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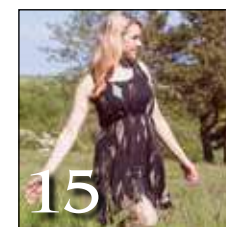
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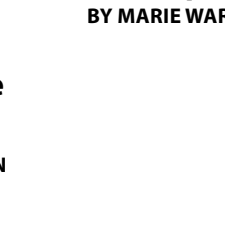
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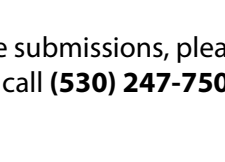
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Joyful Living

Fall 2018

Joyful Living Magazine is committed to embracing a lifestyle of joy and abundance. We are a platform for beauty, goodness and grace. We value inspired thinking and embrace changing seasons. We honor your legacy and where you are from. Our desire is to serve and respect our community.

Our intention is to bring valuable resources as our diverse natural surroundings. We devote this magazine to you and bless your journey today, tomorrow and always. Grateful is our foundation. Love is where we live. We are Joy. We are Full. We are Living.

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BY T.J. HOLMES

Redding Community STRENGTHENS In Wake of Carr Fire

It takes a village. The old adage isn't only true of raising children but also helping out in a time of need.

When the Carr Fire swept through Whiskeytown National Recreation Area, Old Shasta and the subdivisions of west Redding on July 26, summer evenings usually consisting of relaxation turned to panic. In the span of the next week, more than 38,000 people were displaced from their residences and nearly 1,100 homes were destroyed.

Citizens in Redding and Shasta County were in disbelief. But survival instincts and the good will of others didn't hesitate in the wake of adversity. Evacuation centers were set up all over the city and volunteers flocked to assist in any way they could. Some transported pets and livestock, others stuffed boxes full of prized possessions and irreplaceable mementos into cars and trailers. Homes and lodging properties remained open for safety and comfort, donation drives and relief effort funds were instituted, and businesses delivered and served food free of charge.

Neighbors helping neighbors. Strangers helping strangers. Humanity came before all else. "I witnessed countless acts of selflessness by the caring people of this great city who put each other's safety and well-being first," said Redding Mayor Kristen Schreder. "I couldn't be prouder of how this community responded as a collective group and I continue to be inspired by the stories I hear of the bravery from the first responders who dedicate their lives to protect and help others."

Agencies from all over the state, country and world converged in Shasta County to form an army, ready to go to battle against the fire. Cal Fire, California Highway Patrol, emergency services personnel, hot shot



crews and utility workers joined the volunteers throughout the city at American Red Cross and Salvation Army shelters set up at high schools, colleges, churches and rodeo grounds. The support was unwavering.

A COMMUNITY OF CARING

James Vereb's feeling of helplessness lasted only minutes. Vereb and his family were forced to evacuate their home when the fire blazed into west Redding residential neighborhoods. Instead of being glued to updates and worrying about his possessions, Vereb took action.

As the executive chef of the Mosaic, the restaurant of the Sheraton Redding Hotel at the Sundial Bridge, Vereb put others before himself by utilizing his expertise as a culinary magician.

"I saw the firefighters giving everything they have with their skillset, so I thought 'what can I do to help?'" said Vereb, a 13-year North State resident. "I have a skill that I've crafted for



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a long time and can feed the masses. There was going to be a need for it and it didn't sit well with me."

Vereb, 35, and his team has served more than 5,000 meals at evacuation centers in partnership with the American Red Cross and Salvation Army at Shasta College, Simpson University, Foothill High School, Haven Humane and the Mt. Shasta Mall parking lot.

The news of the Carr Fire grabbed the attention of celebrity chef and Emmy Award winner Guy Fieri, who contacted Vereb through a friend about helping with feeding displaced residents. Fieri's crew of five joined Vereb's team and athletic coaches from Shasta College on July 30 to serve 2,000 meals across lunch and dinner for evacuees.

Despite being displaced from his home at risk, Vereb's mind was focused on making sure his fellow community members were taken care of.

"It makes you want to put a cape on and help in any way you can," Vereb said. "That's what's great about our community – that we all came together to care for each other."

Vereb was among several others in the tourism and hospitality industry who assisted the community under dire circumstances, even those who were displaced themselves. Lodging properties remained open to accommodate first responders and evacuees while working around the clock to support their guests, said Laurie Baker, CEO of the Redding Convention and Visitors Bureau, the official tourism marketing organization for the city of Redding.

"I have been so impressed by the tremendous efforts and sacrifices made by emergency services personnel and their steadfast actions to assure safety is the highest priority," said Baker, who was also evacuated due to the fire. "The outpouring of support



this community has for one another in all of the different ways is a testament to how incredible this city, its people and these businesses are. You really feel like people are here for you."

'REDDING IS SOMETHING ELSE'

The Holiday Inn on Hilltop Drive became an oasis for emergency services personnel and evacuees. The coordination from Brandi Merkel, the hotel's director of sales and marketing, welcomed donations for toys, diapers, food, pillows, pet food and drinks.

When the hotel ran out of beds, Merkel turned to Facebook asking for donations for air mattresses. Within 24 hours, the hotel received 80 beds. In all, there were more than 100, allowing her to open her ballrooms to strike teams, hot shot crews, California Highway Patrol and Pacific Gas and Electric Co. workers to offer a place to rest between shifts.

"We were doing anything and everything we could to make sure the crews were as comfortable as possible," Merkel said.

The amenities didn't end there.

Merkel brought in Massage Envy to offer free massages to evacuees and first responders to help with recovery time and give them a chance to unwind. Holiday Inn was averaging about 100 massages a day for first responders and have received help from Glamorous Day Spa, Urban Retreat and the National Holistic Institute of Redding, Merkel said.

"This is the first time I've ever seen this when I've been fighting a fire," said Nick Shew, who has been with the Cal Fire Tulare department for five years. "This city has been absolutely amazing. You give it all you can all day long and come and get a massage and relax for a few hours before you're back at it again. Redding is something else."

The hotel had only 30 percent of its staff the night after the fire spread into the neighborhoods due to employees being displaced, Merkel said. But her friends and family started showing up to volunteer with laundry, setup, sorting donations, housekeeping and creating a play area for children.

"Everybody has pulled together to make sure these heroes are being taken care of," Merkel said.

Sugar Plum Cottage brought brand new toys for displaced children and Mission Linen donated sheets, towels, trash bags for the efforts, Merkel said. C.R. Gibbs American Grille, connected to the Best Western Plus on Hilltop Drive,

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also collected school supplies donations such as backpacks, lunch pails, toys, shoes and markers for families who have lost their homes. The restaurant also held a movie night for evacuated families with snacks.

A DISTRACTION FROM DEVASTATION

During a time of uncertainty, Turtle Bay Exploration Park provided an opportunity for visitors and evacuees to take a break from reality. Turtle Bay opened its museum for free over the first weekend of the fire and had 2,100 people come through its doors to get out of the smoke and take advantage of the educational exhibits, the visible river aquarium, the history gallery, and LEGO station.

"The community responded with gratitude for us providing a safe, air-conditioned place for them to walk around and get their minds off of the fire," said Seth McGaha, a spokesperson for Turtle Bay Exploration Park. "There were a lot of kids writing letters for firefighters thanking them for their brave service."

The Sundial Bridge and McConnell Arboretum and Botanical Gardens remain open to the public. The outdoor area called

Paul Bunyan's Forest Camp, which includes the amphitheater, playground, Parrott Playhouse, Wild Life Woods animal habitats, is expected to reopen soon when air quality improves.

Other major attractions such as the iconic Sundial Bridge, Lake Shasta Caverns National Natural Landmark, McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park, Lassen Volcanic National Park, and Castle Crags State Park are open for business. **JL**



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Woman in Business



BY VIRGINIA FORRISTER

Over the years I've operated several successful businesses. Currently my husband and I own and operate Adonai Dental Laboratory Inc, Redding, CA. It's definitely a male oriented field, however, more and more woman are becoming dental lab owners and dentists. We work with dentists and their staff all day long strategizing the outcome of crowns and implants to beautiful smiles and happy patients.

We've been in the field for about 30 years. I remember running a business raising little kids and the challenges I faced on a daily basis. Even though they are gone and married, new challenges arise. Was I totally organized compared to now? Heck no. You try to be completely organized when you have three little kids running around. Juggling six different schedules does take multitasking skills. Baseball, Cheerleading, and Horseback riding schedules have their demands. My desk was always an organized mess. I knew where everything was though. I've had the privilege of seeing the fruits of my business ethics and skills passed down to my now young adult children.

As a young business mom, I nurtured and paid close attention to the needs of my family. In business, I certainly pay attention to the needs of my clients. But I must say the day to day business dealings are the same from the days of old to present day. Yes, there are different hats I as a woman in business wear day to day and year after year, but it's still me under that hat. It's still me that IS the face of the business. In today's world, woman tend to think they need to act "like" a man in order to be an accomplished business woman who deserves respect and is to be taken seriously. I disagree. In my experience, it's just the opposite.

Knowing who you are and bringing those characteristics to the business table, makes for a great working relationship with our clients. In a business where you can experience non-loyalty, we have experienced just the opposite. We have clients that have been with us for over ten years. We choose to oper-

ate our business in a very ethical manner and our clients appreciate that.

So what am I? Nice, humorous, compassionate, smart, nurturing, integrity, believe in justice, good listener, love to go the extra mile, always know there are no problems, just solutions! I am all of these things, I am a woman, I don't have to be someone I am not. As a matter of fact, many men would rather do business transactions with woman rather than

men. They feel they are in a less threatening environment. And, most woman would rather do business with another woman for the same reasons. I do a lot of communication over the phone with what I do. Projecting over the phone, the characteristics of the kind of person I am, makes great conversation with pleasant results. I love talking over the phone.

So indeed you don't have to "bring

home the bacon, fry it up in a pan, and never, never, never, let him forget he's a man, because I'm a woman, W-O-M-A-N." None of that is true. I think my generation of woman felt if they didn't meet these standards, they failed at life to some degree. I realized this ridiculous standard bombarded that me in my twenties, was anything but true. So I decided to handle business my way. Which is simply me. Be me, just me. JL

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BY SALOMÉ ROAT

SALOMÉ was born in Quito, Ecuador, and has a doctorate of jurisprudence from Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador. She met her husband, Leon, about thirty years ago when he was on a mission trip in her country, and they have three amazing children. Her biggest passions are God, relationships, family, and helping singles with the second most important decision in their lives: marriage. After years of study-

ing what makes a relationship godly, fulfilling, and successful, she has a heart for the generations to come and a passion for couples to find true, intimate love with God and each other. Salomé and Leon (a financial adviser) mentor and coach young men and women and married couples. They live in San José,.

Finding Mr. or Miss RIGHT

Several weeks ago, I spoke with a young friend I will call Ryan. He had recently met a beautiful young lady, and it seemed they were perfect for one another. When I saw them together, they had huge smiles and appeared ridiculously happy.

But a short time later, Ryan came to see me. The relationship had fallen apart and he was heartbroken.

What happened?

Unfortunately, I see this pattern all the time. Many people get caught up in the infatuation and physical stage of a new relationship and don't stop to consider the deeper issues of why they feel the need to rush. So they often end up throwing themselves into a situation they aren't ready for.

But it doesn't have to be that way.

You Have an Important Choice

If you're single right now, then you're on your way to finding the perfect mate, the one God has designed for you. Maybe you have a certain person in mind as you read this. Maybe you're seriously dating someone, and you're thinking about taking the next step. Your path has crossed with this person's for a reason, and God is giving the two of you a choice.

You can run passionately ahead, ignoring all questions and potential caution signs. Or you can take a momentary step back from the situation to pray and evaluate whether this person could be Mr. or Miss Right.

How to Know If You're Marrying the Right Person

For many young people, the road to finding Mr. or Miss Right is strewn with multiple relationships and heartbreaks. Many people find themselves in serious relationships and aren't sure if they're dating the right person. They can end up settling because they think the perfect match isn't out there.

I've known many people who met, fell in love, and then—despite the warning signs rushed into marriage. Unfortunately, some of them found themselves in poor or even devastat-

ing situations that were filled with pain.

You don't have to be one of those people. Here are a few steps you can take to avoid the pain of a broken relationship:

1. Pray about the person you're considering marrying. What is God saying about your future with this person?
2. Spend some time apart from each other and get God's perspective on the relationship.
3. Seek the advice and counsel of mentors, parents, and people who know you well. Those closest to you can usually see potential problems more clearly.

Many young people don't even consider seeking the Holy Spirit's guidance in their marriage decisions. But God is the One who created us, and He wants only good things for us and our relationships. We can pray ahead of time and ask Him for His counsel in what to do.

God is always willing to help us find our way. That is true even after we've taken a wrong turn and don't feel like we deserve His help.

Whether you are dating someone or hoping to date someone, you can use this time to prepare for your future marriage. Enjoy this stage of your life, remembering you never have to settle for less than God's best. JL

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BY CAROL WERTZ

Associate Professor at Simpson University with over 35 years in education and experience in teaching pre-K through adult, Carol has developed a wealth of experience and is ready for a new challenge in answering your educational questions. Please contact her at carolbwertz@gmail.com

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES: *Moving Beyond our Past*

“I’ve been hearing a lot about ACEs lately. Can you tell me what that’s all about and why we would need to know about it?”

What a great question! You’re right – ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) has gotten a lot of attention lately. As I work with youth and adults, I find this tool to be very valuable in helping us see how our past is a key to our future.

Did you know that, as parents, we have the ability to greatly influence how our children’s brains develop? This is an awesome responsibility, and the ACEs study is one more tool to help guide us on this sometimes rocky road called “parenting”.

In the late 1990’s, a doctor from Kaiser Permanente, Dr. Feletti, and an epidemiologist from the Center for Diseases Control (CDC), Dr. Anda, wanted to determine how much negative childhood experiences affect our lifelong health. The doctors came up with a ten question survey dealing with various types of adversity that happened before a child’s 18th birthday and over 17,000 people participated, answering questions about their health history and their difficult experiences growing up. For example, there were questions asking if they had experienced physical neglect, if they lived with someone who abused drugs or alcohol, if they had a parent who was incarcerated, etc.

When they tabulated the results, they were stunned to see how common various types of trauma were, and how high the correlation was to later physical and/or mental health issues. The more traumatic experiences in childhood, the higher a person’s score. The higher the score, the greater their risk for some type of disease later in life. For example, a score of 4 indicates twice the risk of heart disease and cancer.

Why is this important? What’s predictable is preventable. The first step in stopping the trauma cycle is awareness, which can lead to health and wholeness. If you have a high ACE score, it does not mean your destiny has been determined. What it DOES mean is that, now that you are armed with knowledge and know you are at greater risk for health problems, you can take action to change behaviors that are not healthy, both for yourself and for your children.

Knowing that risky behaviors tend to get passed on from generation to generation, as parents, we can determine that our children will not be exposed to the same trauma that we were. Unfortunately, the ACEs scores for Shasta County are much higher than for the state as a whole, but the good news is that our schools have had training in helping children in trauma. We have people from different fields coming together to discuss how to best address the challenges that ACEs can increase.

I would encourage you to take the survey for yourself, but it is not appropriate for children. Go to ACEstoohigh.com to see the survey, and please let me know if you have more questions. JL



Focusing on the Learning Process and Contributing to the **FAMILY**



BY EMILY SCOTT, PHD

Emily Scott, PhD, is a wife, stay at home mom of three, and part time parenting consultant and blogger who has written and spoken on various parenting topics including child development, ACEs, and tips on raising responsible kids. She has lived in the Redding area her whole life, and together with her husband help parents navigate the difficult aspects of parenting at Renewed Hope Parenting. Her website is www.renewedhopeparenting.com

My kids are currently at the age where they love to help. Tonight while doing the dishes, they made an even bigger mess than was there to begin with. But I will always let them “help.” Our daughter put away the silverware from the dishwasher. Forks were upside down, and the big and small spoons were all mixed together. But I praised her for want to help and contributing to our family.

As parents, we send lots of messages to our kids that help grow or diminish their self-concept.

Children who have a good self-concept or self-esteem typically do better in school, make wiser choices, and work hard. They have higher feelings of self-worth and value.

On the other end, children who do not have a strong self-concept are the ones who typically have trouble with friends or at school. They may feel like a failure before they even have the chance to begin. Their self-concepts are developed based on how the big people in their lives (usually their parents) respond to them.

- We need to communicate to our children that we love them unconditionally. Our love for them is not based on how well they perform, how good their grades are, or how well they washed the dishes.
- We want to show our children they are valued members of our family and their contributions to daily life are important, noticed, valued, and beneficial.
- Let your child struggle so they are able to see that they can overcome the challenge, or allow them to ask for help when they need it. The parent who swoops in to help isn't really helping. They are sending the child a message that they aren't good enough to solve the problem themselves.

The end result of our kids doing the dishes for me was messy. But they tried. They worked hard. And perhaps best of all, they had fun. If I had pointed out the spots they missed or all the suds still on the glasses, or the disarray of the silverware what impact do you think that would have had on their feeling of value? If I had told them they didn't do a good job, do you think they would continually want to help?

When my three-year-old wants to help me fold laundry, should I criticize how messy he folded his shirts? Or should I encourage him and thank him for being a good helper? I do not want

to focus on the end result of his work, but in the process of him learning how to fold, and how to help. I know that the more he wants to help and the older he gets, the better he will get. But if I criticize him or tell him I don't want his help, he will never have the opportunity to learn through the process. Not only that, but I have covertly told him he isn't good enough to help. Showing our kids I love them regardless of their performance is much more important than the end result of clean dishes. Allowing them to help even though they didn't get things done to my standard shows them I see them as valued and important parts of our family. JL

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Sheree Maree is a life strategist and heart & soul coach dedicated to empowering women to create the life they desire. She shares her strategies and ideas on how to bring about positive change.



BY SHEREE NATHANSON

Sheree works with smart, successful women who are living a great life but know that something is missing. Their heart & soul are calling for more. Sheree helps them to get in touch with that calling and tune into their own unique gifts.

Sheree works with her clients to heal any feelings of discomfort in their lives and improve their experience of life. What brings them happiness will become clear and be the catalyst to set up a plan with the strategies to get their desired results.

You don't have to have a perfect life to experience happiness.

While I was going through a divorce, and leading up to the divorce I was not in my "happy place".

The idea of me taking responsibility for how I felt was a new concept.

I was stressed about everything. . taking care of my three children, finances, where I was going to live, how my children were going to manage during the divorce and many other day to day worries.

My therapist asked me these questions. My honest answers surprised me!



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The questions were:

- What was I allowing to determine my experiences?
- Who was in charge of my reality?

I had to think about this. My true answer was a big AHA moment for me. I was allowing all my worries and interactions from my soon to be ex-husband control how I felt. The answer for me was my ex-husband was in control of how I was experiencing my reality.

That was a huge realization and the catalyst for me to make some changes. It was time for me to take control of my own experiences.

Here's how I began. . . .

One of my lifetime habits is to take a walk early in the morning. I realized that during those walks I was alone in nature and it was relief for me from the perceived chaos of the day. Nobody was bothering me, my kids didn't need anything, and nobody was calling me. It was peaceful. So I began there. I looked forward to creating that "me" space every morning. During the day if things felt out of control I just reminded myself that in the morning I could have a peaceful experience again.

I was able to build on that. Little by little I started to become aware that I could create that feeling of peace in small doses during the day and gradually I was able to increase it.

It's interesting that we have no problem owning our experiences when something is wrong, but now it's time to OWN YOUR JOY!

It was very empowering as I took charge of my reality. I was deciding how I wanted to experience my day.

I was like Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz. I had the power all along. I just didn't know. JL



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BY MIKE MAESHIRO

“Yeah, I don't like that.” I said.

“You can't say that.” she said, condemning and dismissing my voice.

I looked at her with a confused and unaccepting look. She was notorious for policing conversations and punishing or praising people for their opinions. I knew this would be a point of contention and I chose to cast my lot anyway.

“Emily, you know there aren't rules for how people are allowed to express themselves, right?” I asked.

“Well...”

“I know you don't like that I disagree with your version of proper etiquette but that doesn't make me wrong. We're both allowed to have our opinions and express them. The contrary would be control and an absence of freedom.”

She sat back and considered what I was saying.

In this day and age it's easy to get inundated with ridiculous rhetoric on the proper way to express ourselves with an underlying agenda of what we're allowed to think and what we're not. It's easy to get guilty, shamed or scared into compliance when the voice coming at you is aggressive, loud and intimidating but none of those reasons are worthy of consent. It takes knowledge, wisdom and courage to stand up against a loud, crashing tide and refuse to move.

If someone says something you don't like, feel free to communicate that you don't like what they said, you don't agree, etc., But don't ever despise their freedom to say it.

Celebrate and exercise healthy boundaries and self-respect but the moment you try to take away the freedom of someone else's expression, no matter how ignorant or malicious their expression is, you violate yourself. When you take freedom away from someone else because of their behavior, you limit your ability to confidently enjoy your own freedom.



Boundaries vs. Control

Love doesn't flee the presence of evil, nor does love punish or control the person who chooses it.

Feel free to oppose and disagree with the person's choice but never punish or dominate the person.

They are a child of God. They may be immature, they may be in error, they may be deceived, but they are still God's kid.

People will read this and go to town with their “But's” and “What if's” but what really gets exposed in the opposition is our need for control. Many of us think “if we can find a vicious enough form of evil, we can justify our need to use evil ourselves.”

Controlling and dominating the will of another person is evil. We don't combat violence with violence. An aggressive, violent reaction to violence only exposes our fear and ignorance of the power we

already possess. If a violent man can take away what we hold most dear, we never actually possessed it to begin with.

The problem isn't violence. The problem isn't evil.

The problem is our shallow relationship with the spirit of love. We are weak and overly sensitive about our hurts and ignorant of just how strong love can make us.

We must not snuff out evil, we must brave the depths of love. JL

When you take freedom away from someone else because of their behavior, you limit your ability to confidently enjoy your own freedom.

MENTORING



BY MARSHALL JONES

Early Success Can Lead to a LIFETIME of CONFIDENCE

The 9th grade was a pivotal year for me. I learned to fish, hunt big game and gave up football. That's the year I discovered a local bass fishing club. Having had recent success in a pond made me think I knew something about bass. My first tournament was an eye opener... not even a bite. The second was a tough day for everyone with the most awful weather I could imagine. I happened to draw the top fisherman in the club as my partner and even he wasn't catching. Throughout the day I suggested we try a cove full of submerged trees, similar to the habitat in my pond. My partner said "Kid, there's no shallow fish this time of year. It's

If you enjoy something and want to preserve it, try teaching it.

too cold. They are deep and on points". Nevertheless I persisted. An hour before weighing in with no fish in the boat, my partner said, "OK. Fine, we'll fish the trees". He was just humoring me as we had nothing to lose and the day was about over. I threw a large black spinner bait, He probably laughed under his breath. Then God unleashed what seemed

like a miracle. After my second fish he put the same bait on. I ended up with three and he with two. We won 1st and 2nd place.

For years my friend went back to that cove with the trees and tried black spinner baits and never caught fish that time of year. Had it been a total fluke? I believe it was God hooking me on bass fishing. It was almost a year before I caught another fish in a tournament, two years before I was competitive. That early success kept me fishing, which has become a lifelong love.

That same year a friend of the family took me buck hunting. Dad and I had gone before with no luck but this friend took us to one of his special spots. Shortly after sunrise I bagged my buck, a nice one, actually the biggest local buck I've taken. It was a spectacular event for me. Your first big game animal is especially emotional. Right then I knew I'd be doing this for life. I hunted every year afterward and often went back to the exact spot but didn't get another buck for 10 years. Without that successful hunt I probably would have given up. Today I can't imagine my life without big game hunting.

In contrast, I played football in 8th and 9th grade. Being a big guy I played Left Tackle, but I was a slow runner and overweight so I only made 2nd string. The first year our team was best in the league. We didn't lose a game and only rarely did a team score against us. All our guys were bigger than average. Coach wanted to have that great record so 2nd string only played after our opponent was so far behind we couldn't possibly lose.

The next year we were in a new school with almost the exact

same group of boys. My teammates somehow weren't so big anymore in comparison to the other guys. We ended up almost last in the league. That year our coach would play 2nd string only when we were so far behind there would be no way to catch up.

Over the course of the two seasons I played a total of 2 minutes. That next

year I didn't play. Had I initially played more, I probably would have played through high school and college. The point is with no success there was no confidence to continue.

Kids today don't spend much time outdoors. So many outdoor activities lose out to video games and the internet, but all is not lost. If you enjoy something and

want to preserve it, try teaching it. Be a mentor. Make it fun. Keep it simple. Pass on your skill. Help them to early success, then stand back and watch them take off. It's like giving a model airplane the push it needs to get started. After that it can fly on its own. Hopefully, the people you mentor will go on to mentor the next generation. **JL**

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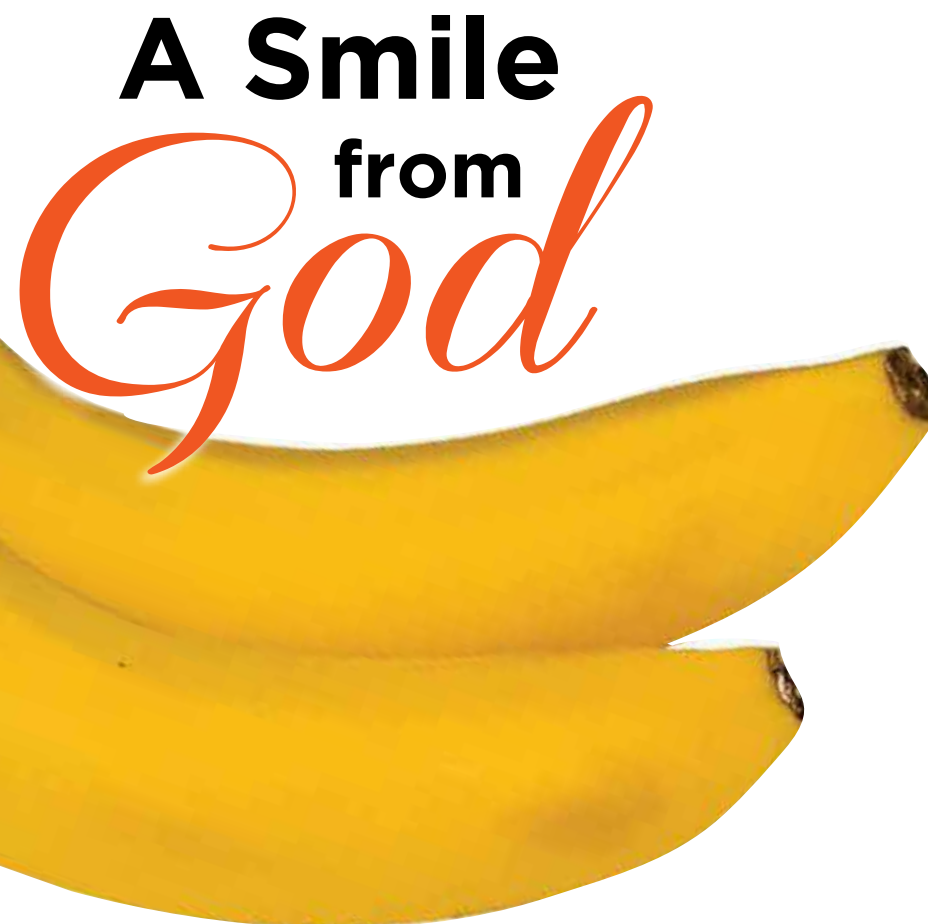
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BY SARAH WIND

Have you ever been surprised by the clear provision of God in a small but very special way? It happens to me from time to time and I enjoy documenting these moments both to remind myself of God's goodness, and to inspire others to be on the lookout for God's gracious provision in their own lives.

The months of May and June last year were incredibly busy for me. I was working full time as a real estate assistant and part time as the testimony overseer for the Healing Rooms and out of the blue I was offered a temporary freelance writing job to



develop small group curriculum on a topic I was interested in. I only had a month to complete the project, and although I wasn't sure whether it could be done that soon on top of everything else, or how exactly the ideas would come, I felt excited in my spirit to be part of it and I recalled the times God divinely enabled me to contribute to other writing projects, so I accepted the job.

The week leading up to my writing deadline was particularly challenging because I still had quite a bit of writing left to do and I wasn't sure if I could complete the project by the deadline. Between writing, working, and mourning the death of a close comrade who served in the Healing Rooms, I had barely enough time to think about eating let alone grocery shopping.

The woman I was living with was in a lot of pain because she had broken her back. She had been eating bananas with her pain medicine daily, and she unintentionally ate the bananas that I got for myself that were supposed to last me the whole week. I left one morning for work thinking it would be nice to get some more bananas for myself, but realistically knew that I wouldn't have any time to shop until I finished my writing project in a few days. Plus even if I did buy some more bananas they probably wouldn't be ripe, and I only like to eat ripe bananas.

That morning as I was sitting in my office, my co-worker Frank called out to me from the kitchenette area, and to my surprise asked me if I wanted a banana! He said he had two extra that he brought with him to work and was leaving them on the counter if anyone wanted to take them. I could hardly believe my ears because it was not common practice for my co-workers to bring food to work to share.

After no one else took the perfectly ripe bananas, I happily ate one and brought the other home for the woman I lived with. It was a small thing, and perhaps a seeming coincidence, but I took it as a smile from God. **JL**

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Sugar Free Pumpkin Dessert Dip



BY JENNA INGEBRETSEN

If you're looking for an easy, sweet treat, but are trying to reduce your sugar consumption, you need look no further. This dip comes together fast, and will be chilled by the time dinner is done. A festive dessert that won't have you tied to the oven all day, but still satisfies your pumpkin-spice cravings.

Prep time:	10 minutes
Chill time:	30 minutes

INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 cups Granulated sugar substitute
1 tsp Cornstarch
8 oz Cream Cheese (Reduced fat optional)
1 can Pumpkin
1 tsp Ground Ginger
1 tsp Cinnamon
2 cups Whipped topping, sugar-free
Apple slices and graham crackers for dipping.

DIRECTIONS

Start by blending your sugar substitute of choice (I've tried both Stevia and Splenda) with the cornstarch until it becomes a powdered sugar consistency. Whip the sweetener mix together with the cream cheese until fluffy, then stir in your canned pumpkin (if you make your own pumpkin, even better!) and spices. Gently fold in your whipped topping to keep it light and airy. Allow this dip to chill for at least a half hour, then enjoy with crisp apples or graham crackers. JL



BY DR. BOB BOYLE

Dr. Bob Boyle has been practicing as a licensed psychologist in Redding, CA since 1991. Currently, he is the staff psychologist at Far Northern Regional Center and maintains a part-time private practice. He also works with businesses and athletic teams around leadership and team-building. Dr. Boyle is co-author of *A Hitchhiker's Road Map to Leadership*. Dr. Boyle is married with four grown children, and enjoys coaching basketball and playing golf. Dr. Boyle can be reached at: drbob-boyle@gmail.com



CRISIS/OPPORTUNITY

Our local northern California communities have just undergone a horrific experience – the fast-moving, destructive, and fatal Carr fire. This has been a fire of epic proportions, scorching (to date) more than 190,000 acres of land. This monstrous assassin has leveled more than 1000 homes, and has damaged thousands more. This has been a trauma of the worst kind.

My wife and I drove through one of the most affected areas in Redding. We drove in stunned silence as we took in the apocalyptic sights. Almost all of the homes on one street were leveled, while a singular home was still standing. The only thing standing on one lot was a lonely garage door, half-melted and bending down toward the ground. On one lot, the yard was completely burned to a crisp; but the home was untouched. One home was intact with one glaring exception – the roof had been completely lifted off. The only thing left of another home was a beautiful brick archway. Behind the intact archway – nothing but ash. Good friends of ours lost their home in another hard-hit area of Redding. The pictures of what was left of their home were worth 1000 words, as the destruction was in-your-bones palpable as I witnessed their loss. A basketball hoop, singed and bent over. The blades of an outdoor ceiling fan, melted into five long and thin strands of pulled taffy, touching the ground. A blue Le Creuset Dutch oven, intact and unharmed next to a burned out dishwasher.

The Carr Fire has been a horrible individual and community trauma that has affected us living in Northern California in ways that we can't even begin to understand. It will take a while for us to process this loss. Eeveryone (and our community) has to be allowed the room to grieve in their own way. Usually

when we think of a crisis, we think of ONLY the loss. The loss is real. The loss needs to be grieved. But the loss is not the whole story. I think that the Chinese have a wise way of viewing crisis. Crisis in Chinese is made up of two characters. When translated separately, the first character means danger. But here is where things take an amazing turn. The second

character for crisis means – opportunity.

There is BOTH danger and opportunity wrapped up in the experience of crisis.

But what is the opportunity for? To come together, work together, and find better ways to love and help one another. I have already seen this happening. The fire and law enforcement agencies that have been on the front line in fighting and dealing with the fire have shown tireless effort and unselfish love. Service agencies, churches, and businesses

– in our community and from outside – have organized relief efforts that help those affected to be able to deal more effectively with their loss. We are #shastastrong.

Dorothy Day was a Catholic, social worker, and activist. She was eight years old when she lived through the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. In the aftermath of the earthquake, she observed that people reached out to help each other – pitching tents, making food, and giving away clothing. She wrote this in her autobiography: "...While the crisis lasted, people loved each other. It was as though they were united in Christian solidarity. It makes one think of how people could, if they would, care for each other in times of stress, unjudgingly in pity and love". Let's care for each other and love each other now, in the midst of our crisis. That is our opportunity. And an even bigger opportunity is to find ways to care for each other better and love each other more when the crisis has passed. JL

There is BOTH danger and opportunity wrapped up in the experience of crisis.

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This Ones For the *Girls*



BY LONNIE JULIUS MARTIN

Sorry Fella's! This one is for the girls. So, ladies here we are smack dab in the middle of "adulting." It started it out so fun, but sometimes I wonder where all the good times have gone. Someone once said,

We have 3 things in life to spend: Time, energy and money. When we are young we have time, we have energy. . . but we have no money. As we progress in age we have a little money, a little energy and no time. And when more years have flown past us than lie before us, we have some money, some time and no energy. Oh the funny way life works!

With each passing age and stage comes an opportunity to get caught up or to rise up and frankly ladies, I think too much of us are surrendering to the notion that instead of being fun and sassy we have to settle for drab and frumpy. We women are natural caretakers. We take care of the laundry, the family, the kids, the shopping, everyone is polished and in their Sunday best with the finishing touch of mom's famous spit bath to get the peanut butter off your cheek before we send you out the door. We grab our purse and keys sporting the messy bun and cotton classics. As we start the car we wonder, "am I even wearing a bra?" Aw yes. Thank goodness. Sure, it's the cotton faded bra built to last decades ago, lacking support and shape held together by a safety pin and a prayer. She's not Victoria's Secret, but



she's mine. She's not in the best condition but she does the job. . . I think. She doesn't hide any sins, but she's the great go to.

When did this happen? We don't have to give in ladies! We need to pull ourselves up by the boot straps (or in this case the bra straps.) Here's a little beauty secret: You deserve to feel beautiful! You deserve to feel sexy. That little "s" word we thought packed up with pregnancy, moved out in menopause. Yep that's the one! Sexy. Let's not get caught up in the silly games of compare and contrast but rather find time to do what we need to do to feel like you again! Taking care of ourselves directly affects the way we feel. But how? When? I try to eat healthy but who can afford it! I tried the gym, but who has time? I have a theory, a secret of such. Are you ready. . . lean in. . . A better Bra. Sometimes just getting the girls where they go helps our backs feel a little better. Makes us stand a little taller and our waists appear smaller. Good bras boost more than self esteem if you know what I mean. Take this in the tone of giggling girls at a slumber party and let's laugh and play and have fun and buy ourselves a new one! Because this one is for the girls! JL

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The recent wildfires have devastated communities in which we live, work and call home. To help our friends and neighbors, Tri Counties Bank has started the Carr Fire Fund with an initial contribution of \$25,000. Funds will be distributed through the United Way of Northern California, with 100% of donations directly serving fire victims with immediate needs.

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My Mom's Laughter



BY KATIE RISTOW

When I was ten years old, my parents splurged and took me on a birthday trip. Every other vacation taken was to a campground, either at the lake or on the ocean. We ate crab and fish taken straight from the water over an open fire, and I tried to sleep to the sound of wild animals. But this birthday trip was different.

My parents got us a hotel right on the beach. I felt so fancy. We didn't catch our meal from sea, but ate at a Mexican restaurant that overlooked the water. The waiters sang "Happy Birthday" and brought me a free

dessert and it was magical.

The next day, we searched the beaches for anemones and shells in the sand. We found a colony of beach squirrels and my mom lured them out of their rock habitat by putting grapes on my head. I kid

I believe today our charge as mothers is to shake off the bonds of stress and fear, to not let the unknown entangle us.

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you not, those squirrels ran up my body, grabbed the grape out of my hair, and took it back to their lair. The following morning, we ate breakfast in the hotel room and I opened presents. Then my mom opened the balcony doors and lured the seagulls into our room to eat our bacon and eggs.

Today, while going through a box of mom's things, I found the picture proof of this event. I found many other photo memories, things I had forgotten. Delightful pictures of our little farm that gave me the most wonderful childhood. But as I remember my



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mom now, I remember more of the good, almost none of the bad. I remember her sense of humor more than her sad days. I remember staying up all night to help the mama goats have their first babies, and working together in the garden. I remember the time she threw horse poop at me because she said I was being too serious. And I remember when she lined up my husband and I and our baby behind the stalks of corn and took a picture so we could be the "children of the corn" and she laughed and laughed. She used to repeat the phrase, "Who burnt the toast?" to my newborn daughter because she really wanted that to be the baby's first sentence.

She was many things. She was the director of children's ministry and family activities at our church, she was a licensed pastor, she was a farmer. She was organized and so poised on stage. She had a way of rallying people together for a cause. She could direct a play like nobody's business, and facilitate a Christmas event that literally shut down traffic. She was very focused creative and smart. She was also, almost always, under immense amounts of stress.

Sometimes, in the midst of it though, she was very, very silly. As a mom, it's a struggle to not get bogged down by the need to clean, by the sleepless nights, by the sickness. Sometimes life is hard. But as a child, I needed my mom's silliness. It was a wonderful balm, the sound of her laugh was such a magical sound. I loved hearing my mom laugh, and I loved her smile. It was everything to me; the tone of my entire day, set upon my mom's mood. And if she was happy, oh joy, I felt weightless.

So today, I give you mamas permission to be silly. To laugh. To smile. I wasn't aware enough as a child to recognize the impact those moments of hers had on me, but they did. Today, while going through pictures, I remembered those moments. Those moments that shown like a ray of sunshine through the most stressful of days. My mom's laugh was like a rescue even when our world was crashing down.

Our last Christmas together, we stayed up late and played Apples to Apples and she laughed and I can still remember that sound. When a mom laughs, her children know that everything is going to be okay.

I believe today our charge as mothers is to shake off the bonds of stress and fear, to not let the unknown entangle us. Let us laugh. Let us laugh without fear of the future because we KNOW WHO HOLDS THE FUTURE. Because we know we can trust Him. Because we are tapped into the fountain that flows from Emmanuel.



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There is a time to mourn. There is a time to cry. But don't let the times of joy and dancing pass you by. Stop now, reach out and grasp hold of them, cling to them with white-knuckled fists until they become your own. Do not hand over your joy to fear and stress. Do not let your silliness wither away in the clutches of fear. Let's laugh with our babies. Laugh with our husbands. Let us lift up our heads and laugh without fear of the future. And breathe deep as the burden eases. JL



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Marie has been a Registered Dietitian for 30 years. She is a Wellness Consultant and co-owns Building Endeavors, Inc. with her husband Kurt to help people get healthy, wealthy and debt free.

BY MARIE WARNER

Redemption Happens

Finding myself alone for the first time after a 22 year marriage was frightening. It had been six months since my marriage had come crashing down after years of trying to make it work. In many aspects I had relief, but the aloneness compelled me to want to find a remedy and fill the vacancy so I could feel “normal” again.

If I dare say, one positive thing that happens in break ups, divorce or the death of a loved one, it pushes us in to the lap of God where He soothes our pain and brings us comfort like only He can. So it was with me. I clung to God in this new season of brokenness and one morning awoke to take hold of my pen and start writing His message to me. My pen seemed to write on its own as though it was borrowing my fingers to hold it, knowing exactly what it needed to deposit to paper:

“INSTRUCTIONS / TO DO LIST”

1. Wait for the gift that is being prepared for me
2. Recover
3. Discover the beauty and strength that is in me
4. Stand back and watch Him move. No need to deviate from this. Don't try to make it happen. Don't go looking for it. It will be orchestrated for you by the One who loves you. It will be one more piece of evidence of His love and care for you.
5. Respect the story unfolding.

I don't know about you, but as with words of promise, I often feel compelled to step in and help fulfill them... as though I could. I tried a few of my own methods to process the discomfort of my life, but His design and instructions really started to manifest after my eleven year old son suggested we have another “presence” in the house as it was just he and I living in what felt like a big empty house after the divorce. So I asked

around for a good contractor and was referred to the same man by two friends. As it turned out, we had met seven years prior at a Fourth of July party at my house. He gave me a quote and we agreed to proceed with the addition.

I had wondered from the instructions how the “gift” would be “orchestrated” for me. You may see where this is going, but I didn't back then. When July Fourth came around, the contractor showed up at my front door bright and early to get started on the addition. Throughout the week as he worked, we would chat here and there and developed a friendship, musing over the commonalities of our life stories to the point that after the project was completed, we continued to talk. He found things to help me with around the house and I found light bulbs that needed replacing. Before long, we were seeing each other every day – as friends of course.

He was so similar to me in temperament, I questioned if we could be compatible after the years of drama I had previously grown accustomed to. But God worked in my heart as I recovered and showed me the goodness of who this man was and little by little dismissed the notion that “normal” requires drama. It took a process of healing and trust. Six months passed and I discovered my heart had been completely won over by this angel of a man and another six months to our wedding day in July of 2013. Since then, redemption has continued to manifest in every area of our lives. That is the nature of God. When He restores, life is always increased, multiplied or improved.

So if you are wondering if you have to figure out the plan for yourself. Read the instructions. Redemption is on the way. It is coming to you. God can bring your redemption literally to your front door. He wants to give you the evidence of His love for you. **JL**

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