

FREE



A GOOD NEIGHBOR NEWS

"STRENGTHENING OUR LOCAL ECONOMY"

AUGUST 2011

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VOL. 2 • NO. 12

CHANGE

by Brenda Dwyer

She was feeling lost, neglected, forgotten. Seems her life was just not going the way she had "once upon a time" dreamed it would. She had many blessings. Perhaps not what most folks would consider blessings, but to her she was surrounded by jewels; her children, her family. She was unsettled in her soul. Often condemned by the world for choices she had made (at such a tender age), she was mocked and ridiculed. Time was a healer though. Once, in a car with her mother; as her children slept in the back seat, she was given a gift of encouragement that she neither expected nor felt she deserved. You see, both of her brothers were ministers and she often felt that they "had it all together" and she just didn't. Her mother told her though ... "Honey, everyone always tells dad and I how blessed we are to have two sons in the ministry. We are. We are so thankful. I need you to know something though ... I am just as proud of you, if not more so. You have a way of looking at people thru the eyes of Jesus ... you don't see what the rest of us see ... you seem to see only the heart of a person." "Sure, everyone thinks that you have brought great shame to our family but I need you to know that you haven't. You have brought blessing upon blessing and we are so thankful for you."

Yet, never in a million years had she ever realized that her actions could, would effect so many. She had always felt the people she loved were hurt; her father was broken ... her children would be the target of hatred and fear. What none of

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LOOK INSIDE FOR VALUABLE COUPONS FROM THESE MERCHANTS

- JERRY'S STANDARD SERVICE
- SHIPSHE PIZZA
- RULLI'S
- VIDEO VISIONS
- KEEPING TABS
- E & S SALES

by Brenda Dwyer

Flashbacks of another time in my life throw me to my knees wailing and pleading with the Lord. I am not ready for this time. I do not want to enter this battle. I do not want to feel this kind of pain all over again. I want instead for things to be the way they used to be ... just a year ago, a week ago, a minute ago. Tears stream down my face and I find myself angrily throwing thoughts around in my head ... possible remedies. HOW CAN I CHANGE THIS SITUATION? HOW CAN I STOP THIS MOTION? I wasn't ready to lose my father in 1994 but he was completing his path to heaven and there was no stopping the momentum of it ... now I am losing my mom ... she has dementia and (if possible) it seems even more cruel than that ugly monster "cancer" that stole my father from me. She is here, with that sweet smile on her face ... the one that has soothed my disquieted heart far too many times in both of our lives and yet now it speaks strongly of her core character and the fact that she is blissfully unaware of just how far into the land of fading memory she has actually traveled. I sob with the weight of it. She was my best friend. She was my confidant. She was my encourager ... she kept me strong with her words. She stood by me even when she didn't agree with me. She was the only person I could ever talk to for long hours on the phone until the receiver burned hot against my ear and in my hand. I fell asleep to the lilt of her soft voice as a child and many times over the years her small, yet strong arms have held me when my heart was wrenched and heavy with the pain of loss. She has been my biggest cheerleader and championed many a cause on my behalf. Now we no longer enjoy the art of conversation as we once knew it. Conversation has become a chore

and a test of endurance. I owe her this much ... to be relentless in answering all over again as if this latest inquiry is brand new and we've never visited the answer before (not even just seconds before). There are times I will lose her altogether in my words as I see her eyes glaze over and drift off (to where?). She has become less confident in her responses ... much more cautious. Almost every sentence ends with an apology. I am lost in this with her ... I easily envision us floating in a web of sorts ... each stuck with the reality and despair of our trap. There seems to be no way out. She is well aware that things are not what they once were and yet she is unaware that medications are involved that keep her from fretting about it. Those same medications that may be a saving grace for her seem like the final blow to me. They build an impenetrable chasm between us that cannot be breached. I hear God's whisper ... "do not be discouraged". I cannot give into anger, I cannot harden my heart. My mother loves the Lord with all of her heart and I pray that I can muster the courage and grow my faith so that I will honor her in how I handle this new change in our relationship. I will throw myself heart first into this battle ... to hang onto any tiny piece of her that I possibly can until God calls one of us home. I will determine to be there for her as she has been there for me all of these years. I will praise God for the many blessings we have experienced together and I will shout to the heavens with joy for the love we have known and will always know. My biggest prayer and hope is for her to remain happy throughout the days, months and years to come ... and for that smile to never disappear from her lips ... yet even if it does ... I will count it all joy and I will take my comfort in knowing that God has her in the palm of His hand; forever.



INSIDE THE TEA ROOM



Healing

by Brenda Dwyer

As I write this it is July 22, 2011 and I am sitting at my desk crying (as softly as I possibly can so as not to be overheard). I have just received some unexpected news that will greatly affect my life (as I know it).

My mind is full of prayer and thanksgiving but my heart is full of sadness. Sudden change is the hardest thing I have ever dealt with in my life. I love to have time to prepare for things ... any notice is probably sufficient but sometimes life doesn't allow for that and things happen

so suddenly and without warning. Whenever things happen suddenly it leaves me feeling just a bit shaken and it takes me a "minute" to recover and carry on.

Whenever these times of acute change happen I should have a "Pavlov's Dog" response because I know that God is with me and most assuredly I will continue on even stronger than

before.

So many things have been stewing in the background of my life lately. To name them all would be both pointless and serve no common good. We all have numerous things that we ruminate about and yet we deal with it. Perhaps this is just one of those times that I would be best served by "pulling up my big girl panties" and moving forward with the adventures that await me.

Writing is therapeutic; of this, there is no doubt. No wonder "journals" are a best seller in every stationary and book shop. Whatever troubles you today ... I pray the Lord fills you with peace that surpasses understanding and guides you to a quick remedy ... don't give into discouragement ... this too shall pass. :)

SALISBURY'S STAKE

by Stephanie J. Salisbury

There's always a morning, sometime in August, where every part of my subconscious screams out, "SCHOOL is about to start!" There's a feeling in the air, both subtle and overt at the same time. It's funny when it happens, because I stop and have a small moment of panic - I haven't gotten any supplies, or school clothes! I don't know my locker combination! I can't find my class schedule! Do I have gym class? What number bus do I ride?

Then I remember: I'm thirty-four years old. I haven't been in school since I graduated college at twenty-two. Granted, we have kids that are in school, but their ducks are all in a row. They have clothes, supplies, locker combinations, and schedules. So why do I panic?

At this point, I think it's more of a 'how-did-the-summer-get-away-so-quickly' feeling than anything else. At the beginning of summer, I have all of these lofty goals. I want to clean the carpets, haul the trash that's been lingering next to the house to the dump, paint the basement, join a softball team, read X number of books, alphabetize the DVDs, cull my wardrobe, spend a weekend at the beach, go camping, start walking a mile a day and take the dogs with me, and have a cookout with all my friends and family for no special occasion. Then, that morning in August, I wake up panic-stricken with the realization that school is about to start. Ergo, I have wasted the summer with things I 'have' to do instead of things I 'want' to do. I have read perhaps 1/4 of one book, walked from the house to the car which is much less than a mile a day, hauled the grill out once to burn some hot dogs, and acquired a sunburn the one day I drove an hour and a half to the beach.

There is a great need for balance in my life, but perhaps the secret to balance isn't try-

ing to find time for everything. Instead, the secret is ordering my priorities so that I am able to experience joy even in the things I 'have' to do, since I can't always accomplish the things I 'want' to do.

I have several jobs: I work at a coffee shop, I clean houses, I'm a wife/mom, and I write. All of these things take up approximately 99.88% of my time so, if I want to experience my life before it's over, I need to make an attempt to enjoy every moment while it's happening. Rather than get stuck on the negative aspects of all of these facets of my life, I get much more joy and a happier attitude if I find the humor in each experience.

If I make a pie chart of my life and what I spend my time on, I find that I fail miserably in the 'time with God' category and the 'time for myself' category. I also spend way too much time in the 'time at work' category, the 'time worrying' category, and apparently the 'time making pie charts' category. The trick is to encircle my life with God so that whether I'm at work, in the bathtub, or making a pie chart, I'm experiencing Him. I need to be holistic instead of compartmental in my approach. If I take some time for myself, it makes for a much better 'me' in every other aspect of my life. It's not selfish to take a 30-minute bubble bath if it helps me not to scream at my teenagers for being too loud in the living room.

I envision a time when I can do what I want to do - see Australia, sing at the top of my lungs, dance all night with my friends, write a full-length novel, spend a week in a tent with a campfire next to me. It's a blissful time, a joy-filled time. It's a time called... retirement.

Here's the part where I sigh, and go back to work. Sometimes I miss locker combinations and gym class.

A GOOD NEIGHBOR NEWS

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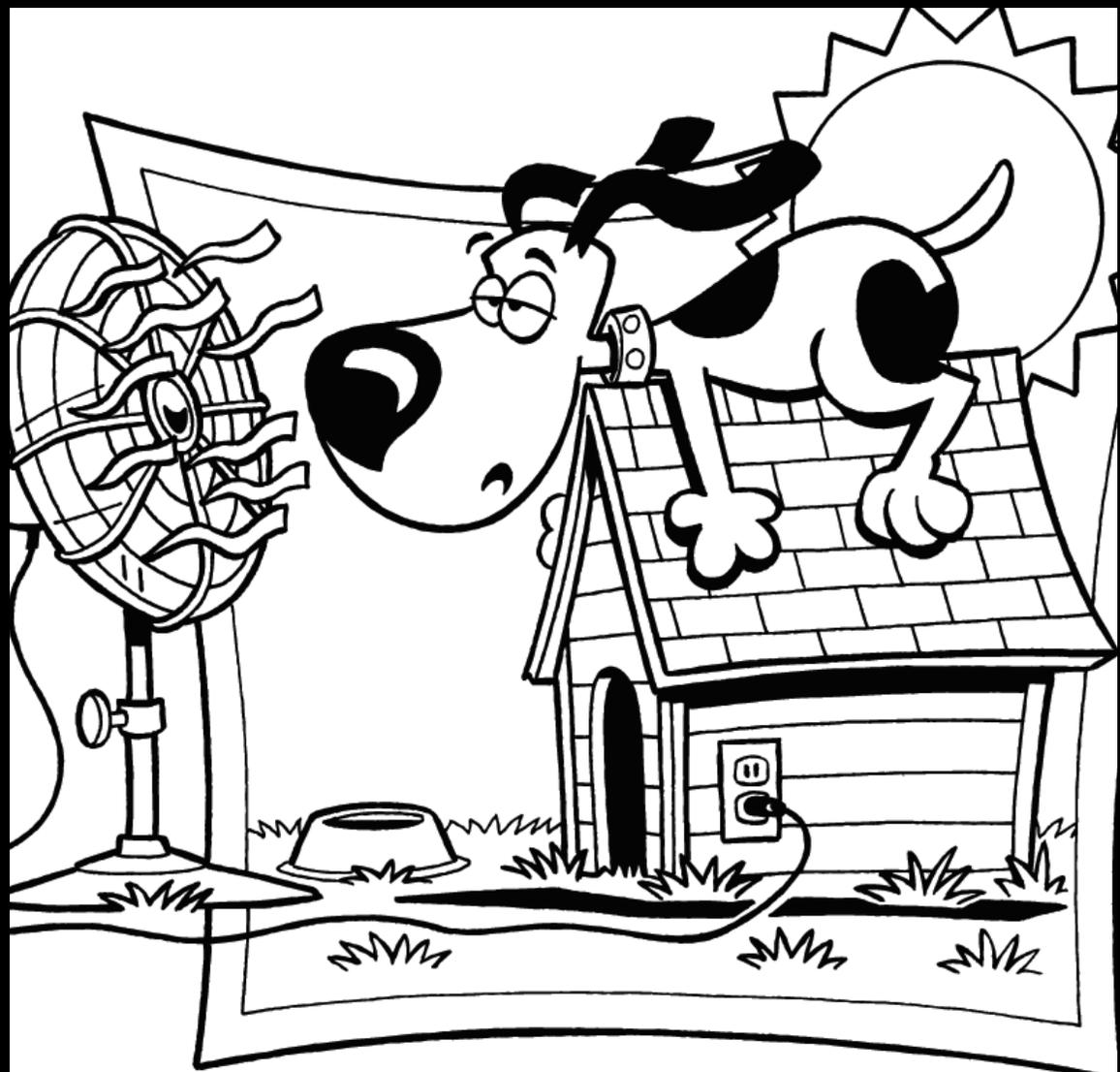
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THE CORNER OFFICE

A word from Bob Dwyer, Jr.



Bob wasn't able to write for his corner office this month. Oh, it's not the first time ... this is probably about the 4th time but considering how little time he spends in the office I would say his track record is fairly remarkable. My challenge comes in when I attempt to fill this space for him. What would he want to talk about? Most of the time, I honestly don't have a clue but this time, in light of some things that have been bothering him I am going to go

out on a limb and write about something that is near and dear to my heart on his behalf. All of us, at one time or another, begin to realize when something just doesn't "feel" right. Why is it that when it comes to the people we love we are proactive in making sure that they stop long enough to go to a doctor and find out what ails them but when it comes to ourselves we have a tendency to put things off. Some people seem to have a very low threshold for stress – and their bodies seem to follow suit. No one can tolerate significant amounts of stress for very long because in each one of us stress will take its toll. It can manifest itself in headaches, stomach aches, digestive problems, ulcers, cancers, and chronic conditions too numerous to list. The key component to any stress related condition

is to REMOVE THE STRESS FROM YOUR LIFE, (Bob ... I am NOT recommending that you get rid of me!) or at least try to maintain a "tolerable" level of it. Stress management classes abound; Yoga and other forms of meditation are right there at the top of the list but keep in mind that understanding stress and its damaging effects is the first step to preventative maintenance or a cure. If you too are experiencing the chokehold of stress in your life, I highly recommend relaxation, prayer and a trip to somewhere beautiful. Life is too short to allow stress to dictate your daily being. Take time to do something special for yourself every single day – something that uniquely celebrates you. I imagine if you make yourself do just that; that in no time at all you'll be feeling better than ever!

THE CAT'S MEOW



the other day, kind of hiding from everyone, when I heard them coming. You always hear them before you ever see them. Those chicks sure do a lot of talking. They all talk at the same time, I have no idea how Raven listens to it all or actually even hears any one of them. Cleo had her babies out at the same time; they were playing by the north berm; they sure did seem happy. We had a pretty good storm last night and I watched Raven get all of her babies tucked up underneath her and she hunkered so low down in the ground I almost lost sight of her. Cleo warned all of her brood to get up under the barn porch which they did ... all except for little man. Little man decided he was

plenty big enough to stay out and investigate ... there was no way a storm was going to scare him. He didn't even know what a storm really was but he did know that he was big and brave and ... oh my ... when that first big crack of lightening lit up the sky and thundered so loud it shook the ground that little boy stood straight up on his tippy toes with all of his hairs standing straight up and his eyes must have gotten three times larger than their normal size ... he was frozen with fear. I laughed so hard I thought I might laugh myself right into the hereafter. Well, things have quieted down again a bit so it's time for me to stretch one more time before I curl up and take a bit of a nap. Prrrrrrrrrrrr

by Brenda Dwyer

Raven had nine chicks. They are the cutest little things. Their names are; Midi, Neti, Lane, Thumper, Scoot, Lilli, Bock, Suzi and Cradl. Those chicks are 4 days old today and Raven sure is watching over them good. I was out underneath one of the southern pines

would bless her in so many ways throughout the days of her life. They made her stronger as she witnessed their strength to endure, persevere and be happy in the process ... against all odds. Although she wished in her heart of hearts (as she grew older) that none of them would

have had to endure the disappointments of this life, her vision became clearer as time went on and she could see the Master weave this unbelievably beautiful and intricate tapestry called life before her very eyes.

This 'n That



MISCELLANEOUS CLEANING TIPS

- Rye bread removes pencil marks on walls.
- Use raw spaghetti as a tester to see if your cakes are fully baked.
- Mayonnaise removes water marks on wood surfaces.
- Remove candle wax from table tops by placing a plastic bag of ice on them. Once hardened, remove the wax with a credit card. If there is any additional residue, it can be cleaned up using a mixture of one part apple cider vinegar to ten parts water.
- Did you know that banana peels work great to polish silver?
- Make your own furniture polish with 2 ½ cups vegetable oil and 1 ½ cups of lemon juice. This product is good for up to 6 months once made and refrigerated.
- White toothpaste works great to remove crayon marks on walls.
- Use crumpled up black and white newspaper dipped in vinegar to wash windows. Dip paper in vinegar and wipe the glass until almost dry, then shine with dry newspaper or cloth.
- Children's stickers can be removed from wood by applying white vinegar to the sticker, letting it soak and then scraping off.
- Clean those dirty, dusty, mini-blinds in your house in a snap! Fill the bathtub with warm, soapy water and let the blinds soak. If they are white blinds add a little bleach to get rid of any stains.
- Remove spilled nail polish from wood furniture: Don't wipe it up! The solvents in nail polish soften most finishes, and wiping may take off the finish. Instead, let the polish dry completely; then gently scrape it off with a credit card. Wax the surface, using superfine steel wool.
- Use cooking or salad oil for lubricating non-essential mechanical things like hinges, tools etc. A light coat of oil will keep tools from rusting and you don't need to buy expensive and toxic chemicals like WD-40 etc.
- To get hard water deposits off of your fixtures try some diluted muriatic acid (available at pool stores or hardware stores), but don't store it near chlorine- they can combine and become explosive!
- Consider investing in a small rug cleaner to use for quick clean-ups of pet stains and kid spills.
- If you have a busy schedule (and who doesn't?), and hate to clean, (and who doesn't?), make a schedule of what needs cleaning when and who will do it. If you have too much to do, consider hiring someone to come in once a month and do the chores you can't get to.
- Run your sponges through your dishwasher every few days, and dispose of them every few weeks. They breed bacteria because they do not get the opportunity to dry out in between uses.
- If you live in a two story house, keep a second vacuum cleaner upstairs; who likes to lug those things up and down stairs? Having 2 makes it easier to whip off some vacuuming when the mood strikes.
- Wash your child's toys after an illness to prevent reinfection or infection of another child.
- When washing windows, wipe the windows with newspaper, it won't leave streaks.
- Don't buy special cleaners to get out baby formula stains, use a little isopropyl alcohol on the stain, then a regular stain remover. Works like a charm.

Continued from Page 1

them could see at the time was that God was right there with her. She was one of His. Even though she made her fair share of mistakes, He was faithful to watch over her. Her children

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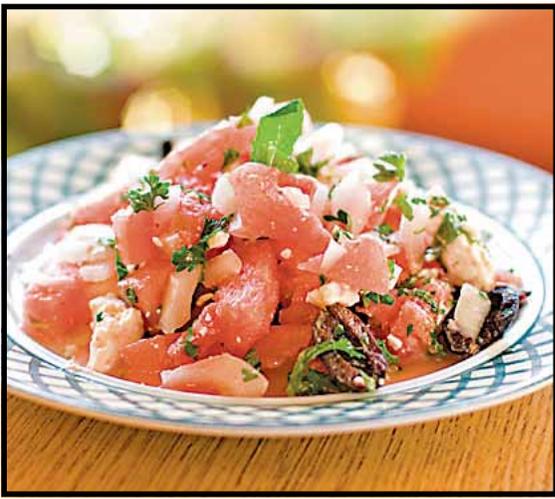
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- 1/2 cup chopped red onion
- 3 tablespoons fresh lime juice (about 2 limes)
- 4 cups cubed seeded watermelon
- 1/4 cup pitted kalamata olives
- 1/4 cup finely chopped fresh parsley
- 1/4 cup finely chopped fresh mint
- 1/2 cup (2 ounces) feta cheese, crumbled

PREPARATION

1. Combine onion and juice in a medium bowl; let stand 10 minutes. Add watermelon

Grandmas



ing to my familial relationships, and say good-bye to ever understanding how this transition transpired and how I now find myself with peers that young people consider to be "old".

by Brenda Dwyer

"To the moon and back Nana!" he said as he pumped his little fist towards the heavens. "I love you to the moon and back!" His words healed a heart that had been weighed down with this new chapter of my life in which I am learning to embrace this new "age" and the wrinkles that come with it, let go of my fantasies of how my life would play out pertain-

Please note that I purposefully used the term "peers"; hoping to ease the association in my head because I am not even close to admitting that I may be one of those "old" people. I still feel 20-something! Look, I know what you may be thinking but I don't know who that person is that greets me in the mirror every morning, although I do have a quick tip for her, "Honey ... a little good night's sleep can do wonders for those bags under your eyes!"

(There are times I worry about myself though ... especially when I have one of those days that I look in the mirror and think, yep, I now know why some fairly famous women over 40 wear all of that make-up). I have welcomed Neutrogena and Lancome into my life with open arms. Oil of Olay is an old friend. My foot is just about ready to cross over into the land of nip and tuck. Well, at least it never hurts to dream. Getting old is a true blessing ... feeling old is not. For today I will resign myself to accepting my age as long as I don't feel it. There, I can live with that.

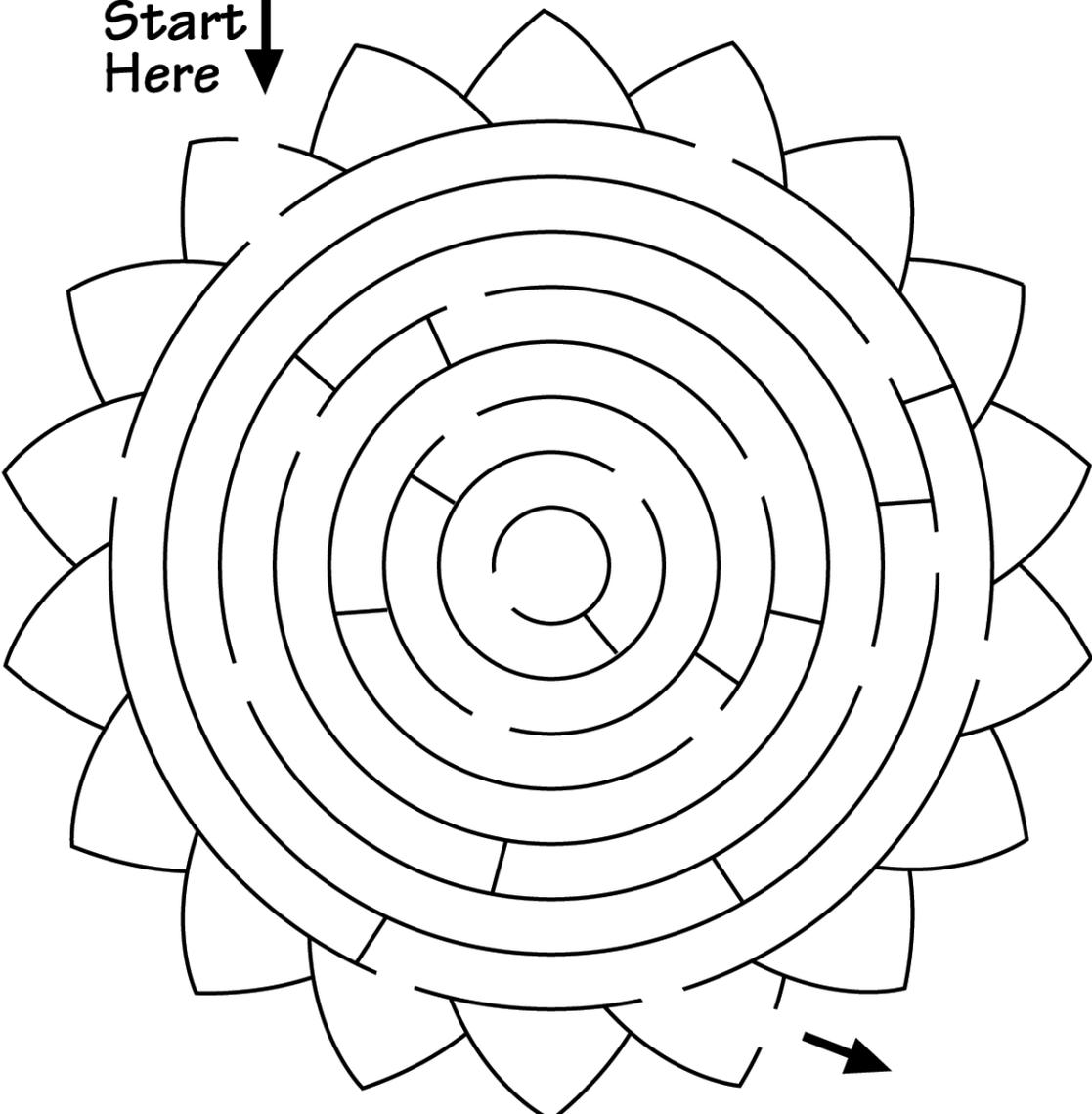
FROM THE PULPIT DISHEARTENED. DISMAYED. DISCOVERY.

Sometimes these three things in succession are what lead a person to Christ. It is a natural process for those among us who were not weaned on the Word as babes. Something in life alters and causes us to seek something more. It is a path that will surely be wrought with snares and pitfalls, deceit and temptation and yet if we continue to seek we will find the light at the end of our tunnel. I have been watching documentaries lately that are centered on the scientific discovery of Christ; who He was, who He is and what the truth is about Him. It is amazing to me (and yet expected) that some people are like belligerent children who do not want to freely accept that which is freely offered ... instead they

choose to reject the very cornerstone of their existence. It is most exciting to watch one of these wayward individuals fall heart first into discovery. I can almost hear the angels sing every time it happens. Blessed are those who know Christ and live their lives with Him at the center of their hearts every day. Tortured are those who wander in the wilderness looking for the very thing that is so blatantly right before their eyes. Knowing God and having a relationship with Him is the most personal thing any of us will ever "do". If you think about it - due to that one fact - we are left with the knowing that it is impossible to judge. Only God knows what is in our hearts. What is in yours?

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TRANSPORTED

The mountains were breathtaking! I can't remember the last time something just "stole" my breath away (and it had nothing to do with altitude). There were moments we would be hiking through thick flora and then the very next second break through into an opening that revealed sheer drop-offs or thundering waterfalls. I love traveling to places that produce an entirely different natural scenic landscape than the one I am used to. I always feel like I am on sensory overload – but in a very good way. The colors, the textures, the scents of a new land and the way the sun, moon and stars hang in a new sky fill me with something so tangible and yet I fail to be able to define it. All at once I am staggered by the realization that something heretofore unknown to me now fits like a glove and seems so very familiar. Small lizards and other reptilian creatures weave their way between the leaves and peek out now and then as if to say "hello". Beautiful birds and monkeys find their way from branch to branch with glorious abandonment and ease. I am learning lessons here. My mind is reeling with the sheer beauty that surrounds me. I am transported by it all because I realize in short order that I am filled with exhilaration and my body doesn't seem to mind the grueling climbs that are required at times as we work our way to yet one more unfathomable sight. As I breathe in the fresh air I realize that the closer I get to heaven as I climb this mountain – the closer I feel to God. His creation surrounds me and embraces me. There are long swatches of silvery leaves here and there that seem to sparkle like diamonds beneath my feet

and they are lush and soft. I find myself wondering why carpet padding is never this soft (not even the expensive yardage). It is what I would imagine stepping on a cloud to feel like if I was weightless. I knew my time here was limited so I wanted to "take it all in" and remember it as best I could. It was

hard to break the tree line on the way back down and back to my everyday life. As always, I am richer for the experience of it and humbled by the beauty of it and most of all ... thankful for the opportunity to have my breath taken away by something so magnificent and extraordinary.



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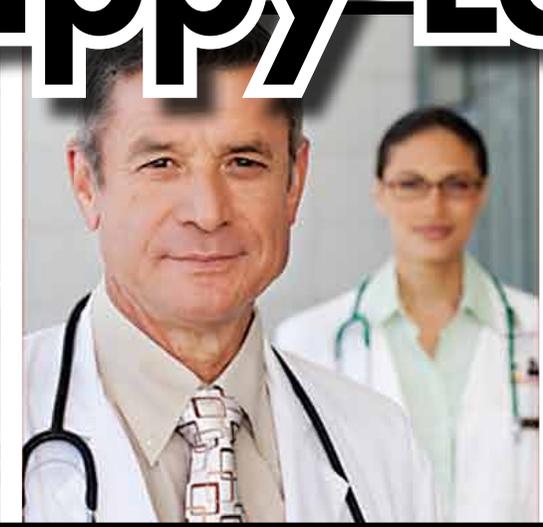
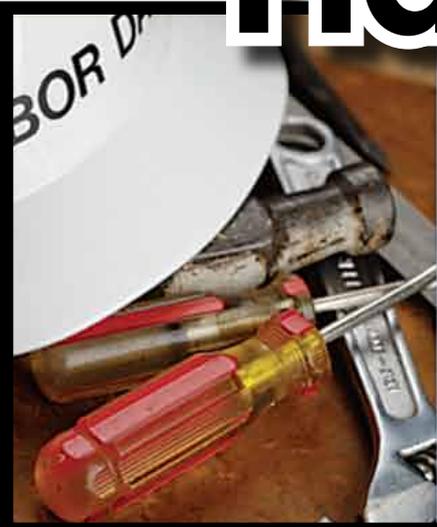
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 Dairy Queen - 416 N. Main
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 Grand Rental Station - 131 Orpha Drive
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 Hochstetler Roofing - 56781 CR 43
 Hoosier Tae Kwon Do, Inc. - 106 Wayne Street
 Indiana RV Connection - 503 N. Main
 Irongate Self Storage - 53070 SR 13
 Jenkins Automotive (NAPA Auto Parts) - 132 Orpha Drive
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 Justrite Nails - 851 US 20
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 Middlebury Hills Restaurant - 104 US 20 (Corner of SR13 &
 US20)
 Middlebury K.O.A. - 52867 SR 13
 Monteith Tire - 132 Orpha Drive Suite B
 Mr. Appliance of Elkhart County - 53855 SR 13
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 Parkway Ave., Suite E
 Tip-n-Toe Nail Spa Parkway - 17 Plaza
 56199 Parkway Ave. Suite 10
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GARDEN GAB



by Brenda Dwyer

I went out the other day and just sat down right in the middle of my pathway garden. It was especially hot and humid out and the dogs needed to stretch their legs. As I looked around I was absolutely amazed. Everything is so big! It was just 3 short years ago that I worked hour upon hour planting this tree, that flower ... oh, and those blackberry bushes over there. Now I am surrounded by towering trees, lush bushes that

have spread to an unbelievable girth, heady floral aromas and color everywhere! I see that I am in need of a lot more mulch but the fertilizer that was fed to each and every planting in here sure has done its job. The wagon needs repainting and the little chimney has almost been reclaimed by the earth but the tall grasses are massive and the ivy beautifully blankets the ground and provides cover for many little creatures beneath. The pine trees that form a line on

the far side of the garden stand like great towering sentinels ... they have grown in leaps and bounds! The hiding places for the grandchildren remain intact and I can't wait until they are all here again to explore within! Summer will soon pass and the fall foliage will first appear with the russet mums that line the front path. Ah, there is nothing quite as magical as a huge garden to bring you closer to creation and its Maker.

TALK ACROSS THE FENCE

by Brenda Dwyer

If I were to lean over my fence today to share a word of advice ... what would I share? How about this ... I know life can feel real hectic (more times than not) but if you are a parent – I don't care how old your child is – give yourself a "time out" to listen to them. Hear them when they talk to you ... that little voice you hear today will soon change and lest you forget – grasp these precious moments and store them up in your heart –

children need to be heard, and you need to take the time to turn every morsel of time God blesses you with into a good memory instead of a lost moment.

I would tell you to zone in on your soul and find peace – and don't give up until you do.

I would share with you that when I pass you on the street ... even though I may not know you; you bless me with the fact that you are out here in the world with the rest of us living your life – and it

especially blesses me when I see you smile.

I would beseech you to stop looking through the "rear view mirror" of your life so that you won't run over the blessings God has strewn along the "road" right in front of you.

I would plead with you to re-examine your faith or lack thereof and investigate further.

And finally, I would challenge you to be yourself/honor your individuality.

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WORD SEARCH

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| GRIN | RELATIONSHIP | WISE |
| HORROR | RUNG | WORM |
| IMPRESSIVE | | YAWN |

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

1. Mexican cuisine ingredient
10. Biology lab supply
14. Jurassic quadruped
15. Cavalry weapon
17. Vocalization
18. Jack
19. "___ any drop to drink": Coleridge
20. Appropriate
21. Staggered
22. During
24. Magazine middle
26. Kind of jar
28. Check
29. Born
30. Hand over for protection
32. Oriental
35. "Dilbert" cartoonist Scott Adams has one: Abbr.
36. Code word
37. Disgustingly
41. ___ Hardy, Marvel Comics' Black Cat
45. Call, as a game
46. Kill, in a way
48. Check for fit (2 wd)
49. Unconventional (3 wd)
53. Arp's art
54. More artful
55. Associations
57. Barely beat
58. Bind
59. Continental U.S.
61. Kind of code
62. Heights above sea level
63. Animal shelters
64. Tiny

DOWN

1. Salt shaker?
2. Place to put the feet up
3. Poet
4. "Act your ___!"
5. Cause for a lawsuit
6. Bartender on TV's Pacific Princess
7. Limpest
8. Clear
9. Bauxite, e.g.
10. Inquiring one
11. Swindler, slangily
12. Marine rock-clinger
13. Noisy partier
16. Blush
21. Created again
23. Residence halls
25. Athletic supporter?
27. Central parts
31. Tray
33. Preserve, in a way
34. Show place
37. Become an adult (2 wd)
38. Cultivated
39. Not connected to network
40. Churchyard tree in "Romeo and Juliet"
41. Leaf-shaped
42. Poisonous salt
43. Salts with I
44. Short-short-long meter
47. Be a snitch
50. Hyperion, for one
51. Cobbler's stock
52. Accept (2 wd)
56. Adjusts, as a clock
59. Cal. col.
60. ___ generis

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A WORLD OF WONDERS

by Monica Clark

GOOD-BYE, SUMMER!

“Whoa!” you say. “Good-bye, summer? There’s a lot of summer left! What is she thinking? What’s this ‘good-bye’ stuff? I don’t think so!”

You shake your head in disagreement, but if you have kids or grandkids, then you know summer is fleeting. Once school starts summer is over--no more sleeping in, no more lazy afternoons by the water, no more long summer naps. Summer may still bluster, her heat heavy and solid, but those vibrant greens are rusty along the edges. I hate to tell you folks, but summer vacation is over.

Now, it’s time to shop for school clothes or to pick out fabric to sew new clothes. Now, is the time to gather up funds to meet the demands of book rental and class fees--seriously, that much?

Instead of beaches and camping trips and cookouts, it will be Friday folders, lunch money requests, homework, and mountains of paperwork to fill out. There’s the trip to the school for Open House just to show your Kindergartner or Jr. High kid that, “It’s okay. You’ll do fine here.”

The kids are antsy, irritable and excited. They lay awake the night before school starts, tossing and turning, wondering what the new day will bring. Let me tell you, staff members also toss and turn and wonder what the new day will bring.

The first day of school is the only day the kids pop up out of bed like a bunch of Prairie Dogs. They quiver and shiver as they dress and try to eat breakfast. Then, they race off early to wait for the bus, not really knowing what time it will show up, but eager not to miss it. They head out, skipping down the lane in their brand new shoes, sometimes staggering under the weight of those enormous book bags.

Big, yellow buses lumber along

country roads, passing clumps of orange day lilies, tall stalks of delicate Queen Anne’s lace and roadside bouquets of periwinkle-blue wild chicory; rumbling past teary-eyed parents waving to the little ones they’ve just let loose. At school, the bell rings and a rush of children fills the hallway. Older sisters or brothers escort first-timers to the Kindergarten wing, little hands clutch bigger hands, anxious not to get separated and lost in the crowd. A few tears, usually, but then the teachers get started and fear is forgotten, replaced by the thought, “Hey, I’m big now!”

And college kids, now that’s a toughie. As they walk away, making their first steps into adulthood, all you see is that little six year old waiting for the school bus so long ago. You can’t believe the little one you sprinkled with baby powder is now this fine young man or woman striding confidently across the college campus.

Our Chris is 20 now and renting a house this year instead of living in the dorm. I tried to talk him out of it, until I.U. raised room rates. Then, I agreed with his decision. (As if not agreeing made any difference!) I am anxious about it. It’s a yearlong lease, which means he won’t be coming home next summer. What will we do without him?

It’s the nature of things, I suppose. You try your best to give your children what they need. You raise them with the knowledge that if you do your job right, they will leave you one day and go off on their own. That doesn’t seem like a very good deal! All the effort you pour into them and then they just leave? Who came up with that plan?!

As you pack up those lunches and hurry around on those frantic, weekday mornings, just take a moment to appreciate those times with your little ones. Believe me, childhood, like summer, is fleeting.

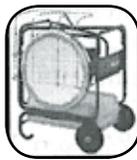
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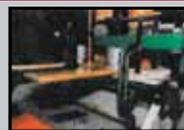
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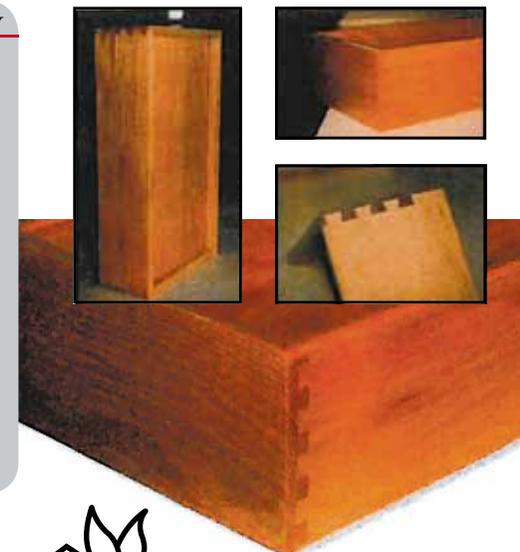
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FARM COUNTRY MOOS

by Loretta Miller

What a wonderful rain we had last night! We could get out of bed refreshed and ready to face another day. To God be the glory; great things he has done. My husband has a trucker coming out at 8:00 this morning to jostle heifers from a neighboring pasture home to our place again. Yesterday was Monday, the busiest day of the week in this farmhouse. Velda picked beans and cucumbers while I did the laundry. The little ones snapped the beans while JoAnne sliced the cucumbers. It goes so much better when we all work together. The other night I was sitting on our front porch swing gazing at the firebugs dancing in the night. Have you ever stopped and just watched them putting on their show of splendor? They were all working together for their God-given cause. It made a beautiful picture. Such perfect harmony. If one firebug would have been blinking alone, it wouldn't have been so mesmerizing. It's just like us humans. How good it must

look in God's eyes when we all shine together. Alone, we can't do near as much. Let's help each other up when one of us falls. We all need a lift sometimes. How wonderful for the caring hands of friends and family. John Newton was a young boy who had a caring mother. She taught him about Jesus and told him stories from the bible. His father was a sailor on the high seas and was rarely home. When his mother died, he was only 9 so he went to sail with his dad. Sea life was rough, alas he grew up rough, tough and a drunken brawler. One day he found himself thrown overboard and miraculously pulled back in. He was carried to the bottom of that boat near death and left to fend for himself. A caring woman took pity on him and brought him a bible. And as he lay there memories of his mother's gentle teachings came wafting back. He was converted, lying on the bottom of the floor of that ship. Later on he penned the words to my favorite song, "Amazing Grace".

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by Brenda Dwyer

I don't know why I feel compelled to share this story, but here goes. I must have been 13 or so when my mother took me to the theatre to see a movie that I won't mention the name of here.

However, I feel stating my age at the time is important so you will sense how very impressionable I was.

It was a narrated movie and the music that played constantly in the background was by Neil Diamond. At the time I thought it was the best movie ever ... in the history of movies! I could relate to this movie ... there was someone out there who understood me so well ... someone who had managed to capture the way I felt in a movie! I loved it and could have watched it again and again. (Didn't get that opportunity due to the fact that there were no VHS or DVD movies back then and my mother couldn't take me back to the theatre repeatedly to see it). Just having seen it one time boosted my sense of self.

Several (as in decades of) years later, my husband was out of town and I invited my daughter and her two children over for a sleep-over. Once we put the children down for the night, I suggested we watch the movie (I happened to have a copy of it that my best friend had purchased for me for my 40th birthday)! I was so excited as I had not yet watched it (I was now 44) and I thought it would be the perfect ending to a perfect day. Jasmin and I gathered up our snacks and headed off to the bedroom where we propped ourselves up on big fluffy pillows, arranged our late night snacks on our night stands and situated ourselves for the start of the show.

We didn't get three min-

utes into that movie before Jasmin asked, "Mom ... are there people in this movie?" I had to stop and think back a minute ... "no honey, I don't think so". The conversation that ensued was something like the following; I believe Jasmin asked me if there were only birds in the movie and I answered that I thought so but I wasn't sure. We watched for about another 10 minutes and Jasmin said (as she was pulling her blanket up to cover her eyes), "Mom ... I'm confused" ... this led to a rolling, bubbling laughter like I had never experienced before or since. Here's why. We fast-forwarded thru that entire movie and we were grossed out by a fight scene and then just cracked up when a crow called the seagull "wise-guy" and "out-cast" ... and then there was a lot more film of the bird flying over the ocean and several scenes of him flying over land and then it was basically over. I believe the single biggest thing that made us laugh so hard was the fact that I remembered that movie as being a change point in my life. Seeing the movie again so many years later just made me wonder ... "what the heck was I thinking when I was 13???" Scarey! I laugh now as I think of it.

I have often, since then, teased my daughter about that night and that movie. I keep asking her if she would like a copy of it. She insists that she is just fine without

ever seeing that movie again. I still think the movie has merit. The music was nice.



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READING INVENTOR

by Matt Cummins

Comprehension is a key component to being able to read well. Whether you are reading aloud to an audience or sitting quietly with a good book, you need to understand what you are reading. I think this is what Emerson means by his quote, "One must be an inventor to read well." Identifying the author's message is critical in comprehension and without the ability to invent ideas, this may not be possible.

I have been able to read almost as long as I can remember. Most of my early experiences with reading came during my school days. Reading wasn't much fun back when I had to read. Reading assignments and book reports were the normal way of life during that time in my life. Now that I have matured and the pressure to read is not as it was when I was a child, I enjoy reading. I have several magazine subscriptions and will occasionally purchase a new book or check one out at the library. Reading, to me, is very enjoyable. It allows me to challenge myself to find meaning in the articles or in the books I select. It helps me stay sharp and up to date on the

world around me.

A lot of what I have learned by reading is the direct result of being able to critically think about the piece I have read. This isn't the first time I have read or seen the quote by Emerson. I read it once while in high school and it did change how I viewed reading. Instead of reading a selection and soaking up the information like a sponge, Emerson's quote empowered me to decide whether or not I thought the reading was relevant to me and it made me think more deeply about the reading. Both of these traits I find to be doing on a daily basis with everything I read.

Knowing what you read and understanding it are very important components to comprehension. Inventing new ways of understanding the meaning of a piece is a great way to form opinions and to present new ideas to an old topic. So, in order to read well you must be an inventor of new ideas and fresh opinions. In my opinion, being an inventor while reading will also make reading a more pleasurable experience for everyone.

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COMMUNITY EVENTS

HUMANE SOCIETY OF ELKHART COUNTY VOLUNTEER ASSOCIATION MEETING

The Humane Society of Elkhart County Volunteer Association will meet Tuesday, August 2, 2011, at 7:00 pm in room #406 at the Elkhart Public Library, 300 S. Second Street, Elkhart.

Any adult interested in volunteering at the Shelter or with various fundraising projects, adopt-a-pet events or educational programs is invited to attend this monthly meeting.

For more information, contact Bernice Simms, Chairman, at 264-7264.

Website: www.elkharthumane-society.org

HUMANE SOCIETY OF ELKHART COUNTY DOG WASH FUNDRAISER

Date: Monday, August 8th

Time: 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Location: Martin's Paw Mart, Cobblestone Crossing, 4100 E. Bristol Street, Elkhart.

Minimum Donation for dog wash: \$5.00 per dog.

Toe nail trims will also be available for an additional donation.

Volunteers from the Humane Society of Elkhart County will be washing dogs with all proceeds used for the care and feeding of the animals at the Shelter.

For more information: Call 848-4225 or web site www.elkharthumanesociety.org

PET TOE NAIL TRIM FUNDRAISER

Sponsored by: The Humane Society of Elkhart County

Date/Time: Monday, August 8, 3:30 - 5:30 pm

Description: Pet toe nail trims provided for a donation. Proceeds to benefit The Humane Society of Elkhart County

Location: Martins Pet & Garden, 116 W. Jackson Street, Elkhart

For more information call: The Humane Shelter at 848-4225

Shelter Website: www.elkharthumanesociety.org

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COMMUNITY EVENTS

PET FEST

A FREE FUN EVENT FOR YOU AND YOUR PET

Sponsored by: Humane Society of Elkhart County

Date: Saturday, August 20

Time: 11:00 am – 2:00 pm

Location: Humane Society of Elkhart County, 54687 CR 19, Bristol

The Humane Society of Elkhart County is hosting their third annual PET FEST (A Day to Honor Your Pets and the Animals that Remain Homeless) on Saturday, August 20. The schedule of events includes registration and pet party favor give away starting at 11:00 am.

There is a group pet blessing at 1:00 pm followed by a pet parade at 1:15 pm. There will be a contest during the parade for cutest costume, owner/pet look-a-like and most unusual pet. Prizes will be awarded to all winners.

Pet games include Dogs Dunking for Dogs at 11:45 am (dogs will dunk for hot dogs in water pool), Musical Hoops at 12:15 pm (similar to musical chairs) and Dancing with the Dogs at 12:45 pm (demonstrate your pet's best dance moves). Prizes will be awarded to all winners.

Other activities include an on-leash agility course and demonstrations by Planet Canine, pet photos by Janet Graham, \$20 microchip clinic, pet related vendors, raffles and free refreshments for humans and

animals.

The shelter will be open for adoptions and will offer adopt one, get a companion animal for free. Cat adoption specials are offered with 50% off cats 5 years and under and 75% off cats over 5 years.

Dogs for Dollar\$ will sell additional refreshments. The Red Barn Resale Shop will be open with a 25% discount on all purchases.

Bring your family and pets and enjoy a fun day at the Humane Society of Elkhart County!



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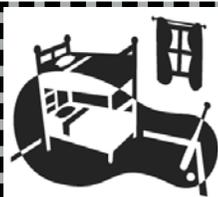
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by Brenda Dwyer
Softly i heard you call my name
i swayed to the music of your voice
i payed attention yet all the same
my path was that of another choice
tears fall down my cheeks as i recall
the very exact moment of it all
what was i thinking when my feet went astray
from your earnest beckoning there on the way
when i felt in my soul all was surely lost
there you hung for my pardon
... there on the cross

by Brenda Dwyer
I have found that life isn't always fair. No matter how hard you strive to do the right thing, say the right thing, apply the right thing ... sometimes life has a mind of its own and you "take one" right in the gut. How many times have I been thrown down, pushed aside, and shoved to the back of this "heap". I smile thinking of some of them for as hard as my life has been, I have always survived. I have gotten back up, shrugged off the push and ignored the shove. Why not? There is enough fighting in this world without me contributing to it. I choose to fight the spiritual battle that rages within instead and thereby recognize the war that plays out around me.

BBQ RULES!!!!!!

Have you ever watched the FOOD NETWORK channel? If so, you may recognize the name, Chris Marks. Chris is a 9x World BBQ Champion! He is from the Kansas City area and is well known in his community and around the country. This guy lives, eats and breathes the BBQ circuit.

Chris was here at A Good Neighbor back in May of this year and taught a class (BBQ 101 Ribs & Chicken)

to a class of over 20 attendees. Back then we didn't have much notice that he would be appearing and therefore we didn't have much time to advertise. Regardless of our feeble attempts, the class was a huge success and September 1st Chris is coming back due to popular demand. Our attendance, this time around, is expected to be much higher. Chris will be teaching BBQ 102 Butts & Briskets.

The class will be from 6PM to 10PM and will consist of preparation methods, seasoning & rub suggestions as well as how to smoke your meats to get the best possible result. All meat and utensils are included in the \$85.00 class fee. There is much to look forward to that night as well; Chris makes it a point to speak to everyone individually so that he can address any questions or concerns you may have.

These classes are a real treat for the discriminating grill-er. The education you will receive will be unparalleled and the event promises to be memorable. If you're looking for something unique and exceptionally special to do for yourself or a loved one ... join us for a night of unequivocal "BBQ" enjoyment - Kansas City Style. Trust me ... it's an opportunity of a lifetime!



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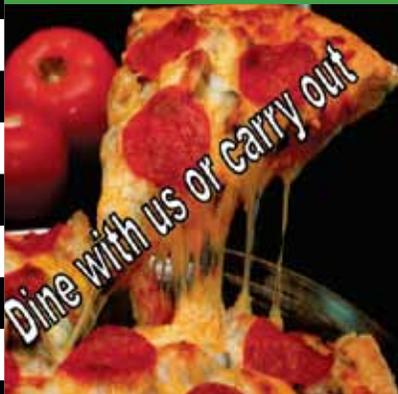
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