

Minnekahta eMessenger®

VOLUME III

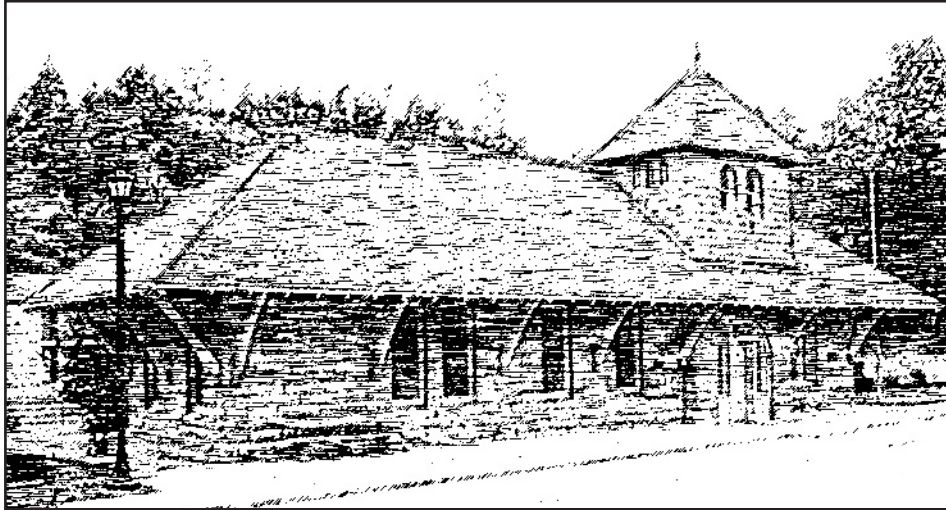
MINNEKAHTA PUBLISHING, LLC

NUMBER 22

SOUTHWESTERN SD.

BRINGING OUR COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

FRIDAY, FEB. 16, 2018



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WE SUPPORT OUR FIRST RESPONDERS THANK YOU ALL LIVES MATTER

BOB'S NEW BOWLING
BUDDY JOE – EVEN
ACCOUNTING MAJORS
GET THE MATH WRONG

By James Giago Davies
Native Sun News Today

Like any writer, I have developed a “voice,” but that voice exists so I can communicate. I stopped writing just to impress when I stopped getting pimples.

The eloquence of my voice is often restricted, or trumped, by a simple check list—I write first to communicate, second to entertain, and third to show off. Number three must be pandered to as little as possible.

Life has some complicated parts and if we are going to discuss these complications on any level deeper than small talk, we often have to resort to big words and technical jargon.

Now would be a great time to touch on some of the more frequent technical terms that will come up in this journal.

Occam's Razor: in the absence of certainty, the explanation with fewer, less complicated or grandiose assumptions, is probably best.

Example: acorn bounces off Chicken Little's head. All she had to do was look down at the acorn, and then up at the oak limb. That would have explained everything. Instead she runs off screaming, “The sky is falling!”

Real life example: couple's checkbook balance is zero, but the bank tells them they have \$250 in their checking account. Couple concludes Jesus must have put it there.

Infinitely more likely was a math error. In my crowded freshman accounting class, only three people balanced the books of a hypothetical paint store. Even accounting majors with calculators get the math wrong.

Counterintuitive: a truth that runs contrary to common sense, life experience or gut feeling. This is where Occam's Razor can sometimes miss the mark.

Example: Icarus plummets to his death because he flew too close to the sun and his wings of feathers and wax melted. This seems the most simple and logical explanation.

We can prove that by standing next to a flame. It's hot, but if we back away from the flame, it is less hot. It stands to reason, then, based upon human experience, that because the sun is hot, the closer we get to it, the hotter it gets.

It is easy to misapply Occam's Razor: we can see the sun moving across the sky, rising and setting on a predictable east-west course. (see *Joe on back cover*)

MASS INCARCERATION: A DESTROYER OF PEOPLE OF COLOR AND THEIR COMMUNITIES

By Jamaal Bell

Around this time last year, the Obama Administration's Drug Czar, Gil Kerlikowske said he wanted to banish the idea that the U.S. is fighting “a war on drugs,” which is a move that favors treatment over mass incarceration. While this approach is being taken, more than 60% of the people in prison are now racial and ethnic minorities.

The [Trump] Administration and the states must take racial disparities in our criminal justice system seriously because it affects the public safety of entire communities. Research shows that people of color who live in high crime areas fear victimization and express a need for increased public safety, yet empathize with offenders and the struggles that they face upon release from incarceration.

What are those struggles?

For example, ex-offenders struggle to find housing, trans-

portation and basic health care upon release from prison, according to Minnesota's Council on Crime and Justice. In fact, according to Michelle Alexander, author of “*The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*,” ex-offenders aren't eligible for public assistance, such as public housing, Medicaid and welfare, and are legally discriminated against when applying for employment.

Furthermore, if ex-offenders are fortunate enough to even find employment, in some states the government can garnish up to 100 percent of their income for the cost of their imprisonment, court and legal fees.

Don't forget about Native Americans in this injustice.

Much of the literature written about mass incarceration tends to be primarily about the Latinos, Blacks and Whites. What about our Native brothers and sisters?

The incarceration rate of Native Americans is 38% higher than the national rate. The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights attributes this higher rate to differential treatment by the criminal justice system, lack of access to adequate counsel and racial profiling.

One example: in South Dakota, Native Americans make up 8 percent of the state's population, yet they compose 22 percent of the state's male prison population. (see *Destroyer on back cover*)

WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE A FAILURE

By Erika Bragdon

Do you ever feel like you're a failure? (Everyone does sometimes.) Here are four things to remember that will help change how you think. For moms especially, if you need encouragement, you'll want to read this.

When You Feel Like You're a Failure:

1. *Take a step back*

If your best friend was dealing

with whatever is dragging you down, what would you tell her?

We are usually our own worst critics and sometimes we simply have unrealistic expectations.

Maybe you're simply being too hard on yourself.

2. *Take a look*

Often, many frustrating situations that serve to make us feel like failures are temporary and it's tremendously helpful to realize that it's something that will pass. Things will improve, though we may not always know when.

Maybe you have a colicky newborn and you're beyond exhausted. Or you've gone back to school and you had no idea it was going to be this hard juggling everything.

On the other hand, sometimes the problem is longer-term, like a chronic illness or a husband who travels for work. Either way, it can help to simply put your finger on what's bugging you.

(see *Failure on back cover*)

IN THIS ISSUE

Minnekahta News.....	Page 1
If You Could Change One Thing.....	Page 2
Diving Deep	
Focusing On a Positive Outcome	
There's Something To Be Said.....	Page 3
The Coat	
The Kindred Spirit	
Lies They Tell Writers, Part 18: Get an Agent	
Off The Beaten Path.....	Page 4
My Mountain Climbing Trip in Alaska, Summer of 1955, Part 3	
Surely You Jest.....	Page 5
Aqua-Thermal Treatment	
The Golf Pro and the Parish Priest	
Catching Up on His Sleep	
Symbols of Our Faith	
Special Section.....	Pages 6-7
Johnny and Nettie: Deceit and Redemption	
My Short Flight	
This May Interest You.....	Pages 8-9
History of Bourbon, Part 2	
Rhyme Or Reason.....	Page 10
Finding the Peace Within	
Life on the Rio Grande	
Well, If You Ask Us.....	Page 11
Minnekahta News (cont.).....	Page 12

If You Could Change One Thing

Diving Deep

By Andy Skadberg

It is interesting to notice how we acquire the knowledge of our power in this life, this world. To do everything, by doing nothing. Just taking each experience, each task, and entering into it.

We are not “making” all of this stuff. It is happening. We are just observers, participants, riders. And the character of our experiences is based on the thoughts we have in the process.

To be like a child, is to have each experience, be engaged, fully. The complexity, or large-ness of what is being engaged expands as one grows older, but what deter-

mines the nature of the experience is our reactions and responses to the phenomena. Are we resistant, using our thoughts, words to criticize, or contribute to?

Our feelings give us a bio-feedback. And guide us. Going with the flow. Entering each experience fully. And becoming a great appreciator, experiencer, contributor.

Like a surfer learning how to get on the top of the wave, and not be crushed by it. To ride the spiral.

I’m often reminded of my kayak trips, alone as a teenager. I just enjoyed the river, never worried what was beyond the bend. There was a natural wisdom.

Today, as I put some thoughts, quietly, to what is happening, I can see, just trust, that this is me watching my love unfold.

That is what I have discovered is going on behind all of this. Each day, moment, experience, is a blessing. Something to embrace and relish as a chance to dive deep and be part of a wonderful becoming. Me simply waking up to the beautiful design that is in place.

“Diving Deep” is a title of a blogpost by Andy Skadberg. It was published on Sep. 25, 2016 on the author’s website, 13light-messages.blogspot.com/2016/09/diving-deep.html.

Andy Skadberg is a consultant in rural development and innovation in agriculture, with a foundation in environmental protection. He is a proponent of sustainability.

Focusing On a Positive Outcome

By Lorelei Marie

We are each of us powerful spiritual beings. By focusing our thoughts on that which we wish to create, we can bring the same into being both for ourselves and our collective reality.

Focus, fortitude and determination can change our lives. They can even heal a body. Take for example the story of Joe Pinnella. In June of 1991, at the age of 42, he was involved in a car accident in which his neck was broken, two vertebrae in his spine shattered, and four disks disintegrated. Doctors surgically removed these. His injuries were similar to those of actor Christopher Reeve. Joe was told that he was a quadriplegic and would never walk again.

But Joe did walk again. In fact, he recovered completely. A pivotal experience that led to his recovery was that during surgery he had what researchers call an out of body experience. He was able to relate afterwards to his doctor every detail of the operation. His doctor was incredulous. Joe had an insight during this experience that his spine would heal.

Something else that played a key role was that at the age of fourteen, Joe had been introduced to the Chinese practice of qigong at a Buddhist temple. He trained

with the monks at the temple for years to master this practice. While lying in the hospital bed paralyzed, Joe called his qigong master who advised him to do qigong by imagining the exercises in his mind. Qigong is the study and practice of cultivating vital life-force through various coordinated movements, including breathing, movement, meditation, and guided imagery.

His master advised, “Imagine you are in a warm swimming pool and imagine you are in the womb. Imagine your body rebuilding itself. Look through anatomy books and find out where your injuries are and then imagine those parts are reforming, healing. Imagine the qigong energy flowing into and around the blocks in your body.”

Joe began to visualize these ancient Chinese healing techniques with the strong intent to regain his strength and train his body to walk again. He said, “I did everything with my eyes shut. I continuously imagined arm and leg movements. I visualized everything...” After about eight months of mindful concentration and exercises, he opened his eyes one day to see his hands actually moving.

Today, 25 years later, Joe is physically fit and active, having recovered full use of his body. He now teaches qigong to help others recover.

Key is the power of intent or mind over matter and movement. Without intent or desire and will power there is no action or reaction. It’s the intent to move forward that accelerates and expands our energies and the seemingly miraculous is accomplished.

I’ve personally experienced the healing power of focusing energy. I become extremely ill with the Epstein-Barr virus after receiving a vaccination and struggled to regain my health for five years. Facing a constant downward spiral of weight loss, debilitating fatigue and the inability to do anything more each day than to sleep and rest, I presumed my time on this Earth was fast coming to a close. Then I began to read books about changing one’s thoughts to not only visualize the desired outcome, but to actually feel it occurring.

Gradually with diligence, perseverance and focused thought, and the guidance of a naturopathic healer, I began to regain my health and my life. Now I reach out to others with healing advice whenever possible, which is why I’m sharing this article with readers.

I wish you all many blessings in your own healing journeys. Please remember that this is who we are. We are first and foremost spiritual beings. The ability to create our lives and our health exists within each one of us, freely given by our Creator.

There's Something To Be Said

The Coat

By Debbie Daybrest

The evening was cold when my son and I stepped out of the empty church house. The homeless couple was standing on the step as we made our way to our automobile. The woman waved to me as we began to pull out of the parking lot, so I stopped to see what she wanted.

"We need blankets," she told me. Her breath was heavy with the smell of liquor and her speech was slurred.

"Oh," I replied, "We don't keep blankets in our church building. Have you been down to the mission?"

Even before I could finish my question she swore that that they had, but that they wouldn't help them. She slurred out some explanation about paperwork, but I knew it was because they had been drinking and the mission didn't let in those that had been abusing substances. She then looked down at her opened coat and with emotion complained that the zipper didn't work.

My mind suddenly went back to the lesson I had taught my class just that morning, the story of the Good Samaritan. My heart suddenly stirred and a thought came to me: "Give her your coat."

(see *Coat* on page 9)

The Kindred Spirit By Barbara Hauseman

Sickness in Winter

I've been sick lately, battling symptoms of the flu, cold, fever, sinus and ear infections, sneezing and runny nose, aches and pains, and extreme fatigue. Enough already!

I went to the health clinic for antibiotics and other meds. The doctor told me the clinic has "revolving doors" for those of us who seek a medical helping hand to ward off these bad germs.

I started wearing a mask to work and other places and have had compliments from people saying "Thank you!" for NOT sharing my personal "petri dishes" of germs! I don't want to expose others to these sicknesses that a lot of us are having to deal with. NO FUN!

I took a box of new masks to the preschool where I teach and passed them out to all the kids. I explained to them in a way that they could understand that a mask isn't a "toy" and should be worn to avoid more sickness and prevent spreading germs around our school. The children were very attentive and learned

how to take care of themselves and their family. Hands-on demonstrations are a quick and often effective way for most of us to learn how to do something.

Parents should take heed of the rise in winter illnesses and consider getting flu shots for the whole family. Most insurance plans cover such protection programs to ward off outbreaks of diseases that arise, which none of us wants.

Wearing heavy coats, scarfs, mittens or gloves, and hats when going outside should be top priority during this recent cold spell we're enduring. Better to be warm than cold! We should all be like Eskimos and keep bundled up.

So, take my advice and dress warmly, eat healthy foods, and wear a mask to prevent you and others from getting sick. Always cover your mouth when you sneeze or cough. Wash your hands with soap and use hand sanitizers.

It's a good healthy lesson for all of us. Kids love masks, so make it fun for them to wear and protect themselves and the rest of us from unwanted germs. Join the healthy team and "mask" it forward!

Lies They Tell Writers, Part 18: Get an Agent

By Rod Miller

The writing world has changed. And I am of the opinion that most of those changes have diminished the importance of the literary agent.

Not so many years ago, a writer had to be represented by a literary agent to have any chance of getting published by a reputable firm. To some extent, that's still the case—certain imprints of the international publishing conglomerates turn their noses up at direct submissions. Queries from authors are lucky to earn a rejection. Most often, they are simply ignored.

But there are many, many small, medium-sized, and even large publishing houses more than happy to deal directly with writers. And, of course, there are innovations like digital publishing and e-books that

essentially bypass the traditional publishing process—including agents.

So, does an aspiring author need an agent? I would never say it's a bad idea, assuming you can hook up with one who's reputable and recognized. On the other hand, I don't think it's necessary. I have managed to publish books with ten or so publishers, from fairly large ones to teeny-tiny ones, all with nary an agent in sight. And at least a few of those publishers had stated policies of not accepting un-agented submissions.

Of course my ability to evaluate contracts is lacking compared to the expertise of an agent. And, if I were overwhelmed with keeping track of royalties and subsidiary rights and such, I'm sure an agent would come in handy.

So far, however, my misdirected, misguided, and mismanaged literary career doesn't require a whole lot of the skill or savvy an agent might provide.

Come to think of it, that might be the problem...

"Lies They Tell Writers, Part 17: Follow the Formula" is the title of a blogpost by Rod Miller. It was published on Jul. 25, 2015 on the author's website, writerrod-miller.blogspot.com/2015/08/lies-they-tell-writers-part-18get-agent.html.

Writer Rod Miller writes poetry, fiction, and history about the American West and writes online about writing and reading at writerrod-miller.blogspot.com. Information about Rod and his books and other works is available at writerRodMiller.com, his Amazon Author Page (www.amazon.com/Rod-Miller/e/B001HCTX7G), and at CowboyPoetry.com.

Off The Beaten Path

My Mountain Climbing Trip in Alaska, Summer of 1955, Part 3

By John Holmes

Before I start on this segment I want to fill you in on some of the aspects of traveling the Alcan Highway.

In 1955, the roadway was very narrow and the trees came up almost to the road. There was hardly any ditch. As you might have surmised, there were no restroom facilities except in the occasional filling station. We solved that problem by, every so often, all three of the vehicles would stop and the leader would call out, "Women to the left and men to the right!" The trees were so dense you could disappear quickly.

Sometimes the three Austrian guides would just stand right outside of the bus and take care of their problem in view of everyone. I remember one of the "old maid school teachers" looking out at them, then looking at me and wondering what to do. I just shrugged my shoulders, like, "What can we do?" In Austria that was a more normal way of doing than here.

8:45 PM August 24. I am just slipping into my sleeping bag after the hardest day of my life! We hiked for four hours up the glacier before we stopped to rest. We were carrying big packs of supplies with us.

When we first started out, we traveled over brush-covered moraine. There is both *terminal moraine* and *lateral moraine*. That is where the ice acts like a plow and digs up dirt and rocks and then when the glacier retreats, it leaves windrows of material. The moraine we were on was covered with brush. Later, the moraine was bare of vegetation.



As we traveled on, we came to just the glacier and lots of *crevasses*. Those are big cracks in the ice. Streams of water rushed along, then would disappear in the cracks with a roaring sound. I carefully looked in where the water rushed in and I could not see the bottom. Every once in awhile we would pass a formation that looked like a miniature mountain.

They were mounds of rock covered by ice. We attempted to establish a base camp at the ice fall of the glacier. We only made it about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way. In order to make it back by dark, we had to leave. We left our supplies for future use and we cached the food. We marked the spot very well by building a *cairn*. You do that by building a pile of rocks. On the trip we saw many things that very few people have ever seen.

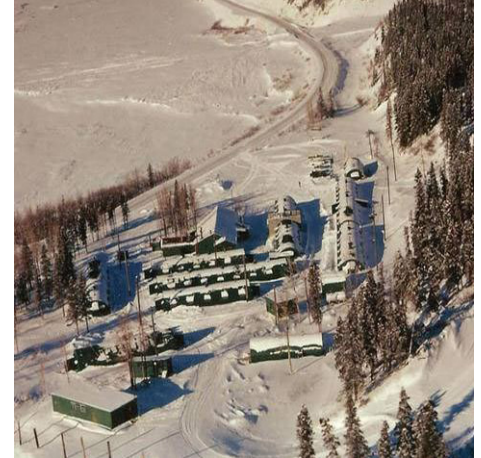
August 25. The next morning I woke up and it was still raining, not hard but steady. I got out of my sleeping bag and put on my shoes. I accidentally touched the top of the tent. As a footnote, you don't touch canvas tents when it is raining because it causes them to leak.

Tolness, the fellow who shared the tent with me, said I had better do something to keep my sleeping bag from getting wet.

I stuck my mess kit under the leak. It was pretty cold so I decided to build a fire. I went over to the shelter tent and found a fellow sleeping, or at least trying to sleep. The rain was coming in on top of him.

I split off some fine slivers from the wood and tried to light the fire. After using two matches without success, I lit the whole box. That got it going. Much of the day I carried wood from about a quarter mile away, split it and kept feeding the fire. It was hard to keep warm.

In the middle of the afternoon, a Colonel from the nearby Army Arctic Indoctrination Center asked if we wanted to move into one of their Quonset hut barracks. We immediately accepted. As we broke camp and started moving out, it started snowing pretty hard. It could have been beautiful but we were too cold and miserable to care.



Here we are at the Black Rapids Training Center. The barracks are made of canvas but are really two layers with insulation in between. It is really dirty and lots of stuff lying around. The center is used only in the winter for training to fight in arctic conditions. Right now there is only one soldier here and he acts as a guard and caretaker.

I am sitting at a table in the mess hall. It really is a mess. Chairs are piled up on the tables and the floor is very dirty. Our camp gear is strung up all over the place to dry. It is pleasant though because it is warm.

There are very beautiful mountain pictures painted on the doors and walls. They add a colorful touch to what could be a gloomy room.

I have just finished eating a very good supper. It consisted of soup, boiled chicken, Austrian goulash, string beans and all the bread, butter, shoestring potatoes, jam and fruit we can eat. Our cooking team prepared the meal. We invited the soldier to eat with us and he seemed to think it was fine.

Tomorrow we plan to go up to where we cached the food on the glacier and bring it back down. We have found that the weather is not likely to get any better for quite a while. We plan to climb in some other area.

August 26, 5:25 AM. Last night we went to a nearby lodge and had a very nice time. We sang and did a little bit of dancing. Joe Statner and the Austrian guides sang quite a few songs.

(see Alaska on page 5)

Alaska (cont. from page 4)

The next morning I woke up and Hans came into the mess hall and said it was nice and clear outside. This means we will probably establish base camp on the glacier instead of bringing our stuff back.

9:00 PM. I am sitting in the mess hall enjoying the warmth because it is very disagreeable outside. It is raining, the wind is blowing and sometimes it turns to snow.

The day did not turn out the way I thought it would. We packed our gear and returned to the Castner Glacier but the weather was terrible. After a meeting with the guides, John Ebert, our leader, decided that we could split up and the more experienced members of our group would go up on the glacier and establish camp. The ones selected to go back on the glacier were Joe Stetner, John Ebert, Earl Carter, Hans Gzelman, and Hans and Hubert Schlaspskie.

Back at camp, we ate dinner then hiked up a mountain that was not too steep. It was right by the camp. We started out at 2:00 and followed a trail made by an army “Weasel” vehicle. Small trees and brush made it hard to see very far on each side of the trail.

As we climbed higher, the trees became thinner and the brush became thicker. About half way up we came to a burned over area which made it possible to see farther. We all decided to be as quiet as possible in hope of seeing game.

Upon reaching timberline we came to a game trail. This made walking much easier. The view from there was really beautiful because the trail led along a very deep canyon. At the bottom was a tiny stream. Looking south, we could see the Delta River, which is wide. Rising from the other side of the river was another range of mountains from which the Black Rapids Glacier originates. We could plainly see the glacier.

It started to sleet pretty hard so we decided to head back. Just as we approached camp, the fellow in the lead shouted, “Moose!” Everyone kept pointing, but by that time it had disappeared into the brush. It was a huge cow, for we found her hoof marks.

(Read “My Mountain Climbing Trip in Alaska, Summer of 1955, Part 4” by John Holmes in the next issue of Minnekahta Messenger on Mar. 2, 2018.)

Surely You Jest

Aqua-Thermal Treatment

Contributed by Bill Cutler

I called an old school friend and asked what he was doing. He replied that he was working on “Aqua-thermal treatment of ceramics, aluminum and steel under a constrained environment.”

I was impressed.

On further inquiring, I learned that he was washing dishes with hot water under his wife’s supervision.

The Golf Pro and the Parish Priest

Contributed by Dennis Kasparek

A guy was getting ready to tee off on the first hole at the local golf course when a second golfer approached and asked if he could join him.

The first said that he usually played alone, but agreed to the twosome.

They were even after the first few holes. The second guy said, “We’re about evenly matched, how about playing for five bucks a hole?”

The first guy said that he wasn’t much for betting, but agreed to the terms.

The second guy won the remaining sixteen holes with ease. As they were walking off number eighteen, the second guy was busy counting his \$80.00. He confessed that he was the pro at a neighboring course and liked to pick on suckers.

The first fellow revealed that he was the Parish Priest.

The pro was flustered and apologetic, offering to return the money.

The Priest said, “You won fair and square and I was foolish to bet with you. You keep your winnings.”

The pro said, “Is there anything I can do to make it up to you?”

The Priest said, “Well, you could come to Mass on Sunday and make a donation. And, if you want to bring your mother and father along, I’ll marry them.”

Catching Up on His Sleep

Contributed by Grits McMorrow

An older, tired-looking dog wandered into my yard. I could tell from his collar and well-fed belly that he had a home and was well-taken care of.

He calmly came over to me, I gave him a few pats on his head; he then followed me into my house, slowly walked down the hall, curled up in the corner and fell asleep.

An hour later, he went to the door, and I let him out.

The next day he was back, greeted me in my yard, walked inside and resumed his spot in the hall and again slept for about an hour. This continued off and on for several weeks.

Curious, I pinned a note to his collar: “I would like to find out who the owner of this wonderful sweet dog is and ask if you are aware that almost every afternoon your dog comes to my house for a nap.”

The next day he arrived for his nap, with a different note pinned to his collar: “He lives in a home with 6 children, 2 under the age of 3—he’s trying to catch up on his sleep. Can I come with him tomorrow?”

Symbols of Our Faith

Contributed by Grits McMorrow

While teaching children about world religions, a teacher asked her students to bring a symbol of their family’s faith to class.

The next day, she asked each student to come forward and share the symbol with the class.

The 1st child said, “I’m Muslim, and this is my prayer rug.”

The 2nd child said, “I’m Jewish, and this is my family’s menorah.”

The 3rd child said, “I’m Roman Catholic, and this is my Mom’s rosary.”

The 4th child said, “I’m Greek Orthodox, and this is an icon of my patron saint.”

The 5th child said, “I’m a Baptist, and this is my casserole dish.”

Special Section

Johnny and Nettie: Deceit and Redemption

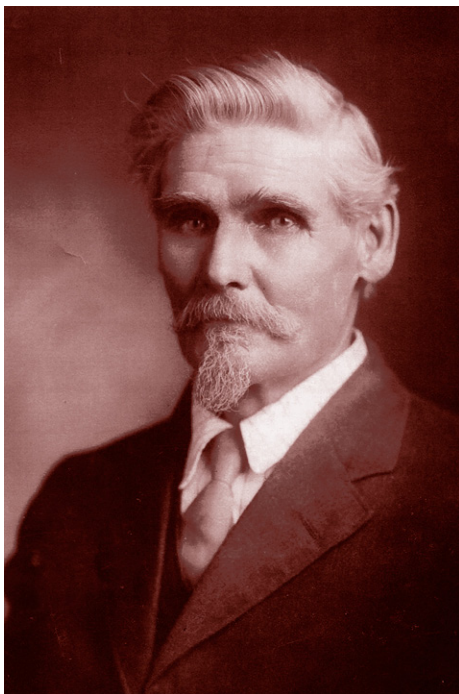
Adapted by T.L. Matt

I was captivated by the picture of a romantic old cabin, the Spaulding Cabin, which was restored and is located at the Belle Fourche Tri-State Museum. It's one of the oldest pioneer dwellings in South Dakota, and has a story attached to the builder that will amaze you.

The cabin was built by Johnny Spaulding, a most handsome, striking man, as evidenced by his picture. He was born in Wisconsin in 1849 and not only attended school, where the basics were taught, but also learned about livestock and farming while a youth. Near a community of Ojibway, he had friends among them and learned their ways and language.

Johnny went to Winona County, Minnesota at 19 to attend a private academy. He paid his own way by working and was good with horses. He also tended a raft of logs being moved down the Mississippi to St. Louis, Missouri.

He boarded with the headmaster of the academy and fell in love with his daughter, Nettie Dobbs, his classmate. They announced their plans to wed in 1871 and the family gave their blessing. Nettie was 16 and Johnny 22.



Johnny and Nettie wanted to make their home in a milder climate, so he went west in 1874 to see what land was available. He crossed the Missouri into Nebraska and bought some land in the south central part of the state. He planted a crop, but because shooting wild game and buffalo was pretty profitable at that time, he became a "market hunter" and ranged through western Nebraska and eastern Colorado.

"It was a risky occupation. Spaulding and his pack horse were both bitten by rattlesnakes. Johnny almost died and the horse did. He was once stranded in a blizzard without food or water for three days. His partner ventured out some 80 miles from their home base, eventually finding Johnny, barely alive but walking and trying to make his way home.

"On another occasion, while approaching a buffalo he'd shot at some distance, Spaulding noticed several arrows protruding from the dead animal's ribs. An Oglala Indian named Yellow Horse soon arrived at the kill site and a dispute arose over who owned the carcass. The competing hunters agreed to wrestle for it. After a half hour struggle, they agreed to a draw. Yellow Horse kept the buffalo's meat and Johnny Spaulding kept the hide."

Johnny had been sending letters to Nettie, but never got a reply from her. He became very worried and sent a letter to one of her aunts. The aunt told him that not long after he went west, another aunt became ill and Nettie moved in with the aunt and her husband, Mr. Giles, to care for her. She told Johnny that after the aunt died, Nettie married the widower, Mr. Giles.

Johnny was sick at heart at the unexpected news and went back to market hunting in Colorado and Nebraska.

What had happened to the two lovers is the stuff of novels or movie scripts, but it was all very real. Nettie never received any of Johnny's letters and none of the letters she wrote him were ever delivered. Mr. Giles had a friend, the local postmaster, who intercepted and destroyed every letter Nettie and Johnny wrote, besides letters from Nettie's own family.

To make matters worse, Mr. Giles gave Nettie a fictitious letter supposedly from her stepmother who said Johnny had married an Oglala girl and he cared for Nettie "no more than a dog."

Unfortunately, with this deceit, Giles pressured Nettie into marrying him so "people wouldn't talk" because she had lived with him and his former wife so long. He then moved Nettie and his children to Texas.

The big buffalo herds were about gone, so in 1876, Johnny Spaulding moved to the Black Hills, lured by the gold strikes he had heard about in Deadwood and Custer.

He arrived at the time when there were tensions because of the Battle of the Little Big Horn in June, 1876. He joined a crew building a stockade in Spearfish.

Johnny then joined the U.S. Army, where his knowledge of Native languages was valued. He worked as a scout for General Crook, who was chasing Crazy Horse at the time.

The cabin, along the Redwater River, just south and east of Belle Fourche was built by Johnny in late 1876. He cut logs near Deadwood and hauled them 15 miles to the cabin site.

Johnny's sister, Lucinda, and her husband, T.J. Davis, and their children came in 1877 after Johnny urged them to join him in South Dakota. They added two rooms onto the cabin. It was considered quite nice for the time in which it was built. There was one bedroom on the first floor and two on the second. Nine people lived in the cabin in the next few years.

Johnny didn't mine gold after all, but hauled freight and worked with livestock and timber. He established a horse ranch in Wyoming in 1881.

Probably, because of his dashed plans with Nettie, he couldn't seem to settle down. He went back to Nebraska, then to the desert Southwest, then traveled into Yellowstone country and also went into Washington and Oregon. Finally he bought some land in Modoc County, California.

Among the first irrigation projects in this part of the country, he built dams on two streams, diverting the water onto a thousand acres.

(see Johnny on page 7)



Johnny (cont. from page 6)

Spaulding tried to enlist in the Army in 1898 when the Spanish American War broke out. But he was 49-years-old. Because the recruiters tried to reject him, he challenged them to a two-mile race. What a guy! He beat the champion of the recruiters and spent 18 months serving with the First

California Volunteers and saw action in the Philippines and Cuba.

Because of a serious drought, he sold his Modoc County ranch and moved to Napa County, California and eventually bought a ranch there.

Then the truth came out about Nettie's life in 1914. His brother learned it from Nettie's relatives in Minnesota. It seems to me he was a most honorable man. Johnny traveled to St. Paul to convince her family that they must never divulge what her husband, Mr. Giles, had done. Johnny must have had unbelievable strength of character, considering what he had experienced. For years, the family honored his request.

Mr. Giles died in 1927 and letters were exchanged between family members. It was at this time that Nettie learned the whole truth.

Just like in the fairy tales of love and romance, the ending of this story will warm your heart as it did mine. In October of 1927, a meeting between the two long-ago

lovers was arranged at Johnny's sister's home in Washington. Johnny and Nettie were married a week later! The happy and wondrous ending to a 55-year engagement. (My eyes are tearing up as I write this).

They returned to his ranch in California and lived happily together in the beautiful Napa Valley for four years. It is recorded that they visited Belle Fourche once in 1928. Unfortunately, Johnny passed away in 1932 from surgery complications. Nettie followed him in a matter of months.

Each old home you see has a story to tell about the former residents. I want to visit the Tri-State Museum to see the home Johnny built and touch the logs and reminisce about his story. There was a happy ending indeed after years of trials. Those four years that Johnny and Nettie shared were a gift to them. A truer Valentine's story could not be told. (www.sdpb.org/blogs/images-of-the-past/the-1876-johnny-spaulding-cabin-belle-fourche/)

My Short Flight

By D.E. Matt

Special Correspondent

When I am sitting on the toilet and water is dripping on my head, that is an annoyance. When I realize the ceiling is wet, that is an annoyance. When I realize it's cold, dark and a near blizzard outside, that is also an annoyance. When my wife begins complaining about these new problems in the bathroom, the same could be said.

When I go outside and see the problems of an ice dam on the roof, that is an annoyance. The same could be said of no operational flashlight and no streetlight. Trying to set up an extension ladder in the deep snow in the dark, it begins to seem like a complication.

Resolving to stay safe, I vow to myself to not get onto the actual roof. I therefore stand on the very top of the ladder and reach as far as possible with a leaf rake to pull down as much snow as possible. Annoyingly, I think this problem is almost beyond my reach while leaning on the gutter with one hand and reaching for the far limits of the rake. That is when I feel the ladder slip sideways and out from under me.

When I regain consciousness at the bottom of the embankment and the length of the ladder from my starting point, something is dreadfully wrong. I now have a full blown disaster—I cannot get up.

My whole body seems in pain, especially the back of my head and my back. I scream as loudly as possible for my wife, who kneels beside me while I wrap my arms around her neck so she can help me stand while I lean on her.

She says when she heard the bang of my fall, she knew immediately that her worst fears had happened. We discuss going to the VA for x-rays. When she tries to clean the blood from my scalp, it will not stop bleeding. I ask for a towel and apply as much direct pressure as possible while she drives me through the snowstorm.

When we arrive, I beg them to help me avoid exquisite pain by keeping my spine in tension as anything else causes intense screams of pain, my wife can hardly stand.

X-rays show I have broken the outsides of five vertebra. The back of my head is now one matted blood clot, which needs stitching. They do the best that they can.

They give me the strongest pain killer allowed and pack me in an ambulance with four nurses for transport to Rapid City Regional.

They take more scans and, after more than 24 hours, release me, sending me home on a pain killer, Fentanyl, which is 100 times stronger than morphine. It is so strong that when I peer out into the darkness, everywhere I look I see faint hallucinations of wooden radio towers, of giant wooden TV towers and giant wooden bridges, all continuously intertwined.

I had to use a walker for about six weeks and now, about thirteen months later, I am finally beginning to sleep for longer than an hour and a half at a time, without acetaminophen. The acetaminophen has been interfering with my sleep for about half of its effective time.

The Lord blessed me to be able to get out of the hospital, and I imagine when I get to the other side I could ask if I they can gather together an audience so I can tell them about my great fall.

Thereupon I will simply be told, "We could do that, but it is only fair to tell you that Adam will be in the audience."

This May Interest You

History of Bourbon, Part 2

By Jeff Consoer

Now, anyone who has tasted corn liquor straight out of a still knows that this product still had quite a ways to go before it would develop into bourbon. But it was a beginning. Next, a country needed to be born. So, then, who turned corn liquor into bourbon? How and why? And who came up with the name "Bourbon?"

Congratulations! It's a nation!

As Americans, we all know the history of the birth of this country. But familiarity can generate complacency. It is one thing to read about the Continental Congress, the authorship of the American Constitution (arguably one of the greatest mission statements of social justice in human history), and even the unprecedented collection of genius involved in these achievements. But we need to recognize that these events were so unprecedented in history that it is difficult, even now, to contrast those achievements with any others since.

Those "free thinkers" had such courage and commitment to "these truths"—"self-

evident"—that they were willing to take up arms against one of the most powerful nations on the planet in order to see the dream of a United States of America become reality. It was brash, even ostentatious, and yet it actually happened and succeeded! We are here as proof.

Helluva thing. And they were just getting started.

So how does anyone follow that? How about by sustaining and growing the new nation and its economy? That is more easily said than done. Here we pick up the story of Bourbon again.

The new nation was composed of the strong, the brave and even the brilliant... but not the wealthy. Keep in mind that most of the new settlers had little and risked it all, even their young families, on a dangerous voyage across the sea just for a chance to acquire some land and create a new life in America.

These were not wealthy people, quite the opposite. But a war of independence waged against powerful England required soldiers, supplies, weapons and money, lots of money.

That money had to come from somewhere.



A significant financier of the revolution was France and its wealthy families. Many of those families had reason to see the U.S. gain its independence. One of them was the French family Bourbon (approximately pronounced: Bore-bow).

In gratitude for their support of the war, several landmarks and features in the new country were given that family's name, including a large region of the very large Virginia Territory, and also a street in New Orleans. That family name will eventually have an impact on corn liquor.

But hang on. American liquor needs to evolve a bit more first.

Corn was already being turned into a distillate in the 17th century. It was drinkable, but pretty rough tasting. Its producers began experimenting with ways to make it a smoother drink. Though it is not clear who first started aging it in oak barrels, many venerable and established modern distilleries lay claim to being the pioneers of that aging process.

In all likelihood, though, the aging of corn liquor in charred wooden barrels was simultaneously experimented with by many early corn liquor producers. A large number of the settlers were expatriates of Scotland, Ireland and France. Those countries already had centuries of distilling experience.

Aging distillates in wooden barrels—even charred wooden barrels—was not uncommon. Ultimately, it is that aging process which turns corn liquor into a (see *Bourbon* on page 9)

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Bourbon (cont. from page 8)

completely new product—mellow, golden brown, complex and smooth.

Another key ingredient in the evolution of American whiskey may be traced to the origins of the corn most commonly used. Once the vast region of the Virginia territory was parsed into several states, Kentucky being one, a county within that state retained the name “Bourbon County.” But given the immense size of the territory originally called Bourbon County, the whole region was still commonly referred to as “Old Bourbon.”

That region produced exceptional corn (partially due to large limestone filtered underground aquifers). This rich corn was perfect for making corn liquor. Once the resulting distillate was sealed in charred barrels (oak was found to work best) for aging and shipment, common practice was to stamp the location of origin on the barrel. So the barrels were stamped with the name “Old Bourbon” or sometimes just “Bourbon”.

The quality and yield of the corn allowed prodigious amounts of this new liquor to be produced in that region of the country. It was becoming popular in broader markets, and these new markets saw the “Bourbon”

Coat (cont. from page 3)

Often, I have been guilty of ignoring the prompting of the Holy Spirit but this time I didn't. I got out of my warm truck and checked my pockets for belongings then unzipped my coat and draped it over her shoulders. Her eyes squinted until I spoke. “Here you are my sister. I love you and God loves you too.”

I gave her an honest embrace then got back in my truck and drove away. I didn't know what else I could do, I had no money on me to give them. I just drove away, all the while weeping, I wasn't sure why I was crying but my 16-year-old-son put his hand on my shoulder to comfort me. He had witnessed the whole event in silence.

I tumbled the scene around in my mind as we drove to our home and, as usual, my perfect hindsight kicked in, making me think, “If I had truly been a Good Samaritan, I should have taken them someplace warm where they could stay the night in comfort.”

But the event was in the past and I couldn't go back and redo it. I pondered if I

name stamped on the shipping barrels that they received. Here was a nice, short, distinctive name for American whiskey.

There is, however, a competing story explaining the origins of the name. It comes from Bourbon Street in New Orleans and is heavily debated amongst Bourbon historians. Many French settlers lived in New Orleans. They missed their cognacs from France and found the corn liquor aged in charred wooden barrels was somewhat similar to cognac. Thus the new American whiskey, irrespective of where it was made, became popular in New Orleans. Since many of the drinking establishments serving this new liquor were located on Bourbon Street, the hometown favorite acquired a local name. Kentuckians pay no heed to this story. New Orleans advocates likewise give little credit to Kentucky.

And what about Tennessee whiskey? It is bourbon, but do not say that to a Tennessean unless you want a fight. Seriously, Tennessee whiskey uses the same process and components as bourbon and technically could be called Bourbon. There is one production deviation, but most important: it does need to be made in Tennessee.

That brings us to an important common misunderstanding: bourbon was never re-

quired to come from Bourbon County or even from Kentucky. In fact, it was not until a 1964 declaration of Congress that bourbon even had to be made in the USA.

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quired to come from Bourbon County or even from Kentucky. In fact, it was not until a 1964 declaration of Congress that bourbon even had to be made in the USA.

Now if the bottle says Kentucky Bourbon, then it obviously has to be produced in that state. But there are high quality bourbons being produced by distilleries all across America, and that has been so for many decades. Only recently did South Dakota establish its own bourbon distillery (Badlands Distillery in Kadoka – *check them out* – www.badlanddistillery.com/).

Interestingly, Congress even went on to officially codify the basic recipe for Bourbon (CFR title 27, part 5.22). But why would the U.S. Congress get so involved in defining one liquor? That is another story and one that involves an overseas war, prohibition, and organized crime.

Sound interesting? Stay tuned for “History of Bourbon, Part 3: Criminals, Congress, and Other Charletons.” (Read “History of Bourbon, Part 3” by Jeff Consoer in the next issue of Minnekahta Messenger on Mar. 2, 2018.)

had done the right thing. Would she appreciate the gift? Had I been foolish?

To my own mind I said crossly, “She’s a daughter of God just like you.” The woman was worthy of a gift from God despite her circumstances. In some people’s eyes I was very foolish, but I would do the same thing over again. I can’t help wondering where the woman is now and if my coat is keeping her warm.

I will remember her each time I see a person walking along the side of the road in the cold. I will wonder about my coat and where it is now and will especially be grateful to the Lord for testing my words. I know I must live the lesson I teach, or I would be no better than those in that parable that looked upon the needy but passed to the other side and went on their way.

Even before this situation happened, my students and I had planned a coat drive; our purpose was to gather coats and give them to one of the local shelters.

How profound this act of charity will be for me. I hope it will mean as much to my students, especially since one of them was my own son.

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Rhyme Or Reason

Finding the Peace Within

By Andy Skadberg

One of the greatest things I can do
Is find the peace within
Just to stop for a moment,
or two, or three
the business outside
in the world of men
spins around
swirling, distracting, taunting
more, more, more
it says
“pay attention to me”
it is interesting, intriguing, fun,
for awhile

then, as it demands its price -
“More, LOOK AT ME - I am it!”
my centered feelings, twinge “no”!
but the voices in my head
say, “go for it, it’s the plan, the game.
it’s the best show in the town.”
the further I go, the more it demands
meanwhile, what I am says
“wait”
together this creates
this playscape called life
but the further I go
the more that I find
that the enjoyment of what’s outside
is an inside game
the more I find my grounding
my centering within
I find vast peace

and appreciation
the demands of the outside
fall into their role
an expression of the vast inside
just waiting to be shared
is not a forced thing,
or contrived
but what is truly real
some call it love
which it is
but I can call it me
for it is what I am
and I cannot escape it
for as I continue to go within
to find the peace in this world
its the only decent thing to share
and it is truly mine
the greatest gift I can find

Life on the Rio Grande

By Larry Stocker

Dear Amigos,
Circumstances had prevented me from
visiting the edge of the river for the last two
Thursdays so I didn’t know what to expect.

The sun, sitting a little lower, shined his
familiar bright light almost directly into my
eyes as I guided the car westward. The sun
doesn’t change very much.

When I pull into the parking lot by the
Rio Grande, I always glance out to see if
anyone is occupying the music-playing
bench and if there is water in the river. Yes-
terday evening the answers to both of these
questions was negative.

I rested the guitar on the music-playing
bench and walked to the river’s edge to see
what I could see. The flowing water, gone
now, had renovated the sand bottom of the
river. There were new mountains and val-
leys and things, like tree trunks, that had
been transported from upstream and then
just left embedded in sand as the force of
the water subsided, like passengers on a
train who couldn’t afford a ticket for the
full journey.

I thought about how the surface of the
earth itself is always changing but that our
lives are so short we barely observe enough
of the cycles to gather much evidence of
the constant change. Things that we think

of as permanent fixtures are always mov-
ing. The river, in a small way, tells us that.
People have figured out that things that
used to be on the bottom of the ocean are
now far above water and things that used to
be far above the water are now at the bot-
tom of the ocean.

The river knows that. She doesn’t care
if things are permanent or not. I do. I like
to be attached to permanent things but she
doesn’t.

Right by the music-playing bench there
is what was once a deep pool in the river
bed that still has some now-stagnant water.
I looked down there. That little stagnant
pool and the sand around it was full of at
least one hundred bodies of small fish may-
be two to five inches long. They looked like
small catfish and carp with a few crayfish
mixed in.

Like refugees, they tried to cling to life
by congregating in the deepest pool they
could find, holding onto life in the hope of
a reprieve that didn’t come. As the water
disappeared and was not replaced, they
gave up and died together like victims of
genocide who have to dig their own trench
to be buried in. Except they weren’t buried.

Kinda hard to think about stuff like that.
But then, I guess you shouldn’t not think
about it either. I wondered what the pur-
pose of those small lives might have been.

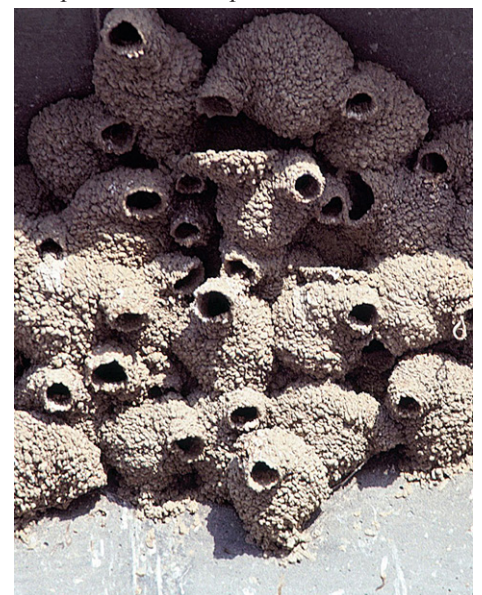
Just then the sun disappeared and every-
thing felt still. For a short time, the man-

made sounds of the guitar tried to find a
harmonious pulse and then retired, allow-
ing the uncomplicated stillness to return.

One fairly permanent thing we have is
the sun’s promise of a new day that will
come after the night.

After a flourish of flying skills, the swal-
lows left the sky for their little adobe huts
under the bridge and a few clumsy-flying
early bats took their place above the river
bed. There would be plenty of mosquitoes
and gnats for them tonight.

*“Life on the Rio Grande” is a weekly email
blog written by Larry Stocker. This story
was published on Sep. 12, 2014.*



Well, If You Ask Us

Hat Creek Grill: Good Food, Good Friends, Good Fun in Edgemont

By Grits McMorrow

Tuesday, February 13 was a beautiful sunny day and the date of the birthday of my sweetie. After her return from a morning of teaching impressionable young minds to learn the three R's (Reading, wRiting, and aRithmetic) and other preschool subjects, we went to the Cheyenne River Social Club to join our peers for a healthy hot meal and sixty minutes of enjoyable conversation.

Not being one to keep a birthday a secret, upon entering the main room, I blurted out loud that the birthday girl had arrived. Our friends enthusiastically responded with an immediate chorus of the "Happy Birthday" song followed by a round of applause.

On Monday we had agreed we would go out to dinner to celebrate, initially figuring it would be just the two of us. Later, we invited a few friends to join us—after all, we had the next night of Valentine's Day to be alone. However, unbeknownst to my sweetie, I contacted our other pals and invited them to join us, too. It was going to be a surprise party! And, you should have seen my sweetie's face light up when she saw her buddies at the restaurant. And since she'd already received those nice cards from her church and school friends, my sweetie was feeling really good.

We celebrated the special occasion at the Hat Creek Grill in Edgemont. Owned by Teresa and Rob, it is one of several "eatin' places" in town. They prepare food from scratch and the meals are darn good. My sweetie and I like to eat there—or order food to go—on Tuesdays and Fridays when the restaurant serves homemade Mexican food. February 13 was a "Taco Tuesday," so we knew we would be eating the biggest, best tacos, with the freshest ingredients, folks 'round here have ever tasted. Ask anyone!

After the dishes were cleared away, Teresa came out with the birthday cake. Sitting across from her, I watched my sweetie's eyes brim with tears as that large, beautiful cake, with candles and her name on it, was placed before her. It was a Kodak moment! You know, Teresa went to Rapid City and chose that cake for us; she, her family, and staff always take good care of friends and customers.

My sweetie had a great birthday, and one she won't soon forget. Good food, good friends, good fun at the Hat Creek Grill. (605-662-7012; www.facebook.com/hatcreekgrill.edgemont/)

The Month of Love

By T.L. Matt

February is a good time to evaluate your involvement with relationships that bring you joy. "We are shaped and fashioned by what we love," wrote Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe. If your true love is money and prestige, then you will be terribly disappointed, because material things do not bring happiness. You can never get enough.

To experience love from others, you have to love yourself first. Applying the same principles of forgiveness, courtesy and kindness you show others to yourself will help. You come from Divine origins with a capacity for unconditional love. Peace will come to your heart as you attempt to serve others and see them as friends, even if they do not acknowledge that relationship immediately.

The greatest men in this world are those who truly listen to others and make them feel good about themselves. I've always felt the love in friendships from those who really look you in the eye and listen.

For our more intimate family relationships, we need to evaluate the actual time we spend with loved ones with one-on-one contact. If given a choice, most people would be willing to trade the flowers, candy and hearts for some quality time with their mates and children.

When we talk to each other, do we look deeply into the heart and ask questions that will help us bond, or do we talk about everyday worries and concerns?

Good questions to ask are: Have you realized your goals in life? How can I help you make them a reality?

As we grow older, we see the hairline recede, the middle expand, the steps slow and forgetfulness common. But if we look into the eyes—the windows of the soul—we see the spark of life that never diminishes. It is the thing that gives us hope and encouragement. It is the light of Love.

There is the hope of Spring in six weeks, but most importantly, in February, there is the hope of increased love.

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Joe (cont. from front cover)

Why consider a far more complicated alternative theory, that the earth revolves around the sun, that the sun is so far away it takes eight minutes for its light to reach earth, across a 93 million mile wide vacuum of near absolute zero, and so the higher Icarus rose, the colder it would actually get.

Real life example: global warming could cause another ice age. Ridiculous! How can it get colder if it is getting hotter! Earth's fluctuating weather conditions are natural and pre-date human existence. Check out the Permian Extinction 250 million years back. Over 90% of all living things died when the climate became a Hellish inferno. Try and blame greedy corporations for that!

Except now would be the time to think counter-intuitively. Melting ice caps and glaciers can put enough fresh water into the sea that salinity levels are critically diluted until the Gulf Stream shuts down, plummeting Northern Europe into a deep freeze.

Millions of Americans scoff at that, which brings us to our last, most important technical term.

Cognitive Dissonance: Leon Festinger came up with the theory in 1957. The theory has two main parts, and what is interesting is how these two parts are selectively applied, namely how the second part is consistently misrepresented or overlooked.

Here is the first part: "The existence of dissonance, being psychologically uncomfortable, will motivate the person to try to reduce the dissonance and achieve consonance."

People don't like holding contradictory opinions, it creates "dissonance," and they try to reduce and eliminate that dissonance.

This part of the theory threatens no person so when you look up the definition of cognitive dissonance, many times this is the only definition you find.

Example of first part of theory: the fox spies some juicy grapes, jump as he might, he can't reach the juicy grapes, so he concludes the grapes were probably sour anyway. Consonance achieved.

Here is the second part: "When dissonance is present, the person will actively avoid situations and information which would likely increase the dissonance."

That also explains why the second part of the theory is often avoided. People felt threatened by the second part, and actively avoided that situation and information.

Cognitive dissonance was at work even while they read about cognitive dissonance.

The problem with the second part is it allows people to hold contradictory opinions at the same time, a cake and eat it too situation.

Example of second part: Bob loves FOX News but tells his bowling buddy Steve the Liberals control the media.

"Yeah," Steve says, "that's why no one watches FOX News, because the Liberals control it."

Bob yells back, "Everybody watches FOX News! Liberals don't control it! They control MSNBC, and that's why nobody watches MSNBC!"

"So which is it," Steve says. "Do the Liberals control the media or does everybody watch FOX News?"

For Bob, both statements are true, as long as he never allows one statement near the other, and as long as he steers clear of guys like Steve. Bob no longer wants Steve for a bowling buddy, although Steve was willing to tolerate Bob, and now Bob literally rolls with Joe instead, because Joe never thinks or says the crazy stuff Steve did.

"Bob's New Bowling Buddy Joe – Even Accounting Majors Get the Math Wrong" is the title of a journal post by James Giago Davies. It was published on Jun. 7, 2014 on the author's Facebook home page, www.facebook.com/iyeska-journal/.

James Giago Davies, an enrolled member of the Oglala Lakota tribe, is an award winning journalist and longtime correspondent and columnist of the Native Sun News Today weekly newspaper based in Rapid City (www.nativesunnews.today/).

Destroyer (cont. from front cover)

Native women compose 35 percent of female prison population, according to a Dakota-Lakota-Nakota Human Rights Advocacy Coalition Report.

Law enforcement agents arrest American Indians and Alaskan Natives at twice the rate of the greater U.S. population for violent and property crimes. On average, American Indians re-

ceive longer sentences than non-Indians for crimes.

They also tend to serve longer time in prison for their sentences than non-Native Americans. The suicide rate is higher among American native inmates incarcerated in jails than non-Indians.

What needs to happen?

We need to admit that racial disparities are tied to our unequal justice practices, and develop strategies, in cooperation with law enforcement and community, that will reduce racial disparity and enhance public safety.

We need to change policy by removing barriers for those with criminal records so they can gain access to employment, housing and civic engagement. What is the point of being released back into society if you can't positively participate in society?

We need to create programs that support ALL families of offenders/ex-offenders. It is important for ex-offenders, the children of incarcerated parents, and their caretakers to establish a network of social support.

Thankfully, there are some states, NGOs, associations and research institutions around the nation advocating for the rights of ex-offenders and combating racial disparities in America's prisons. However, there needs to be a shift in the administration and the states' thinking and action.

Race needs to be explicitly discussed as it relates to policy change, mass incarceration, and criminal justice. Also how the racially disproportionate enforcement of the "War on Drugs" has negatively affected communities of color.

"Mass Incarceration: A Destroyer of People of Color and Their Communities" is the title of an article by Jamaal Bell. It was published by the Huffington Post on May 17, 2010 (www.huffingtonpost.com/jamaal-bell/mass-incarceration-a-dest_b_578854.html).

Jamaal Bell is a Master of Divinity student at Ashland Theological Seminary in Ohio and a youth leader at Vineyard Church in Columbus. He served in the United States Navy. His writing focus is on social justice and Christianity.

Failure (cont. from front cover)

3. Dig deeper

Try to get to the bottom of what's bothering you and ask yourself "Is it something I can change?"

Many times, we feel 'trapped' in a situation that seems to be out of our control, but the truth is, it's not as far out there as we think. In fact, most of the time, there is something we can do about our "failures."

If you're having a tough time losing weight, maybe you need to see your doctor and find out if there's an underlying health condition that might be hindering your efforts.

If your family schedule is so crazy you don't have time to catch your breath, seriously evaluate your calendar and cancel stuff.

Whatever's going on, chances are you can do something about it. It might not be much, especially if it's something like a serious health issue, but there may still be little things that can help.

4. Make a plan

The worst thing you can do when you feel like a failure is to do absolutely nothing but feel sorry for yourself. I've done that plenty of times and it never helps.

I'm not saying you shouldn't ever think, "Wow, this is really hard!" but try not to dwell on it.

Sometimes all that means is recognizing that your situation is temporary and purposing to not be so hard on yourself. Stop feeling guilty for everything you're not doing and give yourself credit for what you DO.

It's also okay and very important to prioritize taking care of yourself. Because after all, if you don't who will?

Do you ever feel like you're a failure? (Everyone does sometimes.) Here's 4 things to remember that will help change how you think. For moms especially, if you need encouragement, you'll want to read this.

Everyone feels like a failure sometimes, but it doesn't mean you are. Get to the bottom of your situation and see what you can do to improve it or simply stop being so hard on yourself. Remember, you can let your "failures" take over or you can take over.

"When You Feel Like a Failure" is the title of a blogpost by Erika Bragdon. It was published on May 4, 2016 on the author's website, livingwellmom.com/2016/05/when-you-feel-like-failure/.

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