If I run into any chipmunks, I'll tell them to eat fruit and nuts."

"Do that," she said, "And I expect that one of these days you'll be off for the Orinoco. Well, good-by."

Just three months later I was back again at the Seattle Airport. A different voice answered, "Information," and I asked for Sally.

"Are you a friend?" "Yes," I said, "An old friend."

"Then I'm sorry to have to tell you. Sally had only been working part-time for the past few years because she was ill. She died five weeks ago." But before I could hang up, she said, "Wait a minute. Did you say your name was Villiard?"

"yes."

"Well, Sally left a message for you, She wrote it down."

"What was it?" I asked, almost knowing in advance what it would be.

"Here it is: I'll read it—"Tell him I still say there are other worlds to sing in. He'll know what I mean.'

34. ASSIGNMENT TO SMILE

UNCONDITIONAL ACCEPTANCE

I am a mother of three (ages 14,12,3) and have recently completed my college degree. The last class I had to take was Sociology. The teacher was absolutely inspiring with the qualities that I wish every human being had been graced with. Her last project of the term was called "Smile." The class was asked to go out and smile at three people and document their reactions. I am very friendly person and always smile at everyone and say hello anyway, so, I thought, this would be a piece of cake, literally.

Soon after we were assigned the project, my husband, youngest son, and I went out to McDonald's one crisp March morning. It was just our way of sharing special play time with our son. We were standing in line, waiting to be served, when all of a sudden everyone around us began to back away, and then even my husband did. I did not move an inch...and overwhelming feeling of panic welled up inside of me as I turned to see why they had moved. As I turned around I smelled a horrible "dirty body" smell, and there standing behind me were two poor homeless men. As I looked down at the short gentleman, close to me, he was smiling". His beautiful sky blue eyes were full of God's light as he searched for acceptance. He said "Good day" as he counted the few coins he had been clutching. The second man fumbled with his hands as he stood behind his friend. I realized the second man was mentally deficient and the blue eyed gentleman was his salvation.

I held my tears as I stood there with them. The young lady at the counter asked him what they wanted. He said, "coffee is all Miss" because that was all the could afford. (If they wanted to sit in the restaurant and warm up, they had to buy something. He just wanted to be warm.)

Then I really felt it—the compulsion was so great I almost reached out and embraced the little man with the blue eyes. That is when I noticed all eyes in the restaurant were set on me, judging my every action. I smiled and asked the young lady behind the counter to give me two more breakfast meals on a separate tray. I then walked around the corner to the table that the men had chosen as a resting spot. I put the tray on the table and laid my hand on the blue eyed gentleman's cold hand. He looked up at me, with tears in his eyes, and said, "Thank you." I leaned over, began to pat his hand and said, "I did not do this for you. God is here working through me to give you some hope." I started to cry as I walked away to join my husband and son.

When I sat down my husband smiled at me and said, "That is why God gave you to me, Honey. To give me hope." We held hands for a moment and at that time we knew that only because of the Grace that we had been given were we able to give. We are not church goers, but we are believers. That day showed me the pure Light of God's sweet love.

I returned to college, on the last evening of class, with this story in hand. I turned in "my project" and the instructor read it. Then she looked up at me and said "Can I share this?" I slowly nodded as she got the attention of the class. She began to read and that is when I knew that we, as human beings and being part of God, share this need to heal people and be healed. In my own way I had touched the people at McDonald's, my husband, son, instructor, and every soul that shared the classroom on the last night I spent as a college student. I graduated with one of the biggest lessons I could ever learn:
UNCONDITIONAL ACCEPTANCE.

LOVE PEOPLE AND USE THINGS-NOT LOVE THINGS AND USE PEOPLE
35. Granddad Brown Rebukes The Devil.

Granddad Brown Rebukes the Devil

Granddad Brown rebuked the Devil once. He did it while walking in the corral that used to be behind Sid's house, and it changed his life. "Lucifer, go leave me alone," he said. Right out loud, he said it. And, after that, Satan did leave him alone.

Here's how it happened. George S. Brown was called as second counselor in the Parker Ward Bishopric, and he served in that calling almost 12 years with Bishop Burdette Remington and the other counselor, Melvin Rudd. As a new bishop, Brother Remington decided that one of his most important jobs would be to work with a group of men in the ward who had grown up in the Church but now were inactive. The new Bishop and his counselors, elders Brown and Rudd, all went to work trying their best to activate those men.

All of the inactive brothers were farmers. They grew crops and most of them raised some steers to get a little extra money. The cheapest feed in the winters then was raw potatoes. There were lots of potatoes during the cold months and they cost a lot less than other feeds, but they caused problems. The biggest problem was that potatoes gave some of the cattle stomach problems. Those cattle got gassy, and some swelled up so badly that it killed them.

Farmers who fed potatoes to their cattle had to watch them carefully. When a cow bloated, it could be saved by poking a hole between its ribs in just the right place to let the gas out. If the farmer did this in time, the steer would live, even though the cut in its side needed to be watched and maybe doctored. If the farmer wasn't around when the steer bloated, the pressure could get so great that he couldn't catch his breath, and he usually died.

One winter, shortly after Granddad had been called to the Bishopric, he lost a lot of cattle to bloat. About one out of every 10 steers in Granddad's herd had died, and he was discouraged. There usually wasn't enough money in the Brown's bank account to pay the bills, and those cattle were badly needed.

On top of the worries of the farm, Granddad was feeling the pressure of his church calling. He visited several of the ward's inactive men as often as he could. Lately, he was embarrassed that he had no progress to report to the Bishop. Every one of those men told him they had to stay home Sundays to watch their cattle. They couldn't possibly go to church. Every man on his visiting list said he just couldn't lose more steers to bloat. Granddad Brown understood what those men were telling him and he was discouraged, because he had the same worries. He couldn't stand to lose more cattle that bad winter.

"I was wondering, you know, if I really hadn't ought to be spending more time making a living," Granddad said. Just then he was walking into the corral to check on

one of his best steers who hadn't been acting right that morning. Sure enough, that steer had bloated, and Granddad got there just as the steer lost his breath and hit the ground. Granddad ran to him, stuck him between the ribs, and the smelly gas spewed out. With the pressure relieved, the steer caught his breath and, after lying there awhile, got up and looked like he might live.

The thought came into Granddad's mind, "You should quit that Church work, stay here, and take care of this stuff." "I can't lose these cattle," he thought. Then his mind went to the sorry state of the bank account and the bills that would soon come due. He walked around the corral to see if other cattle in the herd had begun to bloat. A dark cloud of gloomy thoughts hovered over Granddad's head.

Suddenly, Granddad later said, a strange feeling came over him. "I realized old Lucifer was testing me to see if he could make me quit the Church." Granddad knew about Satan's power to test people and to tempt them, but, he thought to himself, "I wonder just how much power he really has to do this sort of thing to anybody."

Suddenly, Granddad got mad, and it was then that he did it. He said right out loud, "Lucifer, go leave me alone." And that wasn't all he said. He kept right on talking to Satan. Out loud. "I'm going to go do my Church work if all these cattle die. That's more important to me."

After that, he felt a lot better. The cloud was gone. He went on about his business that day and didn't notice anything much different. But, you know, over the next few weeks, the trouble with the cattle quit. Granddad still had a few bloated cattle, but not nearly the numbers he had been having. During the next winter, he fed some of his cattle potatoes. He went to all his Church meetings, and he didn't have to doctor a single critter all winter. Satan backed off.

Granddad didn't realize what an important decision he had made in the corral that winter day until years later. When he and Granny were on their mission on the Navajo Reservation at Sawmill, they got letters with news from Parker. Over the months the letters told tragic tales about those farmers he had worked with during those years in the Bishopric. "While we were out there, they went out of business," he said. "They just couldn't make it. They are not in the Church and they are not in the farming business, anymore." Granny and Granddad's farms were not only still in business, but the two of them were on a mission.

Granddad told Granny, as they read those letters, how sad he thought those men's lives had turned out. "If they had done what the Lord wanted them to do, they would have still been farming. But they had one excuse after another, and now they are disgruntled, unhappy, and out of the Church." He then told Granny, "If I had quit that day in the corral, I would have been just like them, exactly." Granddad often said that the day he rebuked the Devil gave him his testimony about the blessings that come from service in the Church.

36. Red Marbles For Food

During the waning years of the Depression in a small southeastern Idaho community, I used to stop by Brother Miller's roadside stand for farm-fresh produce as the season made it available.

Food and money were still extremely scarce and bartering was used, extensively. One particular day Brother Miller was bagging some early potatoes for me. I noticed a small boy, delicate of bone and feature, ragged but clean, hungrily apprising a basket of freshly picked green peas. I paid for my potatoes but was also drawn to the display of fresh green peas. I am a pushover for creamed peas and new potatoes. Pondering the peas I couldn't help overhearing the conversation between Brother Miller and the ragged boy next to me:

"Hello Barry, how are you today?" "H'lo, Mr. Miller. Fine, thank ya. Jus' admirin' them peas ... sure look good." "They are good, Barry. How's your Ma?" "Fine. Gittin' stronger alla'time." "Good. Anything I can help you with" "No, Sir. Jus' admirin' them peas." "Would you like to take some home?"

"No, Sir. Got nuthin' to pay for 'em with." "Well, what have you to trade me for some of those peas?" "All I got's my prize aggie-best taw around here." "Is that right? Let me see it." "Here 'tis. She's a dandy."

"I can see that. Hmmm, only thing is this one is blue and I sort of go for red. Do you have a red one like this at home?"

"Not 'zackley but, almost." "Tell you what. Take this sack of peas home with you and next trip this way let me look at that red taw." "Sure will. Thanks, Mr. Miller."

Mrs. Miller, who had been standing nearby, came over to help me. With a smile she said: "There are two other boys like him in our community, all three are in very poor circumstances. Jim just loves to bargain with them for peas, apples, tomatoes or whatever. When they come back with their red marbles, and they always do, he decides he doesn't like red after all and he sends them home with a bag of produce for a green marble or an orange one, perhaps."

I left the stand, smiling to myself, impressed with this man. A short time later I moved to Utah but I never forgot the story of this man, the boys and their bartering.

Several years went by each more rapid than the previous one. Just recently I had occasion to visit some old friends in that Idaho community and while I was there learned that Brother Miller had died. They were having his viewing that evening and knowing my friends wanted to go, I agreed to accompany them.

Upon our arrival at the mortuary we fell into line to meet the relatives of the deceased and to offer whatever words of comfort we could.

Ahead of us in line were three young men. One was in an army uniform and the other two wore short haircuts, dark suits and white shirts obviously potential or returned missionaries.

They approached Mrs. Miller, standing smiling and composed, by her husband's casket. Each of the young men hugged her, kissed her on the cheek, spoke briefly with her and moved on to the casket. Her misty light blue eyes followed them as, one by one, each young man stopped briefly and placed his own warm hand over the cold pale hand in the casket. Each left the mortuary, awkwardly, wiping his eyes.

Our turn came to meet Mrs. Miller. I told her who I was and mentioned the story she had told me about the marbles. Eyes glistening she took my hand and led me to the casket. "This is an amazing coincidence," she said. "Those three young men, that just left, were the boys I told you about. They just told me how they appreciated the things Jim "traded" them. Now, at last, when Jim could not change his mind about color or size...they came to pay their debt. We've never had a great deal of the wealth of this world," she confided, "but, right now, Jim would consider himself the richest man in Idaho." With loving gentleness she lifted the lifeless fingers of her deceased husband. Resting underneath were three, magnificently shiny, red marbles.

37. Stress Management

A lecturer, when explaining stress management to an audience, raised a glass of water and asked, "How heavy is this glass of water?" Answers called out ranged from 20g to 500g. The lecturer replied, "The absolute weight doesn't matter. It depends on how long you try to hold it.

If I hold it for a minute, that's not a problem. If I hold it for an hour, I'll have an ache in my right arm. If I hold it for a day, you'll have to call an ambulance. In each case, it's the same weight, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes."

He continued, "And that's the way it is with stress management. If we carry our burdens all the time, sooner or later, as the burden becomes increasingly heavy, we won't be able to carry on."

"As with the glass of water, you have to put it down for a while and rest before holding it again. When we're refreshed, we can carry on with the burden."

"So, before you return home tonight, put the burden of work down. Don't carry it home. You can pick it up tomorrow. Whatever burdens you're carrying now, let them down for a moment if you can."

So, my friend, put down anything that may be a burden to you right now. Don't pick it up again until after you've rested a while. Here are some great ways of dealing with the burdens of life:

- * Accept that some days you're the pigeon, and some days you're the statue.
- * Always keep your words soft and sweet, just in case you have to eat them.
- * Always read stuff that will make you look good if you die in the middle of it.
- * Drive carefully. It's not only cars that can be recalled by their maker.
- * If you can't be kind, at least have the decency to be vague.
- * If you lend someone \$20 and never see that person again, it was probably worth it.
- * It may be that your sole purpose in life is simply to be kind to others.
- * Never put both feet in your mouth at the same time, because then you won't have a leg to stand on.
- * Nobody cares if you can't dance well. Just get up and dance.
- * The second mouse gets the cheese.
- * When everything's coming your way, you're in the wrong lane.
- * Birthdays are good for you. The more you have, the longer you live.

- * You may be only one person in the world, but you may also be the world to one person.
- * Some mistakes are too much fun to only make once.
- * We could learn a lot from crayons... Some are sharp, some are pretty and some are dull. Some have weird names, and all are different colors, but they all have to live in the same box.
- * A truly happy person is one who can enjoy the scenery on a detour.

38. SUCCESS THROUGH A POSITIVE MENTAL ATTITUDE

1. W. Clement Stone sold newspapers as a 6 year old, now president and owner of a 6 billion insurance co.
2. S.B. Fuller: 5 years old worked in the field, drove mules by 9 years old. Had a special Mom, "We are poor only because Father never wanted to be rich." Sold soap 12 years, saved 12,000. A company was for sale for 150,000. Raised 115,000. Prayed to get 10,000 by the next day. Then went on to buy out 7 other companies including a newspaper.
3. Tom Dempsey: Born with a stub of an arm and part of his foot missing. He wanted to play football. Got an artificial foot and practiced and practiced until he got so good at kicking the ball he was hired by the New Orleans Saints, 67,000 fans were heard across the United States when with 2 seconds left in the game with the Detroit Lions he kicked the winning field goal, for 63 yards, the longest field goal kicked in professional football. To win 17 to 19.
4. PMA=
 - A. On success beam.
 - B. Sound health both physical and mental.
 - C. Independent financially.
 - D. Engage in a labor of love by which you may express yourself.
 - E. Peace of mind.
 - F. Faith applied to your living, which make fear impossible.
 - G. Lasting friends
 - H. A long and balance life.
 - I. Immune against all fears and self limitations.
 - J. Wisdom to understand yourself and others.
5. You attract the good and desirable with PMA. You repel them with NMA.
6. Henry Ford- the V8 engine.
7. A contended (satisfied) person will not make the progress he could if he were inspirational dissatisfied, like Henry Ford.
8. PMA- Symbolized by such words as:
 - a. Faith
 - b. Integrity
 - c. Hope
 - d. Optimism
 - e. Courage
 - f. Initiative
 - g. Generosity
 - h. Tolerance
 - i. Tact
 - j. Kindliness
 - k. Good common Sense.

9. Principles for success:

- a. A positive Mental Attitude.
- b. Deftness of Purpose.
- c. Going the extra mile.
- d. Accurate thinking
- e. Self discipline
- f. The master mind
- g. Applied Faith
- h. Pleasing personality
- i. Personal initiative
- j. Enthusiasm
- k. Controlled attention
- l. Teamwork
- m. Learning from defeat
- n. Creative vision
- o. Budgeting time and money
- p. Maintaining sound physical health
- q. Mental health
- r. Using cosmic habit force. A universal law.

10. Everyone who does something great in life has to make sacrifices.

11. If you're unhappy with the world and want to change it, the place to start is with yourself. If you are right, your world will be right.

12. With PMA, the problems of your world tend to bow before you.

13. Identify yourself with a successful image to inspire you, a slogan or picture etc.

14. Deftness of purpose: Starting point of all individual success.

- a. We have control over 1 thing – to direct the mind to whatever purpose we choose.
- b. We should take full control of our mind and direct it with deftness of purpose. To fail to do this will assure poverty, misery, and failure.

15. No goals: no success: aim high, do good for others.

- a. Goal advantage
 - i. Subconscious mind start to work on goal.
 - ii. What the mind can conceive and believe the mind can achieve.
 - iii. Because you know what you want there is a tendency that you get on the right track, head in the right direction, you get into action.
 - iv. Work now becomes fun, you budget your time and money, you study, think and plan. The more enthusiastic you become, your desire turns into burning desire.
 - v. You can see opportunities that help you get to your goals in everyday experience.

16. If Life hand us a problem, it hands us the ability and means to meet the problem.

17. Everyday, in every way I am getting better and better.

18. Think accurately, logically, emotion and reason in balance. (Sometimes do what you want even though it is better not to do it.)
19. Power of your Mind:
- a. You are a mind with a body—you possess mystical powers, powers known and unknown—dare to explore the powers of your mind.
 - b. You do not need to understand fully to access this power, kids don't know what makes the television work, they just know how to turn it on and change channels. So it is with your mind.
 - c. The national debt is 4 trillion, your body has 80 trillion electrical circuits, your 50 oz. Brain has 10 billion cells, it is a generator, a receiver, recorder transmitter, etc.
 - d. The mind has two parts, the conscious and subconscious. They work together
 - e. Science know a lot about the conscious and are just starting to explore the subconscious now.
 - f. The subconscious mind is the seat of the sixth sense.
 - g. One part connects to the conscious mind and the other to infinite intelligence and with all other minds within its thought projection range.
20. Essence of success is keeping your mind on what you want and off what you don't want. A lot worry and they get what they worry about.
21. No limits to the human brain.
22. Control the power of thought – What you think you are you will become.
23. Every failure-every adversity every unpleasant experience carries with it a seed of equivalent benefit or advantage. Find the seed.
24. Successful people almost invariable were successful in exact proportion to the extent that they had met and mastered obstacles of defeat.

39. SUCCESS THROUGH HABITS-SCROLL 1

Today I begin a new life and its substance is as follows: Today I shed my old skin which too long has suffered the bruises of failure and the wounds of mediocrity. Yet I will not fail as the others, for in my hands I now hold the key's which will guide me through perilous waters to shores which only yesterday seemed but a dream.

And how will this be accomplished? For I have neither the knowledge nor the experience to achieve greatness, and already I have stumbled in ignorance and fallen into pools of self pity.

The answer is simple, I will commence my journey unencumbered with neither the weight of unnecessary knowledge or the handicap of meaningless experience. Nature has already supplied me with knowledge and instinct far greater then any beast in the forest, and the value of experience is over rated, usually by old men who nod wisely and speak stupidly.

In truth the only difference between those who have failed and those who have succeeded lies in the difference of their habits. Good habits are the keys to all success and bad habits are the unlocked door to failure. Thus the first law I will obey which precedes all others is I will form good habits and become their slave.

I will read each scroll 39 days in this prescribed manner, before I proceed to the next scroll. First I will read the words in silence when I arise, then I will read the words in silence after the midday meal. Last I will read the words again just before I retire at day's end, and most important on this occasion I will read the words aloud. As I read and reread the words in the scrolls to follow, never will I allow the brevity of each scroll, nor the simplicity of its words to cause me to treat the scrolls message lightly.

Yes today my old skin has become as dust. I will walk tall among men. And they will know me not, for today I am a new man with a new life.

40. Picture of the Son

Who'll Take the Son?

A wealthy man and his son loved to collect rare works of art. They had everything in their collection, from Picasso to Raphael. They would often sit together and admire the great works of art.

When the Viet Nam conflict broke out, the son went to war. He was very courageous and died in battle while rescuing another soldier. The father was notified and grieved deeply for his only son.

About a month later, just before Christmas, there was a knock at the door. A young man stood at the door with a large package in his hands. He said, "Sir, you don't know me, but I am the soldier for whom your son gave his life. He saved many lives that day, and he was carrying me to safety when a bullet struck him in the heart and he died instantly. He often talked about you, and your love for art.

The young man held out his package. "I know this isn't much. I'm not really a great artist, but I think your son would have wanted you to have this."

The father opened the package. It was a portrait of his son, painted by the young man. He stared in awe at the way the soldier had captured the personality of his son in the painting. The father was so drawn to the eyes that his own eyes welled up with tears. He thanked the young man and offered to pay him for the picture. "Oh, no sir, I could never repay what your son did for me. It's a gift."

The father hung the portrait over his mantle. Every time visitors came to his home he took them to see the portrait of his son before he showed them any of the other great works he had collected.

The man died a few months later. There was to be a great auction of his paintings. Many influential people gathered, excited over seeing the great paintings and having an opportunity to purchase one for their collection. On the platform sat the painting of the son. The auctioneer pounded his gavel.

"We will start the bidding with this picture of the son. Who will bid for this picture?"

There was silence. Then a voice in the back of the room shouted. "We want to see the famous paintings. Skip this one." But the auctioneer persisted. "Will someone bid for this painting? Who will start the bidding? \$100, \$200?" Another voice shouted angrily. "We didn't come to see this painting. We came to see the Van Goghs, the Rembrandts. Get on with the real bids!" But still the auctioneer continued. "The son! The son! Who'll take the son?"

Finally, a voice came from the very back of the room. It was the laughing barber of the man and his son: "I'll give \$10 for the painting." Being a poor man, it was all he could afford. "We have \$10, who will bid \$20?" "Give it to him for \$10. Let's see the masters." "\$10 is the bid, won't someone bid \$20?" The crowd was becoming angry. They didn't want the picture of the son. They wanted the more worthy investments for their collections. The auctioneer pounded the gavel. "Going once, twice, SOLD for \$10."

A man sitting on the second row shouted. "Now let's get on with the collection! The auctioneer laid down his gavel. "I'm sorry, the auction is over." "What about the paintings?" "I am sorry. When I was called to conduct this auction, I was told of a secret stipulation in the will. I was not allowed to reveal that stipulation until this time. Only the painting of the son would be auctioned. Whoever bought that painting would inherit the entire estate, including the paintings. The man who took the son gets every thing!"

God gave His son 2,000 years ago to die on a cruel cross. Much like the auctioneer, His message today is, "The son, the son, who'll take the son?" Because, you see, whoever takes the Son gets everything.

----author unknown

41. PUSHING AGAINST THE ROCK

There was a man who was asleep one night in his cabin when suddenly his room was filled with light and the Savior appeared. The Lord told the man he had a work for him to do, and showed him a large rock in front of his cabin. The Lord explained that the man was to push against the rock with all his might. The man did, day after day.

For many years he toiled from sun up to sun down, his shoulders set squarely against the cold, massive surface of the unmoving rock pushing with all his might. Each night the man returned to his cabin sore and worn out, feeling that his whole day had been spent in vain.

Seeing that the man was showing signs of discouragement, Satan decided to enter the picture placing thoughts into the man's mind such as, "You have been pushing against that rock for a long time and it hasn't budged. Why kill yourself over this? You are never going to move it? Etc." Thus, giving the man the impression that the task was impossible and that he was a failure.

These thoughts discouraged and dishearten the man even more. "Why kill myself over this?" He thought. "I'll just put in my time, giving just the minimum of effort and that will be good enough." And that he planned to do until one day he decided to make it a matter of prayer and take his troubled thoughts to the Lord.

"Lord" he said, "I have labored long and hard in your service, putting all of my strength to do that which you have asked. Yet, after all of this time, I have not even budged that rock a half a millimeter. What is wrong? Why am I failing?"

To this the Lord responded compassionately, "My friend, when long ago I asked you to serve me and you accepted, I told you that your task was to push against the rock with all of your strength, which you have done. Never once did I mention to you that I expected you to move it. Your task was to push. And now you come to me, your strength spent, thinking that you have failed. But, is that really so? Look at yourself. Your arms are strong and muscled, your back sinews are strong, your hands are callused from constant pressure, and your legs have become massive and hard. Though opposition you have grown much and your abilities now surpass that which you used to have. Yet you haven't moved the rock. But your calling was to be obedient and to push and to exercise your faith and trust in my wisdom. This you have done.

I, my friend, Will now move the rock."

3-17-99

42. THE CONCERT

Wishing to encourage her young son's progress on the piano, a mother took her boy to a Paderewski concert. After they were seated, the mother spotted a friend in the audience and walked down the aisle to greet her.

Seizing the opportunity to explore the wonders of the concert hall, the little boy rose and eventually explored his way through a door marked "NO ADMITTANCE."

When the house lights dimmed and the concert was about to begin, the mother returned to her seat and discovered that the child was missing.

Suddenly, the curtains parted and spotlights focused on the impressive Steinway on stage. In horror, the mother saw her little boy sitting at the keyboard, innocently picking out "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."

At that moment, the great piano master made his entrance, quickly moved to the piano, and whispered in the boy's ear, "Don't quit. Keep playing."

Then leaning over, Paderewski reached down with his left hand and began filling in a bass part. Soon his right arm reached around to the other side of the child and he added a running obbligato. Together, the old master and the young novice transformed a frightening situation into a wonderfully creative experience. The audience was mesmerized.

That is the way it is with our Beloved Creator. What we can accomplish on our own is hardly noteworthy. We try our best, but the results aren't exactly graceful, flowing music. But with the hand of the Master, our life's work truly can be beautiful.

Next time you set out to accomplish great feats, listen carefully. You can hear God's voice, whispering in your ear, "Don't quit. Keep playing." Feel God's loving arms around you. Know that strong hands are there helping you turn your feeble attempts into true masterpieces.

Remember, God doesn't call the equipped. God equips the called.

Pray today that God will reveal his purpose for you and set out to accomplish it, knowing that God has called only you to that specific purpose. Be blessed today. You are loved.

Next time you set out to accomplish great feats listen carefully. You may hear the voice of the Master, whispering in your ear,

Don't quite, keep playing

43. WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND

His name was Fleming, and he was a poor Scottish farmer. One day, while trying to eke out a living for his family, he heard a cry for help coming from a nearby boy. He dropped his tools and ran to the boy. There, mired to his waist in black muck, was a terrified boy, screaming and struggling to free himself.

The Farmer Fleming saved the lad from what could have been a slow and terrifying death.

The next day, a fancy carriage pulled up to the Scotsman's sparse surroundings. An elegantly dressed nobleman stepped out and introduced himself as the father of the boy Farmer Fleming had saved.

"I want to repay you," said the nobleman. "You saved my son's life." "No, I can't accept payment for what I did," the Scottish farmer replied, waving off the offer. At that moment, the farmer's own son came to the door of the family hovel. "Is that your son?" The nobleman asked. "Yes," the farmer replied proudly.

"I'll make you a deal. Let me take him and give him a good education. If the lad is anything like his father, he'll grow to a man you can be proud of." And that he did.

In time, Farmer Fleming's son graduated from St. Mary's Hospital Medical School in London, and went on to become known throughout the world as the noted Sir Alexander Fleming, the discoverer of Penicillin.

Years afterward, the nobleman's son was stricken with pneumonia. What saved him? Penicillin. The name of the nobleman? Lord Randolph Churchill. His son's name? Sir Winston Churchill.

Someone once said what goes around comes around. When you help someone else you are bringing joy into your life also

A careless word may kindle strife; a cruel word may wreck a life; a timely word may level stress; a loving word may heal and bless.

If you saw the movie Titanic, you know much of what took place 87 years ago tonight, when the ship that even God couldn't sink, did sink. Of the 1,528 people who ended up in the icy water, only six were rescued. But did you know that one of those six was actually saved twice that night? His story is an inspiring reminder that there's more to life than mere survival.

To tell this man's story, though, I have to first tell you about another man, a Scot named John Harper. Harper, a minister of the Gospel, boarded the Titanic with his six-year-old daughter, Nana. He planned to travel to the Moody Church in Chicago, where he'd been invited to preach for three months. When the ship struck the fateful iceberg and began to sink, Harper made sure his daughter was placed into one of the lifeboats. He then began what would be the last evangelistic work of his young life.

As the freezing waters began to fill the ship, Harper was heard shouting, "Let the women, children and the unsaved into the lifeboats." Survivors reported that Harper took off his own life jacket and gave it to another man. "Don't worry about me," he reportedly said, "I'm not going down, I'm going up!"

When the ship began to sink, more than 1,500 passengers jumped or fell into the icy waters. As they gradually drowned or froze to death, Harper was seen swimming from one passenger to another, pleading with them to accept Christ.

Only six of the 1,500 people struggling in the water were later rescued, including a man who later identified himself as Harper's last convert. This young man had climbed up on a piece of debris. Harper, who was struggling in the water near him, shouted out, "Are you saved?" "No," the man replied. Harper then shouted the words from Scripture: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." The man did not answer, and a moment later he drifted away on the waves.

A few minutes later, the current brought the two men back together. Again Harper asked, "Are you saved?" Once again, the answer was "no." With his dying breath, Harper shouted, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." He then slipped under the waves for the last time.

Then and there, the man he had witnessed to decided to turn his life over to Christ. Four years later, at a Titanic survivors meeting in Ontario, Canada, this man tearfully gave his testimony recounting how John Harper had led him to the Lord.

I don't need to tell you that this dramatic story never made it into the movie. We live in a culture that seems to be more interested in fictional stories of romance, illicit sex, and priceless jewelry than in the real romance between God and His people.

When the subject of the Titanic comes up, as it may today on the eighty-seventh anniversary of the sinking, tell your friends the story of a young Scottish minister who witnessed to Christ with his dying breath. And make sure your kids know the story well. John Harper reminds us of a great lesson, the secret of the ages: that there's more to life than mere survival.

This information for this commentary came from the book "The Titanic's last Hero" by Moody Adams. (The Olive Press, 1997). The testimonies in this book were originally compiled in 1912 by John Climie of Scotland.

49. THE GIFT UNDER THE TREE

The wrapping, though yellowed, is still remarkably intact for a package of its age; as John Henry would say, "it came from a day when you got paid cash for a hard day's work." None of us could really imagine such a day, but John Henry had a convincing way about him, so we remained respectfully silent. The package still sits under our tree year after year, although the man who first placed it there is long gone. And year after year we tell the story he used to tell, and we remember the gift that he gave us all.

Two things were certain on Christmas Eve when I was younger: one was the aroma of freshly baked Christmas cookies that would fill the house by early afternoon. The other was that right before supper, John Henry would come through the door, his arms full of presents. He was the entire country's grandfather, a strange, happy old man that lived down the road. It was reputed that he hadn't cooked in years; he coordinated his visits to parallel mealtimes—but nobody seemed to mind. He had a mystical quality about him that drew genuine benevolence from people, and they were grateful to him for bringing that part of them to the surface.

He usually spoke quickly, but when it came time for storytelling, John Henry's voice grew low and quiet; it created a reverence in the room that made the words linger in the silence that followed them. He would always tell two stories on Christmas Eve, but he would say, "If you listen very carefully, you'll hear only one." The first one was about a baby that was born in a stable somewhere, and the commotion he caused. For the second one, however, he went over to the tree and carefully brought out the present that now sits beneath ours. He carried it slowly, reverently, placing it in the center of the circle of children, young and old, that had gathered to listen. We sat and stared at the small box, thoroughly mesmerized, and finally he would begin the story, soft and low. It want something like this.

"When I was no higher 'n...this little one here..." (Always picking up the smallest child in the room, he grew younger every year.) "...I couldn't wait for Christmas! Why, I remember sometimes going to bed before it was even dark...just so morning would come and I could open my present!"

"You never!"

"Oh! I did! I couldn't wait!" The firelight danced in his smiling eyes. "Momma and Daddy always dressed the tree with candles, popcorn and berry strings---it was almost as pretty as your tree!

Anyhow, one Christmas, I was really hoping for something, I was so excited—I remember asking over and over again, 'Momma, I been good this year ain't I?' And she always said, 'Yes, John Henry, you've been a real good boy,' and then she'd smile kinda sad-like and tell me to go play." "What was it, a bike!" "Or maybe...Gobots?" "Oh, heavens no!" he said, wondering what on earth a Gobot was. "See, times were hard, and we...well, we were really poor. Why, I felt lucky to just get a present. That's right—just one! Now, see how lucky... Wait! I think...yes! I remember what it was! It was a bright red rubber ball! Imagine that! Remembering after all this time!" (Every year he remembered after all this time.)

“Anyway, that Christmas was especially hard, ‘cause the summer had been hot, and the crops had shriveled up like the skin on my face. Momma and Daddy told me that maybe they couldn’t get me anything for Christmas---but I never really believed them, ‘cause there was always a present under the tree before. And sure enough, about a week before Christmas, that present appeared under the tree!”

He stopped to let everyone gaze on the package for a few seconds before continuing.

“All week long, I picked up my package---just to feel it, shake it a little, to see if it was my ball. It felt so good just to have something to look forward to that I would sit and play beside my present---just ‘cause it was mine!”

“Was it a ball?”

“I’m getting there---just hold your horses! Anyway, by the time Christmas Eve rolled around, I could hardly wait to see if it really was my ball! I was too excited to sleep!” “Over a Ball?” “Not just a ball! My ball! Haven’t you ever hoped for something until you felt you might burst? Well, I decided I just couldn’t wait. I got up in the middle of the night, Christmas Eve, and started to sneak downstairs to see if I could open the bottom---you know, all careful-like, so my folks wouldn’t know...”

“Did you?”

“Well, I snuck halfway down the stairs, real quiet-like, when I saw Momma and Daddy. The room was real pretty, all yellow from the candles on the tree, and the shadows danced across the mantle. But they were talking real sad and soft, like when Gretchen, our milk cow, died. I tried not to listen, but I heard my name. Momma said, we should’ve told him sooner—he’ll be so disappointed.’ At first I couldn’t understand, ‘cause I had a present, just like always. But after a while I figured out there wasn’t anything in that box. It was just full of rags.”

“They tricked you?” “That’s exactly what I thought! I snuck back upstairs, got into bed and just cried my pillow wet! And then I started thinking.” “About...?”

“About why my parents would fool me like that. I thought about how excited I had been about opening my present. And when I thought about it, I got excited again and felt all warm inside. After a while, I realized something. It wasn’t really the ball that had made me excited at all---it was that I had something to look forward to! And I thought, ‘Momma and Daddy must really love me to give me something to hope for.’” “But what happened in the morning...on Christmas?”

“Well, I got up, remembering everything I had thought about, and ran downstairs. Momma and Daddy heard me and came running too---to keep me, you know, from opening the present, and being disappointed. I just sat down next to my present, and smiled. Momma said, ‘John Henry, I’m afraid we couldn’t get you anything this year. That box is empty.’ And you know what? I told her, ‘No it’s not, Momma. This box is full of hope.’” They both started to cry, but older folks do that sometimes when they’re not sad, so it was okay. And I kept my present, ‘cause I felt good whenever I saw it, and ‘cause I knew it had a lot of love in it, too.”

That was always where the story ended, though the little ones always wanted to debate with him that they really had heard two stories. He just nibbled on cookies and smiled, winking at the older folks. ---David Wray a freelance writer.

50. LIGHTS ALONG THE SHORE

RICHARD h. SCHNEIDER

Guidepost Sr. Staff Editor

But to us he gives the keeping
of the lights along the shore,
Let the lower lights be burning!
Send a gleam across the wave!
Some poor fainting, struggling seaman,
You may rescue, you may save.
---From the Hymn "Lower Lights"

One brisk September day last year I visited Thacher, an island off the coast of Massachusetts. Named after a shipwrecked minister and his wife who found refuge on this windswept stretch of granite in 1635, the island stands about half a mile off Rockport on Cape Ann. Twin 135-year-old granite lighthouses, one at each end of the island, soar about 160 feet above the foaming breakers. The south tower's light still guides Atlantic mariners away from treacherous rocks that, before the first light was installed in 1771, claimed countless ships and lives.

That day I was to interview the lighthouse keeper, Merrell Beebe, a retired Army colonel. He and his wife had volunteered to serve as summer caretakers. There were visitors to guide, generators, boats and motors to maintain, and constant radio contact to keep with the Coast Guard in case the beacon light failed. "Why do you do it?" I asked him.

He studied the horizon and answered quietly, "Maybe it's the spirit of Mrs. Bray." And then Colonel Beebe told the story of what took place here the Christmas of 1864.

Alexander Bray, a wounded Civil War veteran, had been appointed keeper of what was then called Cape Ann Light. He was accompanied by his wife Maria, two children and two assistants. Maintaining the twin lights required much work. The Fresnel lenses--- which accentuate the oil-lamp's beam---had to be kept clear of soot, and the wicks had to be trimmed regularly. Every five hours someone had to wind a great clockwork mechanism known as the carrels, which pumped oil to the lamp and kept the reservoir pans filled. To reach the lens room one had to climb 148 cast-iron circular steps. The twin lights stand about one-fifth of a mile apart, a pleasant walk over rolling terrain on summer days but a head-down struggle against fierce Atlantic blizzards in winter.

Shortly before Christmas one of Bray's assistants came down with a high fever. The keeper and his other assistant settled the sick man in a small boat and rowed across the bay to Rockport to get him to a doctor. While they were on the mainland a powerful northeaster struck. Maria was alone with the responsibility of keeping the lights burning.

With her baby safe in his crib, she pulled on an ankle-length cloak and wrapped a shawl around her head. She took the older boy with her, and they stepped out into the howling storm. She headed for the far tower, squinting against stinging ice crystals. She slipped and fell, and picked herself up. Finally she reached the tower's iron door and clanged it open. She and the boy rested a moment on the stone bench inside the first-floor room. Then they began to climb. Twenty-five steps to the first landing, twenty to the

1=Religious people; 2=dishonest man (a backstabber); 3=Police officer lives here.; 4=make your self at home. 5=you can sleep in this farmers barn. 6=Poor water; 7=Stay out of yard; 8=these people will help you when you are sick. (Pop Bottle Charlie, a hobo, gave list of different signs with their meanings.)

52. HOW POOR WE ARE

One day...a wealthy family man took his son on a trip to the country so he could have his son see how poor country people were.

They stayed one day and one night in the farm of a very humble farmer house. At the end of the trip and back home the father asked the son: What did you think of the trip?

The son replied: Very nice Dad.

Father: Did you noticed how poor they were?

Son: Yes

Father: What did you learn?

Son: I learned that we have one dog in the house...and they have four. We have a fountain in the garden and they have a stream that has no end. We have imported lamps in the garden, they have the stars. Our garden goes to the edge of our property, they have the entire horizon as their back yard.

At the end of the son's reply the father was speechless and his son added:

"Thank you dad for showing me how poor we really are."

Isn't it true that all depends on the crystal you use to see life?

53. WHY I BELIEVE JOSEPH SMITH WAS A PROPHET OF GOD

1. No man could have done what Joseph Smith did without the help of God.
2. Joseph Gave the world more of the direct words of Christ then any other Prophet. (More then Moses, Abraham, Isaiah, Jeremiah, John, Paul and others)
3. He declared unto the world the true nature of God.
4. He restored ancient records with teaching not taught by the Christian world in his day.
5. He gave many new revelations on gospel subjects, the nature of which show their divine authorship. Such as the Book Of Mormon, Pearl of Great Price, and D&C.
6. He declared to the world, "thus saith the Lord," the first recorded man to be able to do so for over 1800 years.
7. His teachings and revelations had to agree with all recorded scripture in every detail, in meaning, thought and contend. And they do.
8. For 170 years his revelations and teaching have to be investigated and the wise and educated of the world would try to find fault, and they cannot.
9. He was a young man, lacking in the education you have. (3 year formal)
10. In restoring the Book Of Mormon, he completed that task in less then two months and it has stood as he translated for 170 years.
11. Through Joseph Smith, the ancient priesthood was restored, even the Melchisedec and Aaronic, so once again man could say with authority thus saith the Lord. (Today there is more priesthood on the earth then any other time in the history of the earth.)
12. He restored the power to bless the sick. And to do all the miracles done in the time of Christ.
13. He brought back the building of temples and all the ordinances therein.
14. The findings of this day at Qumran, Nag Hamadi etc. have to agree with everything he declared.
15. He brought back a knowledge of the following:
 - a. Mother in Heaven
 - b. Life before earth
 - c. Degrees of glory
 - d. Gospel taught to the dead
 - e. Baptism for the dead
 - f. Name of the true church
 - g. Organization of the true church
 - h. Administrations of the true church
 - i. Name of members (Saints)
 - j. Doctrine on infant baptism

- k. Plan of eternal progression
- l. Grand concept of: As man is God once was and as God is man might become.
- m. The worth of man, this is my work and glory to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.
- n. And many more things that help us come back to God.

54. ABOUT THE MORMONS

Letter to the Editor of Newspaper in Santa Clarita, California---Paul Allen

His letter to the editor was published in the Santa Clarita, California newspaper.

“ I have heard and seen enough! I have lived in the West all my life. I have worked around them. They have worked for me and I for them. When I was young, I dated their daughters. When I got married, they came to my wedding. Now that I have daughters of my own, some of their boys have dated my daughters. I would be privileged if one of them were to be my son-in-law.

I'm talking about the Mormons. They are some of the most honest, hard-working people I have ever known. They are spiritual, probably more than most other so-called religious people I have encountered. They study the Bible and teach from it as much as any Christian church ever has. They serve their religion without pay in every conceivable capacity. Not one of their leaders, teachers, counselors, Bishops or music directors receive one dime for the hours of labor they put in. The Mormons have a non-paid ministry - a fact that is not generally known.

I have heard many times from the pulpits of others how evil and non-Christian they are and that they will not go to heaven. I decided recently to attend one of their services near my home to see for myself. What a surprise! What I heard and saw was just the opposite from what the religious ministers of the day were telling me. I found a very simple service with no fanfare. I found a people with a great sense of humor and a well-balanced spiritual side. There was no loud music. Just a simple service, with the members themselves giving the several short sermons. They urge their youth to be morally clean and live a good life. They teach the gospel of Christ, as they understand it.

The name of their church is "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day-Saints."
Does that sound like a non-Christian church to you? I asked them many questions about

what they teach and why. I got answers that in most cases were from the New Testament. Their ideas and doctrines did not seem too far fetched for my understanding. When I read their "Book of Mormon" I was also very surprised to find just the opposite from what I had been told I would find.

Then I went to another church's pastor to ask him some of the same questions about doctrine. To my surprise, when he found out that I was in some way investigating the Mormons, he became hostile. He referred to them as a non-Christian cult. I received what sounded to me like evil propaganda against those people. He stated bluntly that they were not Christian and that they did not fit into the Christian mold. He also told me that they don't really believe the Bible. He gave me a pile of anti-Mormon literature. He began to rant that the Mormons were not telling me the truth about what they stand for. He didn't want to hear anything good about them.

At first I was surprised and then again, I wasn't. I began to wonder. I have never known of a cult that supports the Boy Scouts of America. According to the Boy Scouts, over a third of all the Boy Scout troops in the United States are Mormon. What cult do you know of that has a welfare system second to none in this country? They have farms, canneries and cattle ranches to help take care of the unfortunate ones who might be down and out and in need of a little help.

The Mormon Church has donated millions to welfare causes around the world without a word of credit. They have donated thousands to help rebuild Baptist churches that were burned a few years ago. They have donated tons of medical supplies to countries ravaged by earthquakes. You never see them on TV begging for money. What cult do you know that instills in its members to obey the law, pay their taxes, serve in the military if asked and be a good Christian by living high moral standards?

questions and answers that explain the meaning of life, the purpose of death, suffering and pain, the absolute need for a redeemer and the marvelous plan of happiness conceived and executed by Jesus Christ the Savior?

Yes, as soon as I find another church that teaches that, and also that has the organization and the priesthood power to make that teaching effective, I am going to quit the Mormon Church.

Don't you think, Mr. Editor, that the Divine Church should also have prophets that don't get old and sick, and die and certainly that don't make a goof here and there? A Divine Church should be so divine that only perfect people should belong to it, and only perfect people should run it. As a matter of fact, the Church should be so perfect that it should not even be here on earth!

So, I repeat, if any one of the kind readers of this imperfect letter knows about another church that teaches and does as much for mankind as the Mormon Church, please let me know. And please do it soon, because my turn to go to the cannery is coming up soon.

Also, they want to send my fifth and last son on a mission and I'll have to pay for it all. And I also know that they expect me to go to the farm to prune trees before long. Boy, these Mormons don't leave you alone for a minute. And what do I get for all they ask me to do? Well, someone said, for one, you can look forward to a funeral service at no charge! Do you think you can help me find another church?

-----Tom B. Clark

60. KATRINA

frank yoder

From: "Rich Murset" <mac_wad@sisna.com>
To: <High Priests & Ward Members>
Sent: Saturday, September 03, 2005 11:40 AM
Subject: Katrina/Fast Sunday

Sept. 3, 2005

Dear Ward members,

As you are aware there has been a monumental disaster in the New Orleans area. I have included an article about some of the relief efforts of the Church to date. It is obvious that neither the Church or the nation is prepared to deal with the kind of displacement, damage, food and water needs etc. that Katrina has caused. We all cannot drive to the South with our chainsaws and tents and help, no matter how much we may desire to do so. Since tomorrow is fast Sunday, I would ask all of you to help in a way that you can easily do. As you know the Church uses its own channels to get help to people. It also uses other agencies for the same purpose. Cash is the easiest way for the Church to help out since it can purchase things on the open market in places that are closer to the disaster. So I would ask that you give a generous Fast offering, which helps us in our area, but also please contribute to the 'Humanitarian Aid' place on your Tithing Donation slip.

You will also note in the article how the Church has distributed a lot of Sanitary kits that we have put together here and in other places. We always expected that these would go to third world countries, but now we see that they are also needed right here. Thank you for all you do and your generosity.
Bishop Murset

MERIDIAN MAGAZINE

Katrina's Devastation and the Latter-day Saints
By Maurine Jensen Proctor

Katrina's devastation may be the worst natural disaster in the history of the United States. Over a million people have been displaced from their homes in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama by savage winds and murky, rising floodwaters contaminated with sewage and bodies. Eighty-five percent of New Orleans is under water and rescue workers are marking X's on houses that contain the dead.

Martial law has been declared in the city and all residents are being asked to leave. All the lanes on all the roads around New Orleans are one way—leading out. Coastal cities and towns in Mississippi and Alabama have been devastated by the tidal surge.

Yet for Latter-day Saints, Ole Christensen, President of the Denham Springs Stake and chairman of the regional welfare committee, gave the most graphic description, “It reminds me of the chaos in 3 Nephi.” That completes the picture. Utter catastrophe. The face of the world changed.

“I’m sure the people then were probably numb too,” said President Christensen. You really don’t have time to think about it because the phone never stops ringing.”

“This is something you think will never happen,” said his wife, Joyce.

Most of us are experiencing Katrina’s wake through television images of desperate people who have become refugees with no place to go, huddled in the Superdome or climbing, drenched out of water, saying they have no food, no water and no one to tell them what to do.

Remarkable Welfare System

Thanks to the remarkable welfare system of the Church, for Latter-day Saints the situation is very different.

Latter-day Saints knew immediately knew what to do. When the storm hit, Priesthood leaders began what is an ongoing assessment of the whereabouts and well-being of the members. The Church has announced that all missionaries were evacuated before the storm hit. There are no reported deaths or injuries of members although many have not been accounted for.

President Christensen said the Baton Rouge temple was undamaged, though it lost its power for a period of time. Of the 43 buildings in the five stakes of his region, most of buildings sustained little or slight damage, except for those buildings in the areas hardest hit—the New Orleans Stake and the Slidell Stake. Because communications has been nearly impossible with those regions, the fate of many of those buildings is still uncertain.

“My best guess” said President Christensen, “is that two of the buildings in the Slidell area have some water in them. We do not have reports out of some areas—even by satellite phone.

Kevin Nield, director of Bishops' Storehouse Services, said that to this point the Church had responded with 14 semi-trailers full of necessities like water, tents, sleeping bags, tarps, chainsaws, generators, canned food and hygiene kits. When the Church saw the storm danger, "simultaneously we sent supplies to be pre-positioned in those locations to be close to the needs."

Needs are assessed by priesthood leaders with some guidance based on the experience of the welfare department. Every evening priesthood leaders have been on a conference call with officers in Salt Lake so that the Church can be appropriately responsive to needs.

Bennie Lilly, Area Welfare Manager for the North American Southeast Area, talked to Meridian from the Slidell bishop's storehouse. "It's hot and humid here. People are tired. About 10,000 members live in this area who have been affected by Katrina.

"Where I am standing, I see a tree that has fallen through the roof of a house and just beyond that a church that has lost its roof. There is no water, but still Bishop David Navo of the Mississippi Picayune Ward is here getting commodities for his hard-struck members." Housed in a Church

Bishop Navo had one central message when Brother Lilly handed the phone to him, "I am so grateful for the Church. I am grateful that Salt Lake had supplies on the way before the hurricane even hit. When you are involved in a catastrophe of this magnitude, you get a whole new picture of the services of the Church."

Bishop Navo's ward members have no communications whatsoever. No cell phones. No pay phones. No electricity. Stores are closed, but Wal-Mart is letting a few people in at a time to buy items with cash.

Limbs, trees and branches are down everywhere and many of the roads are nearly impassable. Katrina's eye passed over Picayune and so they were hit hard.

"Oak trees so big that you couldn't put your arms around their trunk went down," he said.

Bishop Navo cannot contact every ward member, so the night before the storm hit, he and his family moved into the Church to be there in case any members had to find shelter there. Come they did, by the scores. They pooled what food they had. The storm hit and the next

day misery set in with soaring temperatures and no water and food.

Thus Bishop Navo came to the Slidell bishop's storehouse for food, water and generators to supply the needs of those living in the church.

What especially pleased him, however, was that a woman who had adopted two special needs children received something she desperately needed. When the children got too hot, they had a tendency to go into seizures, and she needed a generator to keep them cool. Bishop Navo made sure she received the first generator from the Church's supplies.

Of course, members will need more than commodities as the awful realization bears down day in and out of what they've lost. LDS Social Services is sending help into the area to support member's emotional needs—almost a kind of grief counseling. People are reaching out to each other with open homes and open hearts.

And in the long run? How will Latter-day Saints rebuild lost homes and opportunities, swallowed under floodwaters or howling winds? That will take a longer assessment.

For New Orleans to be habitable again, they will have to start from the ground up with a completely new infrastructure—including roads and power. For Latter-day Saints who lived there, they can turn to a deeper infrastructure—a Church that is ready to help them when disaster strikes.

61. MISSIONARIES SING TO PROTESTER

APRIL 2003 CONFERENCE.

BY SISTER MISSIONARY

To be a missionary on Temple Square during General Conference is absolute heaven! Members of the Church travel hundreds of miles to Salt Lake City to see a prophet of God. The feeling within the walls is of peace, sacrifice, love, and testimony. Some members of the Church who don't have a ticket to get into a conference session will wait in lines inside the square for hours in hopes of crossing the street to the beautiful Conference Center. No one is impatient or grumpy as they wait. Even as it hailed and snowed, smiles are seen and laughs are heard as members try to squeeze under umbrellas of those in line with them. What a happy, joyous thrill it is to be a part of this event.

Outside the walls of Temple Square, however, the scene is quite different. Several very vocal protesters have been attending General conferences for many years. Each conference their following grows and becomes louder and even more disturbing than the last. Their main purpose? To yell and scream terrible things about the leaders, the doctrine and members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and in this way convince us we are wrong. The last time I check, yelling profane assumptions at families who are minding their own business wasn't the most effective teaching method. Yet, their posters and billboard get bigger, their voices louder and the result is the same—families scramble, covering the ears of their little ones as they hurry across the street between the Conference Center and Temple Square, where within the walls they can again feel the peace of the Spirit.

The Church got smart last year and came up with a plan. Anti-Mormons can buy a permit from the city to stand in a specific spot and conduct their protest. The Church decided to purchase their own permits, as well. They purchased one permit on the Conference Center side of the street and one on the Temple Square side of the street, just outside the gates. The Church called a special meeting of those sisters in mission leadership positions and asked us to be brave and place ourselves smack dab in the middle of all the drama. Can you imagine two sets of young sisters standing at their designated post in the midst of mobs of angry men holding posters, yelling, and blowing their noses in sacred garments and waving them in the air. We were a small force, but a mighty one. We had shifts, so we'd stand for two hours and then recharge back inside the Square before going back out to the lions.

One funny thing about these men is that they are paid to do this, and so when each Conference session started and everyone was inside, there was no one to yell at, so they'd put their signs and megaphones down and relax. This was an opportune time to chat. We called one anti-Mormon over who seemed to be our age and asked why he was here. He didn't really know. He was cold and "kind of wanted to get back home." We noticed one more man who seemed mentally slower than the others. As everyone was entering the Conference Center, he was holding an arrow that said "False Prophet," but it was pointed to the man next to him who was also an anti-Mormon. When his partner noticed, he re-directed his arrow so it was pointing at the Conference Center. We chuckled. Now that it had died down we made eye contact with this man and smiled. He smiled back and waved as if he wasn't aware of what he was being asked to do.

My companion and I had a break, so we went across the street, back to Temple Square, to warm up, before our next shift we really prayed that our presence would have some kind of impact.

Conference let out and as we positioned ourselves on the post outside of the gates of Temple Square, we watched as 21,000 people came streaming out of the Conference Center, spiritually fed and strengthened. I said one more prayer just as the anti-Mormons picked up all of their megaphones and signs. As we watched the peace destroyed and the faces of the members saddened and afraid of the mobs of yelling men, we were moved to action. My companion who has an incredibly powerful voice turned to me and said, "Let's sing hymns and try to out sing these guys." We began singing hymns as loud as we could. A few missionary sisters joined in and as the members crossed the street, they started to hear the singing behind all the yelling. As they looked past the mobs they saw us, and some joined in. We became very powerful, which angered the men, causing them to yell louder. It didn't matter—the members' faces turned from fear to happiness as they saw a small army of Saints standing for truth. Some mouthed the words "thank you," many waved and everyone smiled! More and more Saints joined in and we found more and more courage as we bore our testimony through song. As the mobs chanted "false prophet, false prophet." As they chanted "the Book of Mormon is false." We sang with fervor, "We are as the Armies of Helaman," and as they yelled with their megaphones that we were going to "burn in hell" we sang with full hearts, "The Spirit of God Like a Fire is Burning." The feeling was unmistakable. The presence of the Spirit was powerful and we were all brought to tears. Never had the contrast between good and evil been so clear to those standing there that day.

In the midst of it all, my eyes were drawn to one man who had stopped yelling. I watched for a moment as the spirit of the music utterly stopped him from yelling. He lowered his sign and looked back to see a small army of Saints with faith in their eyes as they lifted their voices in song. He looked back down at his sign with the expression on his face as if to say, "what am I doing here?" There he stood with his head down, touched by the Spirit. At that moment I began to cry, knowing that the gospel of Jesus Christ will go forth boldly, nobly and independent and that no unhallowed hand will stop it. No amount of yelling men will change what is true and cause me to doubt the confirmation I received that day.

How grateful I am for the spirit of truth and for the hearts that were touched through this wonderful experience. The Spirit of God like a fire is burning, and will continue to burn brightly forever.

62. "MODERN DAY STRIPLING WARRIORS"

I just got this story from a friend and thought it was a wonderful tribute to our young men who have been fighting in Iraq. Bishop Murset

Recently, I sent several friends an e-mail on the history of our military bugle remembrance, taps, and one of them, a friend I will call Pete, e-mailed me back. His report is so extraordinarily special that Brother Thomson, our Group Leader, agreed that I should share it with you as today's lesson on the Melchizedek Priesthood.

I tend to get emotional when I see the hand of the Lord in things. I hope that He will help me to get through this very touching material, and that you will accept it as it is intended, as a testimony for righteousness and the power of the priesthood. I will read it so Pete's words can speak for themselves.

"My oldest son, Jack, just returned from Iraq. He is a sergeant with the 1457th Engineer Battalion. They have a most interesting recent history. They were the first National Guard Combat Engineer Battalion to be called up to fight in Iraq. They are one of only two combat engineer Battalions in the nation that are National Guard units. The reason they had to go was because the eleven regular army combat engineer units were too badly depleted during the Clinton Administration to be combat-ready.

Engineers are sometimes called "sacrifice troops" since they must engage the enemy with only small arms, ahead of the main battle force. On D-Day, June 6, 1944 most of the casualties were combat engineers."

Jack and his family were shocked with a message they received when he was first called up. They were told to prepare messages and letters to their families and to plan their funerals, since the majority of them would not be coming back. The President wrote a letter of apology to them. "Combat engineers always go first.

Never before in American military history has any assault engineer unit gone into war and not suffered heavy casualties---until now. The 1457th engaged the enemy every step of the way from Kuwait to the liberation of Baghdad. Every one of them came home alive. Prior to every attack, assault engineers were dropped into enemy territory at night by helicopter, or sent in by day on foot, blowing up strategic facilities, taking out sentries, or in other ways going hand-to-hand with an enemy, then radioing that the way was clear for the main force.

Nobody every heard of the 1457th because they didn't fight as a unit. Once deployed, they were divided up among other units. They became 3rd Marines, 7th Marines, Rangers, Special Forces, 101st Airborne, Big Red One, and others. When a unit went into action, they took with them as many combat engineers as they needed to get the job done.

Jack served with the 101st Airborne as they fought through central Iraq and for the liberation of Baghdad itself. It was not a coincidence that a Utah boy found Saddam. It was also Utah Guardsmen who threw a rope around Saddam's status and pulled it down, with the world watching. The Special Forces in the North who worked and fought with Kurds were more Utah Guardsmen. The Utah "Rangers" who rescued the first prisoners were there early to do it because they were ahead of the main force.

Jack was able to send an e-mail every week or so. Every time, he wrote that he and the other Utah troops seemed to be on TV every night. Their job led them to take on the enemy first, and then to hold while the heavy forces came in to clean up. With the cleanup came the media, shooting tape to send home to the soldiers they found nearly every time, the soldiers greeting them were Utah Guardsmen assigned to whatever unit had had that assignment.

More than once Jack came out alive, unscathed, from a destroyed Humvee. He did not tell me this and was shocked that I knew, but confirmed it. When a squad took casualties, the ones walking away from it always included the combat engineers they had with them. As that oddity continued during the past year, many times soldiers insisted that they wanted a "Chaplain" with them when they went on missions. A Chaplain? Does that sound confusing? As the time went on, everyone noticed that the guys with the castle patch (Engineer patch) were always holding prayer circles or knew how to pray or something else that took religious training. In time many in their units thought the patch represented a church and not a battlement, the Engineer symbol. When asked if they were Priest, they said? Well...I was years ago, I am an Elder now." Un-explain that one.

Our engineers always held Sunday worship for everybody wherever they were. Our guardsmen cleaned out Saddam's huge residence, because it was the only building available and big enough to hold meetings on Sunday. Week in and week out, they held "Volunteer type Sunday meetings. Thousands of U.S. Soldiers wrote home that they liked the way the Army held Sunday worship, everybody taking turns giving a talk, praying, and leading the singing. Just that only "those fighting chaplains" were ordained to bless and pass the sacrament for everyone. Returning engineers said they never told others that it was a "Mormon" meeting. All were welcome, and in war, there is no atheists.

Sometimes after being prompted to just say what you're grateful for, a soldier new to praying would repeat in his prayer, "Say what you're grateful for!"

A soldier praying did not move as his prayer ended. All waited in silence as he remained with his arms folded and head down, eyes still closed. After a while, the man told his comrades, "Sorry, I had to tell God I was sorry I never talked to Him before, and promised I would again." Everyone understood.

A big smile comes from the fact that on the first Sunday that meeting were held in Saddam's palace, standing-room-only meetings were held every hour on the hour, from 7:00am to 9:00PM. At one afternoon service, as they were about to say the closing prayer, a voice called out from the side. It was one of the commanding officers. He wanted to thank the chaplain for holding such a wonderful worship service. A regular Army chaplain's voice from the middle of the room spoke up, "Sorry, General, I had nothing to do with this, the guys from Utah did it. I just come and do my part like the rest."

For music, the most popular songs were "Onward Christian Soldiers," "Give, Said the Little Stream," and "Jesus Wants me for a Sunbeam." A strange favorite that most managed to learn from the winter of 2003 was "I Am a Child of God." Interesting how that one got to be so well-known in Iraq.

Jack's most important message to our family was that he knew, more than anything, that all men are his brothers. As they fought across Iraq, prior to going into the fight, one could see the desert covered with men in prayer circles, arms wrapped around each other's

shoulders. And many times, the prayer was not just about protecting them from harm, but to allow them to find a way to let enemy soldiers to be able to go home to their loved ones. Only the true spirit would lead men to say such great things.”

I sent Pete an e-mail back, to tell him how special this was to me, because in the 60’s when I served in the Utah national Guard, my unit was the Group Headquarters of the 115th Engineers, and the 1457th was one of our battalions.

Pete e-mailed me back. It seems that in his work, he is a technical services vendor to the Utah National Guard Headquarters in Draper, Utah. He has contact with many of the senior people there. He told me something I didn’t know-that much of the intelligence for the war comes out of Draper. The translation and analysis comes out of the linguistics group there. They know what is going on-that’s how he found out about the Humvee incidents. Pete wrote that his relationship with the Guard leaders in Draper changed when he was asked if he was related to one of the non-coms of the 1457th, and he told them that the sergeant is his eldest son. After that, they followed what Jack was doing, and kept Pete up to date.

Pete told me, “It was as if they needed someone outside the military to talk to about their strange boys. I don’t remember how many times I have been alone with a senior officer who would break down in tears and ask, “What kind of people are we commanding anyway?” They knew all these faith-promoting stories.” Oddly enough, they knew so much because it was being reported to them by the Inspector General.

The Pentagon had ordered the IGF to investigate every small thing about particular groups of soldiers, trying to figure out what was different about them-why they were so special. The more they reported, the stranger it got. Midway through the war, Senator Hatch had complained to the Joint Chiefs, asking if they were trying to kill off his Utah Guardsmen and reminded them that we are a small state, too small to have so many people in harm’s way and to have so many of the dangerous missions staffed from one small state. The senator was reacting to parents writing him to complain about only Guardsmen going out to do all the dangerous stuff. Not only that, many of the dangerous patrols were being manned, not just by the 1457th, but some of their numbers were Utah linguistics soldiers who were not supposed to fight at all-whose job was supposed to be intelligence.

Well, the shock was that it was all true, but for what are rather strange reasons. As the fighting progressed, the commanders in Qatar were keeping track of who was doing what and with what success. They had no idea that the superior soldiers they kept hearing about were Utah Guardsmen. All they knew was that certain squads were hot. The Airborne, Marines and Rangers asked for the best men they could get to carry out important missions. Nobody knew that those squads, spread all over the military, were from the same place. Stranger still, some of the engineers would get orders cut to take “specialists” with them-nobody questioned who these specialists were. But they turned out to be friends of theirs who were in the other Utah Guards Unit-the linguistics boys-translated, “returned missionaries.”

One story Pete told me was that when the first attacks were made on Iraqi, logistics people back behind the lines, a group of Attack Military Police was sent to take out the Iraqis attacking the highway. For hardened support, they asked for the most experienced fighters from the 101st to assist them. Jack’s platoon was chosen, and he hand-picked his

men. (Want to guess who he put together? Uh, people he knew and trusted?) The 101st airborne received a citation for that one. The 101st sent the same group in to rescue captives later on. The whole world did not know they were all just Utah Guardsmen. Even his 101st Airborne Company Commander did not realize they were not the Special Ops people he thought they were. He assumed that a group like that had to have special training to pull off the things they kept doing-and succeeding under really tough odds and all come back unhurt.

When the Joint Chiefs verified, to their shock, that what Senator Hatch was complaining about was true, but for very strange reasons, the questions became why these guys were so good? It prompted a full-scale investigation into them, without even their knowledge. Jack told me they had no idea. Now regular army spooks were following them around everywhere they went and reporting every small things they did, and asking other soldiers about them. The general story coming back was that they were essentially extremely religious guys who had close friends everywhere and all of them were afraid of nothing, they must have some kind of unexplained charmed life. There was no logic at all in the way they came back unharmed over and over again.

In time, a whole story unfolded. It began with private prayer circles at camp in which other soldiers wanted to join. In time the prayer circles began to include more and more soldiers, and it spread to prayer circles even in battle. As time went on, the prayer circles were held after lights out in the tents all over Iraq. As you can imagine, these reports coming back were odd indeed. Here were tiger fighters who organized prayer circles everyday and worship services every Sunday, then would go out on Monday and fight hard again. It was when they were in Kuwait waiting to go home, reassembled from all their temporary units, that the Army saw them in one place for who they are, the 1457th engineer Battalion from Utah. No longer Special Ops, marines, Rangers, Attack MPs or Airborne. One Battalion, with no casualties, and made up of a majority of the most individually decorated fighters in the whole campaign.

The whole army was in shock. Not one killed? They had been spearheads of the Third Marines and 101st and Rangers? All those Sunday volunteer chaplains? The prayer circle guys? All those men are the same people? How can that be? They wore different uniforms with many different unit patches on their arms when they got together to go home. One patch they all wore-the engineer battlement patch. The patch many thought must be a church. The Army will now have to find chaplains with a cross or Star of David on their lapels. The church patch boys are going home. Combat engineers are not used to mop up, just to take the fight in.

Another interesting story, my last. You may recall from our local news the controversy about them being extended just before they were about to come home? Remember that? And how within two weeks they come home anyway? It all began with Fallujah, a major city in Iraq, becoming belligerent and needing experienced troops to go in and retake it. Orders went out for an assembly of the best fighting units to go in and clean the insurgents out. On paper the commanders in Qatar assembled successful units to go do it. One at a time, these orders filtered down-to the men in Kuwait, waiting to go home! They were not Marine or Ranger squads anymore, but a bunch of Utah Guardsmen who had served with those units. When the realization hit the commanders in Qatar, the orders were changed. The miracle men would go home after all. Field commanders interceded en mass, reporting back to headquarters that the men Qatar HQ was calling back to fight again had seen more dangerous action already than anyone else in the theater. But the messages coming back

were as odd as the whole situation. Commanders who didn't even know each other made similar comments. "Send them home. Tell them we can fight and pray on our own now!"

Jack was humbly surprised when I recounted what the people in Draper were telling me. "We all agreed we would keep all that to ourselves." Then he continued, "You see, Dad, it wasn't just that the president sent us there, at least not a national kind. The Lord sent us to Iraq to start something for Him. Not since the days of Abraham has there been any significant Melchizedek Priesthood presence in Babylon. We talked about it a lot among ourselves. We all knew that the Lord was doing something special, and decided we would keep our mouths shut and get on with it."

Jack shook his head in amazement when I told him about the military having all of them studied. There were unexplainable things happening—at least unexplainable in ordinary terms. No wonder the administrative regular Army officers in Draper wanted to know. "What kind of people are these?" But how does one answer without putting it in spiritual terms? Any attempt to respond in any other way only meets with oddity and confusion, and now confusion is the state of the Army in trying to understand what they observed. A few who were in tune got the message. But along with the 1457th itself, even they cannot tell the world what they saw—who would believe them?

Yesterday my friend Dave had just returned from the Priesthood session of Regional Conference in the Utah Valley. The general authorities at the conference were President Faust and Elder Maxwell. President Faust told them that five senior generals had recently met with the Brethren, thanking them for the fine young men from Utah who had served in Iraq and wanted to know more about them.

I wonder if the Brethren read them the Book of Mormon account of the Stripling Warriors? Now, what do you take away from this? For me:

First, I think, greater appreciation for our blessings.

Greater understanding of his words, "The Lord works in mysterious ways, his wonders to perform."

A hope that the "Holy Priesthood after the Order of the Son of God" has begun to work in the Land of Islam.

It is my hope that we will all be greatly impressed by and committed to the marvelous things that the Lord is working to do in the world today; that we, each of us, will take to our hearts and minds this realization, and put our faith, prayers, actions, and the Holy Priesthood that we bear, more fully behind Him in His work.

----June 13, 2004

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Spiritual nourishment in Iraq mess hall

Mormon guardsmen carrying on tradition of faithful fighters

By **Kevin Dougherty**, Stars and Stripes
European edition, Sunday, May 22, 2005

SULAYMANIYAH, Iraq — Every Sunday evening for the past few months, some of the boys of Battery B congregate in their small, second-floor dining room on base in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq.

They come for nourishment, though it's sustenance of a different sort the soldiers seek as they settle in at one of the four tables. Amid the containers and packets of mustard, ketchup and hot pepper sauce are manuals of faith, such as the New Testament and The Book of Mormon.

"We have a good little service here," said 30-year-old Staff Sgt. John Murdoch, who often leads this group of warriors in worship.

Mormons toting M-16s is



Kevin Dougherty / S&S
With a hymnal in hand, Staff Sgt. John Murdoch leads the Mormon men of Battery B in song. Every Sunday, members of Battery B, 1st Battalion, 148th Field Artillery, a National Guard unit of citizen-soldiers from Utah and Idaho, meet for a prayer service.

not an image that readily comes to mind when pondering the spiritual leanings of soldiers. And yet Mormons do serve, and have for generations, harking back to Capt. Jefferson Hunt in the mid-1800s.



Kevin Dougherty / S&S
Sgt. Derek Williams reflects on a passage in The Book of Mormon.

The list of Mormons who have left an indelible mark of military service is longer than people think. There's Gail Halvorsen, the "candy bomber" of the Berlin Airlift; Army Lt. Gen. James King; Air Force Gen. Robert Oaks; and retired Air Force Col. Bernard F. Fisher, the first airman to ever receive the Medal of Honor — and live to tell about it.

Fisher's story is compelling.

In 1966, while flying over the A-Shau Valley in Vietnam, his wingman is shot down. A Special Forces team is near the downed pilot, but rescue is not imminent. So Fisher lands his plane, rescues the flier and departs while his aircraft gets peppered 19 times by enemy fire.

Iraq is no different. Currently, there are 14,000 Mormons in the military. A large National Guard contingent from Utah and Idaho — Battery B, 1st Battalion, 148th Field Artillery — is deployed in the northeast, where Sulaymaniyah is located. Many are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

"People have to fight for our freedom," Murdoch, a resident of Shelley, Idaho, said after the service, "or we won't be able to worship as we want."

Sunday worship services at Forward Operating Base Stone are unique, if only for the setting. On the walls of the dining room are notes and charts reminding troops of operational security, leadership procedures and maintenance. A pair of glass windows face west, fly strips hang from the

curtain rods, pictures of Europe adorn the room and a soda cooler constantly hums, though not enough to drown out the singing.

Murdoch swings his right arm like a symphony conductor as 18 soldiers sing loud and hit just about every note.

“Those boys can sing,” said U.S. Army Corps of Engineer employee Dave Varner, a non-Mormon who recently took in one of the worship services.

There are scripture readings and open discussions. Few, if any, of the soldiers need to be prompted to participate. As hands shoot up, Murdoch first addresses the attendees as “Brother” followed by his last name.

The service typically draws 15 to 25 soldiers, a decent turnout given the size of the base and the dynamic nature of serving in a war zone.

On this day, the talk is deeply reflective; other times there is levity and laughter. Murdoch later steers the conversation to the presumed Second Coming of Christ and a passage that hints of “wars and rumors of war” that will precede it.

“We are kind of seeing that right now, aren’t we?” Murdoch notes.

During the service, the view outside turns heavenly. The setting sun reveals a kaleidoscope of colors: blue, purple, red, orange, yellow and green.

But few seem to notice. Like good soldiers, their attention is trained on Murdoch. It’s that focus that has served them well in war — and in peace.

“War won’t impede with my beliefs as a Christian,” said Spc. Jason McCurdy of West Valley City, Utah. “If it takes war to maintain our beliefs, then that’s what it takes.”

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64. The National Conference of Christians and Jews.

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The National Conference Statement on Religious Freedom

It is the position of the National Conference of Christians and Jews that the First Amendment right to the separation of religion and state and the right to freely exercise one's own faith is fundamental and inviolate. The right of any group to practice their faith in whatever manner consistent with public health and safety cannot and must not be infringed.

We further recognize that with every right there are also responsibilities that are equally part of our democratic process. Religious freedom is not the right to condemn, impugn, ridicule, or attack the beliefs of others. The responsible exercise of religious freedom includes the acknowledgement of according the same right to all others and a tolerance for the differences between and among all faiths.

The National Conference is particularly concerned with the growing number of attacks on religious beliefs and practices by a number of groups and individuals within our society. Such attacks, that utilize false or misleading information that is intended to promote religious bigotry, are acts of intolerance and prejudice. They are both irresponsible and anti-democratic in nature.

The recent attacks from a number of sources on The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormons) reek of the same prejudice that, in the past, we have often seen used against Jews, Catholics, Muslims, and many others. This kind of behavior needs to be identified and condemned for what it is: religious intolerance and blatant bigotry.

These attacks on the Mormon Church have come in three forms: preaching, publications, and video presentations. Honoring the freedom to speak and preach from the heart, the National Conference takes issue with using the pulpit, any pulpit, to promote misleading, distorted, false and/or bigoted views of any religious body. An example of such a distortion is the growing use and presentation of two videos: "The

The National Conference of Christians and Jews, founded in 1927, is a human relations organization dedicated to fighting bias, bigotry and racism in America. The National Conference promotes understanding and respect among all races, religions and cultures through advocacy, conflict resolution and education.

Godmakers" and "The Godmakers II". These videos, developed by an anti-Mormon group intent upon vilification and hatemongering, are designed to misstate, malign, and encourage the hatred of a well established group of Christian believers and they ought to be repudiated by all people of good will. We quote from the NCCJ "Programs in Pluralism" of April 1984:

The Godmakers ... does not, in our opinion, fairly portray the Mormon Church, Mormon belief, or Mormon history. It makes extensive use of half-truths, faulty generalizations, erroneous interpretations, and sensationalism. It is not reflective of the genuine spirit of the Mormon faith. It appears to us to be a basically unfair and untruthful presentation of what Mormons really believe and practice.

Mrs. Gillian Martin Sorensen, immediate past president of the National Conference, noted in news release in December of 1992 that:

...Godmakers II carries the odious scent of unreasoning prejudice. Let the public beware...Frank discussion of the truth of claims of different faiths is a legitimate avenue of inter-religious dialogue. But base appeals to fear and hatred have no place in such efforts, and must be condemned wherever they are encountered...Godmakers II is an affront to religious understanding.

As Virginians and as people of good will, we in the National Conference of Christians and Jews join with our national leaders in the condemnation of any attempt to use one's first amendment religious freedom as a smoke-screen behind which one might hide while engaged in actions which must rightly be named as religious bigotry.

It is not the policy of the National Conference to promote one religious faith over another or to champion the views of any religious group. However, it is our intent and our very purpose to oppose vigorously the actions of any group, religious or secular, that would enhance or engender religious prejudice.

It is the view of the National Conference that videos, tapes, books, and other media that are used to foster religious prejudice are deserving of

our contempt and condemnation. Thomas Jefferson, one Virginia's greatest citizens and the author of the Virginia Statute for Religious Liberty, wrote in that document that, "... all men shall be free to profess, and by argument, to maintain, their opinion in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities."

We, the Board of Directors of the Virginia Region of the National Conference, are in full agreement with Mr. Jefferson and we call upon all people of conscience and good will to acknowledge and protect the religious rights of every citizen as they would also desire to have their rights acknowledged and protected.

Adopted with a unanimous vote by the Virginia Regional Board of the NCCJ, February 4, 1994.

65. Smoking Death of Peter Jennings

By Naush Boghossian,
Staff Writer LA Daily News --8-9-05--

John Wayne, Bob Marley, Steve McQueen and Peter Jennings.

Each man was among the best in his profession, and each, in his own way, epitomized cool. But the mystique was shattered when they each fell victim to lung cancer - a hazard of smoking brought again into the national spotlight by Jennings' death Sunday.

"It freaked me out," said Michele Ross, 39, of Chatsworth, when she realized Jennings was just 67 when he died.

"Even if I stop, there's still a chance that I can get something later down the line. I don't want to die young. I don't want to have a terminal illness.

"It definitely opened my eyes. I very much am considering stopping and I'm hoping I didn't do damage to myself."

An estimated 400,000 Americans die annually from tobacco-related illness, including 160,000 from lung cancer, statistics show.

Despite warnings that smoking can cause cancer, bronchitis, emphysema, heart disease or even impotence, an estimated 54 million Americans smoke. The American Cancer Society says about 174,000 new cases of lung cancer were diagnosed in this country last year.

Susan Fox, 55, a travel company executive, has been smoking since she was 13 the same age as Jennings when he started.

"I think twice about it all the time," said the North Hills resident. "There's no allure to it's discouraging when he stopped 29 years ago and still got the disease."

Doctors and smoking experts emphasized that, while it's best to have never started smoking, quitting does reduce the chances of getting lung cancer.

"You don't diminish your chances to zero, but they'll help their lungs, decrease their risk of cardiovascular disease and lung cancer. Unfortunately, we can't make that risk go away completely." Said Dr. Robert Figlin, director of the Thoracic Oncology program at UCLA's Johnson Cancer Center.

The reality is that three out of four smokers want to quit but cannot, and 75 percent of smokers say they wish they never started, according to the U.S. Centers for disease Control and Prevention.

"I smoke because it's a stress reliever," said Lara Floyd, 21, of Northridge. "I don't really think about the health risk, that if I smoke this cigarette I'll die. But, I'm thinking about quitting now."

Bryan Hunt, 49, has been smoking since he was a teenager and thinks about quitting but only occasionally.

"I don't have many bad habits," said Hunt, of Topanga, who smokes two packs a day. "I justify it by saying I smoke cigarettes, but I don't smoke crack. It's kind of being in denial."

Sanez Pezeshki, 24, of Calabasas has been smoking for six years and says she'll know when it's time to quit.

"If it's going to happen to me, It's going to happen," she said. "I'm going to quit when I'm going to quit."

Abbe Long, supervisor for the counseling department of the California Smokers Helpline, said the two main components that help people quit smoking are internal motivation and planning being prepared to quit.

But high-profile lung-cancer deaths such as Jennings do have the ability to scare people of the habit.

"It's a real shock to see someone who's been in their living room every night for years die," Long said. "It makes people take stock and think, very much like if someone in your family passes away. But, for other people, it doesn't have an effect."

Hollywood has glamorized smoking for decades, and many young smokers today say it's cool to smoke, but those who have seen the disease up close know that's only a fallacy.

Treatment can involve surgery, chemotherapy or radiation therapy, or a combination. The prognosis depends on several factors, including the type of lung cancer and the patient's health, as well as whether and where the cancer has spread. Still, survival rates are generally lower than those for most cancers.

Former Glendale resident Patricia Henley knows firsthand what it's like to be taken to the brink of death. Hanley had been smoking Marlboros for 35 years before, in 1997, five doctors surrounded her hospital bed and told her she wasn't suffering from pneumonia but from lung cancer, and she had just four months to live.

One of the doctors told her, "you're going to die the worst death know to mankind," she recalled.

Since chemotherapy put her cancer into remission, Henley, 58 has considered herself lucky.

"You have no idea the hell it takes you to," said Henley, who now lives in Nevada. "It was surreal. Sometimes I felt like I came out of my body and was looking at myself, saying, how could you let this happen, how could you not have been smarter than them.

"I was scared I was going to die and afraid I wouldn't."

She successfully sued Philip Morris, alleging they had erroneously assured her that cigarettes were safe. She won \$9 million in punitive damages, which she used to create the Patricia Hanley Foundation, which uses the arts to teach children about the hazards of smoking and helps youngsters suffering from cancer, asthma and other smoking-related diseases.

As somebody who experienced lung cancer, Henley said Jennings' death devastated her. "How does a man go through the wars and go into war zones and a thing like a cigarette kills him?" Henley said. "I don't understand it."

66. ABRAHAM LINCOLN KEEPS HIS PROMISE

One day Abraham Lincoln was riding in a stagecoach, in company with a Kentucky colonel. After riding a number of miles together, the colonel took a bottle of whiskey out of his pocket, and said, "Mr. Lincoln, won't you take a drink with me."

Mr. Lincoln replied, "No, colonel, thank you, I never drink whiskey."

They rode along together for a number of miles more, visiting very pleasantly, when The gentleman from Kentucky reached into his pocket and brought out some cigars, saying "Now, Mr. Lincoln, if you won't take a drink with me, won't you take a smoke with me, for here are some of Kentucky's finest cigars?"

And Mr. Lincoln said, "Colonel, you are such a fine, agreeable man to travel with, maybe I ought to take a smoke with you. But before I do so, let me tell you a little story--- an experience I had when a small boy.

"My mother called me to her bed one day when I was about nine years old. She was sick, very sick, and she said to me, 'Abey, the doctor tells me I am not going to get well, I want you to promise me before I go that you will never use whiskey or tobacco as long as you live.' And I promised my mother I never would. And up to this hour, Colonel, I have kept that promise. Now would you advise me to break that promise to my dear mother and take a smoke with you?"

The colonel put his hand gently on Mr. Lincoln's shoulder, and with a voice trembling with emotion said: "No, Mr. Lincoln, I wouldn't have you do it for the world. It was one of the best promises you ever made. And I would give a thousand dollars today if I had made my mother a promise like that and kept it as you have done."

67. BOOK OF MORMON TRANSLATION STORY

REFLECTIONS OF SAMI HANNA AS RECORDED BY RUSSELL M. NELSON:

My neighbor, Sami Hanna, is a native Egyptian. He is an academic scholar who moved into our neighborhood to accept an assignment with the university as a specialist in Middle Eastern Studies and the Semitic group of languages such as Arabic, Abyssinian, Hebrew, Aramaic, and Assyrian. Being a newcomer into our community, he felt the Mormons were a bit of a curiosity. Upon learning the name Mormon came from our belief that the Book of Mormon is divine scripture, he was intrigued by the existence of the Book of Mormon. He had erroneously thought this was American literature.

When he was told that the Book of Mormon was translated from the ancient Egyptian or modified Hebrew type of hieroglyphic into the English language by the prophet Joseph Smith, he became even more engrossed. This was his native language and he knows much about the other Semitic languages as well as modern languages. So challenged was he by this book that he embarked on the project of translating the Book of Mormon from English to Arabic. This translation was different from other translators, for this was to be a translation back to the original language of the book. To make a long story short, the process of this translation became the process of his conversion; for he soon knew the Book of Mormon to be a divine document even though he knew virtually nothing of the organization of the Church or of its programs. His conversion came purely from the linguistics of the book which he found could not have been composed by an American, no matter how gifted. Some of these observations I think will be of interest to you, as they were to me, for they clarify some of the unique aspects of the book.

1. Jarom 2: "It must needs be..." This expression, odd and awkward in English, is excellent Arabic grammar. Elsewhere in the book the use of the compound verbs "did eat", "did go", "did smile" again awkward and rarely used in English, are classical and correct grammar in the Semitic languages.
2. Omni 18: "Zarahemla gave a genealogy of his fathers, according to his memory. Brother Hanna indicates that this is a typical custom of his Semitic forbearers to recite their genealogy from memory.
3. Words of Mormon 17: Reference is made here as in other parts of the Book of Mormon, to the "stiffneckedness" of his people. Brother Hanna perceives that this word would be a very unusual word for an American youth, Joseph Smith, to use. An American would likely prefer an adjective such as stubborn or inflexible. But the custom in the Arabic language is to use just such a descriptive adjective. Stiffnecked is an adjective they use in describing an obstinate person.
4. Mosiah 11:8 "King Noah built many elegant and spacious buildings and ornamented them with fine work and precious things, including ziff." Have you ever wondered about the meaning of the word "ziff" referred to in this

scripture? This word, although in the Book of Mormon, is not contained in dictionaries of the English language. Yet it translates freely back into the Arabic language, for ziff is a special kind of curved sword somewhat like a scimitar which is carried in a sheath and often used for ornamentation as well as for more practical purposes. The discovery of the word "ziff" in the Book of Mormon really excited my neighbor, Brother Hanna.

5. Alma 63:11 Reference is made to Helaman, son of Helaman. Why did not Joseph Smith interpret this as Helaman, Jr., which would have been more logical for him, bearing the same name as his father, Joseph, and being named Joseph Smith, Jr. In Arabic, Brother Hanna explains, there is no word "junior" to cover this circumstance. Their custom is to use the terminology Joseph, son of Joseph; Helaman, son of Helaman, etc.

6. Helaman 1:3 Here reference is made to the contending for the judgment seat. Brother Hanna observes that the use of the term "judgment seat" would be quite strange to an American who might have used a more familiar noun such as governor, president, or ruler. Yet, in Arabic custom, the place of power rests in the judgment seat and whoever occupies that seat, is the authority and power. The authority goes with the seat and not with the office or the person. So, this, in the Semitic languages, connotes the meaning exactly.

7. Helaman 3:14 In this verse, there are a total of eighteen "ands." Reviewers of the Book of Mormon have, on occasion, been critical of the grammar in such a passage where the use of the word "and" seems so repetitious. Yet Brother Hanna explains that each of the "ands" in this verse is absolutely essential to the meaning, when this verse is expressed in Arabic, for the omission of any "and" would nullify the meaning of the words.

8. Helaman 3: 18-19 Have you wondered why the Book of Mormon cites a numbering system such as this? Do we say "forty and six, forty and seven, forty and eight?" No! Joseph Smith's natural interpretation would more appropriately have been forty-six, forty-seven, forty-eight without the "ands." Brother Hanna excitedly observes that the use of "and" in "forty and six" is precisely correct Arabic. Remember they number, as well as read, from right to left and recite their numbers with the "and" to separate the columns.

Well, I have just cited a few of these examples. There are many more! As Latter-day Saint leaders, we are aware of the Semitic origin of the Book of Mormon. The fact that an Arabic scholar such as this sees a beautiful internal consistency in the Prophet Joseph Smith's translation of the book, is of great interest. The Prophet Joseph did not merely render an interpretation, but a word for word translation from the Egyptian type of hieroglyphic into the English language. Brother Hanna said the Book of Mormon simply flowed back into the Arabic language.

68. ETERNAL MARRIAGE

Two spirits in the Celestial World
Stood apart from the Heavenly throng,
A mighty love shone in each face
And in each heart a song.

“Dearest,” he said, with a look of love,
“The time at last has come,
that I may take the glorious step
And have a mortal home.”

“Our love and association here,
Will bind our hearts below,
And, darling, when I meet you there,
I’m sure our hearts will know.”

“I too am sure,” she gently said,
“The love that has bound us here,
will span the space betwixt, heaven and earth,
I’m sure, I shall know you, dear.”

“God grant it,” he said with a lot of love.
“If the Father has willed it so,
I shall meet and know and love you dear,
In the life God has planned down below.”

“And further thoughts by God’s great plan,
Our union shall endless be.
Not only for mortal life my dear,
But for all eternity.

A young girl worked at her daily task,
In a thoughtful studied way,
Some long forgotten memory
Seemed to stir her heart that day.

A young man had entered the Bank,
Transacted his business and gone,
But the sight of his face and the
Sound of his voice,
Stirred her heart like the strain of a song.

“I suppose I have met him,
but it seems so strange to me
It seems I have known him always,
Ah, ---That voice from eternity.”

She learned to watch for his coming,
And always when he was gone,
The same emotion arose within,
It seems I’ve known him so long,

The self-same thought, entered his
Mind; the self-same emotion stirred
The glance of her eyes; and the sound
Of her voice; thrilled his heart
Like music he'd heard.

Their association were constant,
The courtship a patch of joy,
The sky of their love seemed cloudless,
Pure love, without alloy.

Slowly their hearts grew together
Firmly their heart bound with love,
Love which from God is eternal
Pure from the realms above.

At last the day of union: They
Stood in a thoughtful way, for
One with authority given of God,
Was to bind their lives that day.

"She is yours for eternity," the
voice of the Priesthood said,
"Yours for countless ages, your
union is never dead."

Still in their hearts was a craving,
Their souls were stirred within,
For the Lord had commanded his children
"Thou shalt rear the souls of men"

To them the commandment was sacred
Their souls with love were stirred
Then with her arms clapped around his
Neck, She said,
"Dearest, our prayers are heard."

Their hearts went up in daily prayer
"Oh Lord, if it be thy will, make us
worthy of a little life to come,
Make us better and nobler still."

Meekly she bore the burden, uncomplaining,
Sweet and mild.
A daily prayer went up to God, for the life
Of their unborn child.

But the ways of the Lord are a study,
And sometimes we don't understand,
Sometimes we are not quite ready, to
acknowledge the mighty hand.

For 'ere the baby has been given,
That would brighten their hearts and home,
The Father said, "Tis enough my child
Your mission on earth is done."

"The Lord has accepted your offerings,
Your life on the alter is given,
A Celestial Crown awaits you, in the home
Of your Father in Heaven."

Humbly he stood by and watched her,
As she passed to her home above
Taking his all, in one swift blow,
His baby and wife he loved.

"Father," he cried, in misery,
"Help me to say, 'Thy will be done'.
In this hour of sadness, I know that peace
For my loved ones is won."

Head bowed and with faith increasing,
For the Father's strength was given,
and he cried, "Be still my aching heart,
My treasures are laid up in heaven."

"Yet, the little time I may linger,
May my life be a worthy one,
Darling, we'll meet in a home of bliss,
When my mission on earth is done."

In the Celestial realms of our Father,
Stands a mansion of beauty rare,
On the steps stands a woman,
so beautiful, radiant, and fair.

By her side is a darling baby,
They are waiting for someone to come.
Waiting in joy to welcome him from
Earth to his Heavenly Home.

At last he sees the mansion,
Earthly toils for him are past.
And they hasten out to meet him
To welcome him home at last.

With arms outstretched they hasten
"Dearest Darling." Are the cries they give,
"Heaven, Wife, and Babe."

69. ETERNAL SEALING OF PARENTS: PROMISE

“The Prophet Joseph Smith declared – And he never taught more comforting doctrine – That the eternal sealing of faithful parents and the divine promises made to them for valiant service in the cause of truth, would save not only themselves but likewise their posterity.

Though some of the sheep may wander, the eye of the shepherd is upon them, and sooner or later they will feel the tentacles of divine providence reaching out after them and drawing them back to the fold. Either in this life or in the life to come, they will return. They will have to pay their debt to justice: they will suffer for their sins: and may tread a thorny path: but if it leads them at last, like the penitent prodigal, to a loving and forgiving Father’s heart and home, the painful experience will not have been in vain.

Pray for your careless and disobedient children: hold onto them with your faith. Hope on, trust on, till you see the salvation of God.

Who are these straying sheep – These wayward sons and daughters? They are children of the covenant, heirs to the promise, and have received, if baptized, the gift of the Holy Ghost, which makes manifest the things of God. Could all of that go for naught?”

(Orson F. Whitney, Conference report of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, April, 1929, pages 110-111.)