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Special thanks to Don Kreutzweiser of Kreutzweiser Photography for his photography of our covers and many of the wonderful inside-the-magazine photos. Don can be reached for senior pictures, weddings, family portraits, and other special events. And be sure to thank him for all he does to make Community Spirit possible!

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individuals and ministries have had on
the world over the last 100 years.

Developed in commemoration of the
Oklahoma Centennial, this 192-page coffee
table book will celebrate the faith,
leadership, and influence that have made
the greater Tulsa community a respected
beacon of Christian thought.

The book will be entitled
"Journey, Tulsa’s Century of Christian
Faith, Leadership, and Influence",
and will be introduced in May 2006.

5000 copies will be sold and distributed
throughout our community. Placed in the
libraries of churches, colleges, cities
and counties, it will forever stand as
a testament of our Christian heritage.

Time Line:

Space reservations by October 1, 2005
Materials to Community Spirit by November 1, 2005
Layout design approval by December 15, 2005
Final editing from December 15-31, 2005
Send book to print January 1, 2006
Introduction of the book on May 4, 2006

Terms:

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"JOURNEY" WILL INCLUDE THREE GREAT CHAPTERS

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An overview of our Christian heritage with interesting sidebar stories written by respected and well-known personalities from our community. From the early Methodist circuit riders and the Catholic missions, to the expansion of other churches and the modern mega-churches, "Journey" will tell the story of the impact faith had on building our unique prairie town into a thriving city known for its strong Christian ministries.

Chapter Two: "Leadership"
This is a paid section of individual pages honoring our community’s men and women who have made and continue to make a positive impact on the world for Christ. You may include pages about your leaders, friends and loved ones. From past and present ministry leaders to respected individuals who have given a lifetime to serving, every church and ministry has its own heroes who need to be counted. Don’t miss this opportunity to share their story. $1,000 per page.

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A Bonus for Each Church!
As a bonus for participating in this project, each church that buys at least a two-page spread also receives an invitation to be included in either our compilation choir or compilation praise and worship CD placed in each copy of “Journey”.

We believe it is a shame only your local church body hears your wonderful music ministry. This is an opportunity to share that ministry with people who may never have had the opportunity to attend your worship service. And since “Journey” will be read and re-read by thousands, we believe that the CD has the potential of bringing many visitors to your church.

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All groups who participate in the CD will be invited to perform at a special evening concert held on the National Day of Prayer, Thursday, May 4, 2006. It will be an incredible evening when thousands of believers come together, forgetting the things that separate us and instead focusing on a common faith in Jesus Christ. The location and the agenda of this wonderful evening will be announced soon. But don’t wait! Get involved now!
Bragging Rights

They are, in a word, outstanding. These are students and groups and teams pushing themselves to achieve the most, give the greatest, and reach for never ending possibilities. And this is our chance to let them shine.

Tulsa area Christian schools can be proud of their students’ accomplishments. We wanted to give them a chance to brag, this is it. And this is only a few. Read about these “outstanding” students and why Tulsa has a reason to brag about their youth.

Bishop Kelley

Natalie Russo graduated this year from Bishop Kelley High School with over 1,000 volunteer hours. She was honored by St. Francis Hospital for volunteering more than any teen in the history of the hospital. Natalie created a coloring book about St. Francis for young patients. Sister Mary Petra Kidd R.S.M. illustrated the coloring book, and Natalie wrote the text. The book may soon be published in Spanish. Natalie’s project helped her earn the Girl Scout Gold Award.

All Kelley seniors graduate with at least 100 Christian service hours. The goal is to encourage a life-long habit of volunteering, based on Matthew 5:41. Honorably, 84 seniors exceeded the volunteer requirement with at least 150 volunteer hours.

Also, the Academic Bowl Team won the 4A State Title, the Speech & Debate Team won State for the second year in a row. The Boys’ and Girls Soccer each one State - the Girls for the 7th consecutive year. Alex Schulte is the State Girls Golf Champion for the third consecutive year. Roberto Ruiz holds the track state title for the 800 meter.
Approximately 40 Cascia Hall sixth graders and their parents participated in a Habitat for Humanity landscaping and gardening project at Schlegel Park on Tulsa’s west side.

Francesca Barger, an eighth grader at Evangelistic Temple School, recently took third place at the State History Day Competition in Oklahoma City. Her project, “Communication in the Underground Railroad,” depicted the intricate method of communication used in quilt designs in the south.

Contestants qualified for the state competition by placing in district competitions earlier in the year. Francesca and classmate John Woldum both qualified to compete at the state level. John’s project highlighted ESPN Sports Channel and placed first in the district competition.

ETS middle school students prepare a History or Science Fair project each year, with many students qualifying to continue on to district and state competitions.
Holland Hall recently became only the second Oklahoma team and third private school to win the National Academic Championship title in the competition’s 23-year history. The program, which is only four years old, has quickly become a national force.

The team consists of five members: Matt Pargeter, Mark Donaldson, George Gibbs, Daniel Jouas and Matt Baumer. Holland Hall Upper School faculty member Jayme Howland advises the team. Team captain Matt Pargeter was accorded “Hall of Fame” status for his role on the team in both the 2004 and 2005 competitions. In 23 years of competition, only 14 players have received the “Hall of Fame” honor.

The group qualified for the tournament by winning the New Orleans phase of the competition at the end of May, beating out a field of 39 schools from across the country. During the final rounds of competition, they defeated the team from Byrum Hills, New York in the semi-finals and the team from El Paso, Texas in the finals.

The national title is not the only one the Holland Hall team received this year. The Holland Hall team won their fourth straight 3A State Academic Team title this year.

The National Academic Championship focuses on academic information rather than trivia. Questions Unlimited provides the questions. There are four “quarters” in each competition focusing on different types of questions: a warm-up round, Toss-up questions with bonuses, a lightening round and a “Stump the Experts” section.
Mingo Valley Christian School

This last year was the second year for Mingo Valley Christian School’s Key Club. With over 40 students in the club, they had a great time together making a difference in the Tulsa Community.

Overview of what Key Club has accomplished in 2004-2005:

• Grandparents’ Day – played Mingo Bingo at a retirement apartment complex. Wal-Mart donated $500 for prizes and bingo games.
• The club used the Mingo Bingo weekly with the elementary after-school care program.
• Books n’ Beanies — bi-monthly the Key Club read to Kindergarten and First Grade students
• Thanksgiving Canned Food Drive — collected canned goods at the Wal-Mart grocery store at 81st and Sheridan. They collected over 4,100 pounds of food.
• Operation Christmas Child — collected over 90 boxes of Christmas items
• Adopted a family (single mom with 3 children) for Christmas
• Linus Project — made over 70 blankets. (Key Club students received donations from Hancock’s and Albertsons)
• Bow Wow Luau — served dinner at the Tulsa Aquarium for the Tulsa Humane Society fundraiser
• Canned food drive for Christ for Humanity and Blue Star Moms
• Eight Key Club Seniors received a total of $10,000 in college scholarship from Kiwanis Club of Tulsa.

The club is beginning to gear up for another great year with Daniel Rusco and Brad Biggs at the helm.

Cascia Hall Class of 2005

Congratulations!

100% (83) will attend college in the fall.
31 are Oklahoma Academic Scholars.
18 are National Merit Finalists.
19 Athletic State Championships were earned in four years.
$5 million in merit scholarships was offered.
13,159 community service hours were performed in four years.
84% participated in the Advanced Placement Program.
53 graduated with honors.

Truth • Unity • Charity
When Emily Steward found out that many soldiers were discouraged because they rarely received mail, she decided to do something about it. She heard the news from her cousin, Kasey Pershing, who was serving in an Army convoy support unit in Iraq. Immediately, the 9-year-old Regent Preparatory School student jumped into action.

With her cousin’s help, she matched the soldiers up with pen pals from her school. Each class prayed for their assigned soldier throughout the year and also filled and mailed boxes containing gifts, personal items and letters.

The soldiers were delighted to hear from their new friends and were deeply touched by the gifts and letters from the students. Great job Emily! It is proof that even a 9-year-old can make a HUGE difference in our fight for freedom.

Four years ago the first ever Rejoice Christian School basketball team lost by over 30 points to another Christian school. In February they competed in the State Semi-Finals, they defeated the same school by 12 points. They went on to an overtime victory against Southwest Covenant in Yukon to win the OCSAA State 2A Title.

Rejoice is so proud of the way their seventh and eighth grade boys represented the school in performance and character. Way to go Eagles and Coach Casey! Team members are Tanner Blackman, Boggy Neph, Josh Graham, Jacob Graham, Jacob Owens, Mark Bedair, Caleb Compton, Matt Strickler, Kody Kemp, Derek Hodge, and Scott Zingerman.
Summit Christian Academy

Summit Christian Academy has some INCREDIBLE students! Every week several SCA middle school and high school students assist Broken Arrow Assembly’s Children’s Pastor, Jason Berry, with Kid's Church. Sarah Goldsmith, Derek Drake and Naomi Sawyer are faithful to “K-Crew” every week.

This summer, Pastor Jason has run a summer program titled “The Incredibles: God’s Heroes.” In June, the church sponsored a Vacation Bible School to culminate the Incredibles program.

In addition to the K-Crew, other SCA students who helped were: Michael Casey, Jeremy Ott, Brance Bess, Pat Delehanty, Abby Goldsmith, Alyssa Dawe, and Brittany Jeffus. These students sang, danced, performed skits, set up facilities, prayed with kids, and even “got slimed” all for the great cause of sharing with young children the power of God’s word.
In a culture in which winning at any cost is everything, it is refreshing to meet teenagers who recognize winning is not an end in itself but the beginning of greater things. Becca Hester, Miss Teen Oklahoma 2005, is such a teen. She is the kind whose spirit permits parents and grandparents everywhere to rest assured there is hope for future generations.

With a playfulness and contagious joy that seems to ooze from her pores, Becca is in many ways a typical teenager; outgoing, giddy, eager and full of life. However, the grace that radiates from her sets her apart from most. It is quite remarkable that she began her stride down the catwalk only three years ago when a family friend told her about a coming pageant. In this period she has been named third runner-up for Miss Teen Grand Lake, second runner-up for Miss Teen Oklahoma City University and most recently Miss Teen Oklahoma. She has also won the Miss Congeniality title four times! With each accomplishment her confidence has grown and she can’t help but cry, “I can actually do this!”

In keeping with the concerns many parents of teenage girls have, Becca admits that the challenge has been keeping it all in the right perspective. She tries to view her involvement in pageants as a ministry not as a forum for self-glorification; the platform simply being a springboard from which greater works of service to the community must be performed. In her capacity as Miss Teen Oklahoma and using her “team power” platform, Becca has spoken to young girls about self-esteem and having confidence in whom God has made them, a lesson she considers one of the most important in her life, second only to learning to be oneself. She not only speaks of the power of team and mentorship, she lives by it. She is a member of an accountability group of four young women who meet periodical-ly to share their challenges and give support to one another.

At the center of her efforts is a strong faith in God. While other journeys of faith begin in dramatic fashion, Becca’s was quite simple, really. It began when, at six, she saw her older sister, Katie, receive communion, and she knew she had to have some! She said a prayer and she did. However, it was only seven years later, at 13, that she began to understand the seriousness of her faith. She has not turned back since. She is actively involved in missions, praise and worship and youth group at Southern Hills Baptist Church, where her father, Hess Hester, is pastor. Her mother, Julie Hester, is a music teacher at Jenks Public Schools. Becca’s participation in missions to the homeless have been both touching and revelatory, “You go there thinking you will be ministering to them, but they minister to you instead,” she said soberly.

As she looks forward, Becca sees a life full of possibilities. This August, she is scheduled to participate in the Miss America’s Outstanding Teen competition in Florida. She has also received a tuition scholarship to Oklahoma City University, where she plans to study Music and Theater in the Fall of 2006. Meanwhile, this young lady will find time to do all the other things she enjoys; watching movies, listening to local bands, stopping by the neighborhood coffee shop and, of course, dancing - “not that ballroom stuff, but groove,” she says as she writhes in her seat, arms moving rhythmically in the air. Go Miss Congeniality!

=""You go there thinking you will be ministering to them, but they minister to you instead"
Building tomorrow’s information superhighways

BY JEFF GREER, FASTRACKIDS TULSA

When Time Magazine selected the 100 Most Important People of the 20th Century, Tim Berners-Lee was an easy choice in the category of Scientists and Thinkers. The fundamental principles of computer networking and standard protocols were developed as far back as 1966 in research conducted by the U.S. Defense Department. But it was Tim Berners-Lee’s efforts to develop a more “brain-like” approach to information sharing that led to the World Wide Web and the wealth of global information flow that we all enjoy.

There were other pioneers that contributed to Berners-Lee’s quest, including Vannevar Bush who in 1945 wrote an article entitled, “As We May Think,” which described a theoretical system for storing information based on associations. The first computer program to demonstrate the relational organization of information was aptly titled, “Enquire Within Upon Everything,” taken from a childhood encyclopedia of Mr. Berners-Lee’s. Enquire was followed by a coding system HTML (HyperText Mark-Up Language), linking rules HTTP (HyperText Transfer Protocol) and finally the first browsing tool that made the Internet accessible to the masses.

Tim Berners-Lee’s accomplishments have been called extraordinary, civilization changing and Gutenbergian, and they were based on the premise that the way computers exchange data and information should be more “brain-like”. The truth is, that despite the explosive growth of Internet use by multitude millions, the development of the World Wide Web pales in significance to the amazing information networks forming within the brains of our children each and every day.

At birth, each child begins their journey through life with 100 billion brain cells called neurons, capable of developing 20,000 branches called dendrites. Extending from each neuron is a trunk-like body called an axon. At the end of each axon is a series of presynaptic terminals that can transmit impulses or electrical messages to other neurons with dendrites in close proximity to the terminals. Neuroscientists call this process of interconnecting between neurons “brain wiring” and within the human brain, trillions of connections form creating the fundamental building blocks of how we think, learn and reason. Some of the wiring culminates in subsystems dedicated to specifically process auditory, visual or other sensory information into language, logical, emotional or other skill areas.

There are specific developmental windows of opportunity for brain wiring to occur in children. Neuroscientists believe over half of a child’s structural brain development occurs before the age of five and 80 percent of the wiring process occurs before the age of eight. The wiring process is fostered through the experience of the child. If a child is denied the opportunity of experiencing proper visual stimulation during the critical window of visual development then blindness will occur and subsequent actions will fail to restore sight once the developmental window closes. Pediatric neurobiologist Harry Chugani of Wayne State University says, “Early experiences are so powerful they can completely change the way a person turns out.”

In a Newsweek Cover Story, titled “Your Child’s Brain,” the following statements are made, “The implications of this new understanding are at once promising and disturbing. They suggest that with the right input at the right time, almost anything is possible. But they imply, too, that if you miss the window you’re playing with a handicap.”

If early experiences are so critical in developing the information networks of our children’s brains, then Mr. Berners-Lee’s original program, “Enquire Within Upon Everything,” may be just the right prescription for parents. Parents should:

• Partner with their children in exploring the natural curiosities that every day brings,
• Seek out opportunities to create learning experiences for their children that involve all of the senses,
• Remember the greatest development rewards come from a child’s struggle to discover truth,
• Learn to ask the right open-ended questions, and
• Recognize and reward creative solutions and genuine effort.

Jeff Greer is owner of FasTracKids®, 6050 S. Yale in KingsPointe Village, an accelerated enrichment education program for children three to seven years old. Twelve exciting subjects are taught in weekly two-hour sessions. You can reach him by phone, 495-1444, email, jgreer@GiantLeapForKids.com or visit FasTracKids on the web, www.GiantLeapForKids.com.

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One of the more challenging situations a parent may face is knowing how best to prepare a child for college and a career. Compared to this rite of passage, scraped knees and other childhood and teenage mishaps seem small.

Students moving from high school to college often struggle with increased academic demands, difficult career choices, unfamiliar financial responsibilities, and homesickness—all at the same time. Meanwhile, parents struggle with counseling from a distance, increased financial obligations, and letting go. It is a challenging situation for all.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO EASE THE TRANSITION?

More and more students and their families are turning to concurrent enrollment as a solution. Concurrently enrolled students attend high school and college classes simultaneously. It's a workable option that makes perfect financial sense for those students who have already completed the majority of credits required for high school graduation. And, students can adjust to college's more rigorous academic environment and make sound decisions about their future careers while living at home.

Upon graduation from high school, students can transfer their coursework to the college or university of their choice. In fact, many high school graduates who have participated in concurrent enrollment enter college with one full semester of college credit already on their transcripts.

For families preparing to send their students to costly private Christian colleges or universities, general education courses completed as a concurrent student can translate into thousands of dollars saved on tuition and fees.

Tulsa Community College unveiled a program last spring that offers students and parents in the Greater Tulsa area a large financial incentive to participate in the concurrent enrollment program. TCC’s Attend College Early (ACE) Tuition Waiver Scholarship program offers high school students free tuition for a minimum of three and a maximum of six credit hours of college classes each semester. (A typical college class carries three credit hours.)

Students must meet the academic requirements set by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education for concurrent enrollment and must pay applicable fees. Up to 1,000 concurrent students will be awarded ACE scholarships at TCC each semester; scholar-
ships are awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Brittany Ahmed, a 2005 Owasso High School graduate, completed 15 hours of college coursework at TCC by the time she graduated from high school.

“Taking classes at TCC has helped me prepare for university work and given me a 15-credit starting advantage," she said. Brittany will enter Oklahoma State University in Stillwater this fall as a pre-med major with a full semester’s worth of coursework already on her college transcript.

Thanks to the ACE program, concurrent enrollment at TCC jumped from 419 students in Fall 2004 to 697 students in Spring 2005. Officials expect an even greater increase this fall.

Prior to implementation of the ACE scholarship program, high school students were not eligible for any kind of college financial aid, including scholarships. Following their graduation from high school, many of these high performance students are eligible for other academic scholarships and tuition waivers.

Criteria set by state regents for concurrent enrollment eligibility state that students must be juniors or seniors and eligible to graduate from high school in the spring of their senior year. Students who are home schooled or attending unaccredited high schools must be at least 16 as a junior and 17 as a senior. Students must have participated in the ACT or SAT and scored at the following levels: juniors must have an ACT composite score of 21 or SAT composite score of 980; seniors must have an ACT composite score of 19 or SAT composite score of 900. Juniors and seniors must score 19 (ACT) or 450 (SAT) subscore in the subject area in which they want to enroll.

Information about concurrent enrollment is available at www.okhighered.org (keyword: concurrent enrollment), www.tulsacc.edu (keyword: ACE), or through your local high school counselor’s office.

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The first day of school can conjure many emotions for students and parents. Children may dread the thought of the end of their summer vacation. Parents may savor the idea. But when your child leaves home, climbs onto the bus, and heads to school, are they safe? If the child is riding a school bus, they may be safer than when in the car with you. Passengers are nearly eight times safer on a school bus than they would be riding in any other passenger car, according to statistics from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

In fact, across the country in 1995, 12 occupants of bus-type vehicles were killed in crashes. That same year, 8,168 children between five and 20 years old were killed in other types of motor vehicles. Part of the impressive safety record, experts at the NHTSA said, is due to the stringent construction standards for school buses. Emergency exits are required, as are strengthened joints, and safer fuel tanks.

But a lot of the credit can also go to the drivers and personnel, said Rick Delp, Jenks Public Schools transportation director. “We’re very proud of our staff, and they do an excellent job,” Delp said.

Driver training at the Jenks school district is fairly intensive, he said. Bus drivers must get a commercial drivers license, which requires an 18-hour course. Drivers then train on the road, putting in an estimated 24 hours behind the wheel before they can drive school children.

Delp said Jenks has had one accident in the time he’s been transportation director. “We travel hundreds of miles daily,” he said. Most of the accidents involving school buses have been “unpreventable,” he said, usually the fault of another vehicle.

Still, some bus crashes have claimed lives. In March, a 16-year-old Ripley High School student and a Cushing man were killed in a Payne County pickup-bus wreck. Three other people were hospitalized in that accident.

Such accidents may make some parents wonder why seat belts are not mandatory on school buses. A National Academy of Sciences (NAS) report found there’s no compelling reason to require seat belts on school buses. School buses are already built to be “compartmentalized,” with reinforced, heavily-padded back seats. The seats are also closely spaced. The effect is to provide energy-absorbing areas for passengers, lessening chances of injuries in most crashes.

Of the crashes that have been fatal, the NAS found the occupants who were killed were in a direct line with the crash forces, meaning the injuries likely would have been fatal anyway.

“School buses are heavier, experience less crash forces, and distribute crash forces differently than do passenger cars and light trucks,” an NHTSA report stated. Smaller buses, weighing less than 10,000 pounds,
must be equipped with lap or lap/shoulder belts.

Many injuries or deaths in school bus-related crashes have been to pedestrians, rather than passengers.

In 1996, 35 children were killed and 5,000 injured in school bus-related accidents across the nation. Of those, 26 were pedestrians, according to the Tulsa Area Safe Kids Coalition.

“There’s an area called the ‘danger zone,’” Delp said, where vision for drivers is obstructed. The Jenks school buses are all flat-faced, allowing excellent forward vision for the driver, but blind spots do occur.

“We make sure all mirrors are set so the driver can see into the blind spots,” Delp added.

The Safe Kids Coalition recommends children cross at least 10 feet from the front of the bus and wait for parents on the same side of the street as the bus loading and unloading zone.
As the beginning of the school year approaches, we are all thinking about the various activities our children will be involved in during this school year. Throughout a child’s school career, Kindergarten to 12th grade, the total sum of summer break amounts to three years of vacation.

Studies have shown that students forget much of what they learned from the previous school year during that break. A successful school year, according to Varsha Desai, the Certified Kumon Instructor at Kumon Math & Reading Center of South Central Tulsa, can depend on how smooth a child transitions from vacation. Desai suggests the following tips for a successful route back-to-school.

Focus on the Positives. Talk to your children about their summer accomplishments and recognize the skills they used to be successful, such as perseverance, time-management, responsibility and independence, which are the same skills that will help them succeed in school.

Ask your child to write a short story including exciting highlights from their summer experiences. This will give your child practice writing before their first day back in the classroom, and it is also a nice way to reminisce about quality time spent together.

Give your child genuine and frequent praise. Praise your child’s progress, not perfection. Let them know that you believe in them, you think they are special and you have confidence in them. Let your child know you recognize and value their efforts not just their final accomplishments.

Set up a study area for your child. It should be quiet (no TV or stereo), well ventilated, free of distractions (no phones, pets), well lit and equipped with all necessary supplies for the child (pens, paper, markers, dictionary, thesaurus).

Establish a consistent homework routine at the very beginning. Schedule daily homework time in your house so it becomes a part of your family’s routine. This also helps children to see that homework is a priority in your home.

Make time to get acquainted with your child’s teachers and keep the communication open. Discuss goal setting with both your child and the teacher. This parent-teacher-child partnership will be very effective in the development of healthy homework habits, which will in turn help children have a successful school year.

In addition to these tips for transition, parents should also be sure to schedule their child’s activities to include adequate time for academics and extracurricular activities like sports, music, or dance.

Balancing academics with extracurricular activities is essential for the overall development of your child. Just as a child needs to practice daily over time to become adept at a sport or musical instrument, so too, does he or she need daily practice in order for academic skills to develop and flourish.

This academic year expect more from your child. Parental expectation is a powerful force in student success. Parents who feel happy with average get just that – average. Children will strive to achieve parents’ expectations. Setting and communicating your expectations to your child will actually encourage them to learn more.

You might consider adding a supplemental academic activity along with piano lessons, soccer, or gymnastics. Kumon Math & Reading Centers offer an after-school math and reading program that employs a unique learning method designed to help each child develop the skills needed to perform to their full potential. It is also the largest and most established program of its kind in the world.

Kumon can help children who may be struggling, as well as those who are seeking enrichment. The Kumon Method allows your child to advance steadily at a comfortable pace dictated only by his or her ability and initiative. The ultimate goal of The Kumon Method is for your child to begin studying above their school grade and to always have opportunities to reach their full academic potential. For this reason, your child’s individualized Kumon program is never compromised by the needs of a group or a prescribed teaching agenda.

The Kumon Method facilitates self-acquisition of the skills and study habits needed to improve academic performance. This empowers children to succeed on their own, giving them a sense of accomplishment that fosters further achievement.

Children may enroll in Kumon as early as preschool, and Kumon is attended by students throughout primary and secondary school. It is always preferable to start young and begin developing skills early to get the greatest cumulative benefit.

Since 1958 Kumon Math and Reading Centers has helped children strengthen math and reading skills, increase self-confidence and develop study skills that last a lifetime. Today, Kumon is currently helping more than three million children in 43 countries. For information about the Kumon Math & Reading Center of South Central Tulsa, call (918) 254 5437 (KIDS) or visit www.kumonSCtulsa.com.
For many students, going back to school is an exciting occasion – a chance to make new friends, embark on new extra-curricular activities and meet new academic challenges. For all students – including those who may have struggled through the last semester – it’s also a chance for a fresh start. As the most important “coaches” in our children’s race to achieve, there are three key steps we can take to prepare them for journey ahead.

STEP ONE: CREATE A LEARNING SPACE

Studying is hard work, even more so amid the myriad distractions of television, technology and other factors that may get your child off-track. Establishing a quiet, neat, well-lit space for studying will help your child focus on homework and significantly enhance their ability to retain material. Be sure to have materials such as paper, pencils and pens, a dictionary, a thesaurus and a calculator readily at hand. The seating area should be moderately comfortable – with a straight-backed chair that will keep your child relaxed but alert as opposed to soft upholstery, which can encourage drowsiness. It’s also a good idea to have enough space to read and write in the same area.

STEP TWO: ESTABLISH A LEARNING SCHEDULE

The beginning of the school year is also a good time to set parameters that balance study time and leisure time. Setting aside a designated period of time after school or in the evening used only for schoolwork is a strategy proven effective for countless students over the years. There are several factors that can influence the decision about which time is best. One of the most important relates to your child’s rising and falling energy levels. Some children, for example, may complete homework more successfully by beginning immediately after school, leaving the rest of the late afternoon and evening for other activities. Others may need time to “wind down” after being in school all day before they’re relaxed and focused enough to complete homework successfully.

Another factor is your child’s schedule of extracurricular and athletic activities. Keeping in mind the significant amount of study time most children need to make good grades, take a look at the other activities your child wants to fit into their day. Have a frank discussion to determine which activities are most important to your child, and see if you can arrive collaboratively at a decision about which should be pursued. Then see if you can also determine, together, the best time to be set aside for studying in the midst of these activities.

While it’s important to set and maintain a schedule throughout the year, most high-achieving students also plan ahead to ensure they have enough flexibility to fit in extra effort that may be needed during high-pressure periods, such as the approach of midterm and final exams.

STEP THREE: SET THE STAGE FOR EFFECTIVE PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

The beginning of the school year also marks a fresh opportunity for parents to establish the foundation for an ongoing, effective dialogue with teachers, guidance counselors and other school professionals. Begin by either going to the school to introduce yourself or by calling or writing a note. Speak forthrightly about your child’s particular strengths and interests and areas in which they may need extra help. Ask about milestones – such as major tests – for the coming year. Find out how you will be kept informed of your child’s progress. Are there other vehicles and mechanisms aside from report cards that can help you find out if your child is struggling so you can take positive steps for improvement?

The first parent-teacher meeting can also be a good opportunity to find out how you can best support your child’s school. Ask about meetings and activities of special parent groups such as the PTA. Find out if there are upcoming field trips or other extracurricular activities that require adult volunteers. Finally, make sure the teacher knows to get in touch with you. Communication will be much easier if the teacher knows your name, has your phone number and email address, and is aware of the best time to reach you during the day and evening. By establishing the right environment at home and a strong, positive connection to what’s happening at school, you can give your child a head start that will drive success all year long.

Dr. Huntington is co-founder of Huntington Learning Center, which has helped children achieve success in school for 28 years. Parents who want additional information, or who wish to discuss a specific problem, are encouraged to call Huntington Learning Center, 7116 S. Mingo Rd., Suite 105, Tulsa, OK 74133, at 918-252-1200.

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Story time with Grandpa John

BY TARA LYNN THOMPSON

Grandpa John comes back home everyday at noon. He eats a peanut butter and honey sandwich with whole milk. He gets on his computer and responds to his emails. Then he begins his writing.

When he's finished for the day, he listens to Joni Erickson Tada and sometimes dozes for a few minutes. He gets ready for dinner. Six months out of the year he trades Joni for baseball and then back to Joni again.

And then he goes to bed, gets ready for dinner. Six months out of the year he trades Joni for baseball and then back to Joni again.

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Grandpa John said. And at the end of the morning, he heads home to his Joni and writing. “It's a good exhaustion,” said the 77-year-old.

This isn’t Mr. Rogers. But it’s hard to tell. Grandpa John welcomed me into his home off Sheridan, stained glass he designed and created warming the light passing through the front door. We moved into a “room with a fan” and I sat down not realizing whose presence I was in. I was sitting with a living storyteller, a man of quick incites and honest smiles, a father to his very core, and a servant of God who gives everything he has but relentlessly attributes what he has received.

“Who wants to hear from someone who says, ‘I’m doing all this for them.’ That really is not the case... The children have blessed me. The church has blessed me.”
faster. “The children have blessed me. The church has blessed me.”

Retirement altered his life. He came home, to the home his wife Nelda had once inhabited, and said he was stricken with loneliness.

“As a senior, especially during your retirement years, you need that,” he said, speaking of the connection he has with the children. “You sit home alone and there is a big vacuum inside.”

He had spent lots of alone time with his own grandchildren throughout the years. One day, when he took his granddaughter Amy to Sunday School at Asbury, the opportunity came for him to stay. They needed help and he needed to be needed. Sunday school teachers were badly needed so he stayed. Following his granddaughter through classes until the

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second grade, he decided the little ones were his favorite. And since Amy called him Grandpa John, everyone started calling him Grandpa John. It fit. It still does.

“Told my grandkids a lot on my own. They would come and stay overnight. So I felt comfortable with the kids,” he said.

When retirement came at age 67, Grandpa John spent Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays working part-time in his lifelong career as an engineer. A few silent Tuesdays and Thursdays later, he had enough. He went to Asbury and asked if they needed any volunteers. The answer was “absolutely.”

It’s been ten years since his first day, his first experience on the playground when a child ran up to hug his leg. “Where have I seen such trust?” he asked, tears choking the words momentarily. Then the smile returned, unfazed and complete.

Grandpa John, when not working with the children, spends his time volunteering. In the summers, when preschool takes a vacation, he works with the Vacation Bible School in June, the Summer Reading Club in June and July, the Bible Buddies on Wednesday, and the Asbury print shop on Thursdays.

And when he isn’t with the children, he is writing. The writings have become their own legend and compiled in three books, When Grandpa John Was a Kid, Jesus Friend of Mine, and Old Testament Friends.

Writing has been part of his life. After marrying Nelda in 1954, the young couple began writing letters each week to their mothers. Now, Grandpa John’s mother has passed away, along with his wife. But he continues writing to his mother-in-law, who is 101 years old and still writes back every week.

His letters and his history evolved into his first book, When Grandpa John Was a Kid. The stories take you through life during the 30’s Great Depression in Oklahoma City. “Everyone was on the same economic level. You were poor but didn’t know it. You felt as wealthy as the next person,” he said.

His stories have been published in Tidings and later compiled into Old Testament Friends. He printed 5,000 books and gave them away in 10 days.

“People like the simplicity of the old testament characters that they know about but have had a hard time getting their mind around,” Grandpa John said. His stories help simplify those complex characters.

Any proceeds he has received have gone toward Restore Hope, an ecumenical charity to help needy families in West Tulsa.

He said the church and the children have given him a life. And his writing has given him an outlet. As he took me to his refrigerator to see pictures of him and the kids held by magnets, every shot had one thing in common – his warm welcome told by his smile, his spirit, and in his prose.

“I’m not a good writer. But as my daughter would say, ‘You’re a good storyteller.’ And that will suffice,” said Grandpa John, as he prepares another evening for some writing and a Joni serenade.

You can read his stories by visiting his website, www.jdavidsjewelry.com.
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Is it time to choose an area rug for your home or office? Are you perplexed by the wide range of price ranges and styles? We were too. So we sought the advice of the folks at Grigsby's new Rug Gallery. They helped us sort out the options and to understand the world of hand-made, hand-tufted, hand-knotted, and hand-hooked. We decided it was an experience worth sharing.

So what should you look for when you need an area rug? What are the differences that produce such a wide variety of prices? Here is a quick lesson in rug-buying to help you through the process.

First of all, you have to understand some lingo.

Hand-made—The method of weaving rugs by hand has been around for over 2,500 years, and the most expensive rugs are still made in the same way. It is a tough process. In fact, depending upon the size of the rug, it can often take an entire year to make. Manufactured primarily in Iran, India, Pakistan and the orient, these are truly magnificent rugs of kings and emperors. They can even be woven with wool, silk, and even gold threads. Hand-made rugs are a long-term investment and you should school yourself much more than what is possible in this article before choosing one. Buyer beware, but choose wisely and you can end up with a rug that will be passed down for generations to come.

Hand-tufted—Instead of hand-weaving the rug, hand-tufted rugs are made in a process by which artisans insert yarn into a backing with a hand-held, single needle tufting tool or “gun.” After the tufting is complete, a latex backing is applied to protect and anchor the stitches. The latex backing is then covered with canvas. Hand-tufted rugs have a sheared, or cut, pile surface as opposed to the hand-made looped surface.

Machine-made—Most of today’s rugs are now made on electronically powered machines. Though they may not provide the collection value of the hand-made rugs, new technology makes them a great value, providing vivid colors and a lifetime of durability.

WOOL VERSUS NYLON, VERSUS OLEFIN

Another difference in the price depends upon the materials used. Generally, wool rugs are the most expensive. They are known for their ability to withstand high wear and are resilient to spills. Silk is sometimes included to provide a more luxurious look and feel.

Nylon can be a great alternative choice. They accept dyes so well that they can often produce the widest color pallet, and when treated, they too can offer excellent stain resistance.

Olefin rugs are generally the least expensive. Although they provide less wear resistance, they can be a great short-term decorating choice.

SETTING THE RIGHT MOOD

Leslie Seelig, Grigsby’s Rug Consultant,
explained that once you determine the type of rug you want to invest in, it is time to pick the rug to perfectly match your room and personality. There are many styles from which to choose. You may choose from transitional rugs that can be used in most any setting, to the traditional oriental style rugs, to contemporary rugs that will bring an extra amount of excitement and color to your room.

Leslie suggests to her clients they bring in paint swatches, chair cushions, and even placemats so she can help tie the whole room together. She also helps determine the right size, being careful to provide the right atmosphere without covering too much of the client's beautiful hard-surface floor.

Grigsby's rug showroom, in their beautiful new location at 45th and Sheridan, provides a wide range of rug choices. There is something to fit most any room décor. From the traditional oriental rugs, to the fun new shag and even leather specialty rugs, it is a great place to find the solution to any decorating dilemma.

Study a little, play around with the choices of materials, styles and colors, and then go have some fun. Once you understand a little terminology, choosing a rug doesn’t have to be tough job.

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Got a kid planning their first year at college? Then prepare to watch them as they take their first stab at decorating their “own” place. It is a fun process as long as you remember to only quietly nudge while keeping your distance.

If it has been a while since you have seen a dorm room, not much has changed. While some schools have now gone to more of a “suite” design with six or eight kids to a common bathroom, it still is pretty much a drab box screaming out for a little decorating. But walk cautiously; there is wisdom in letting the kids do it themselves.

For the guys, the simpler, the better. Over-decorating or decorating at all, is a sure way to be labeled as “uncool.” So, don’t be alarmed if your son doesn’t act too interested in taking that decorating trip to Wal-Mart anyway and prod them on with a few suggestions. They may surprise both of us.

However, for the girls, the planning is often much more involved. They will spend hours talking with their future roommate(s) to coordinate the right colors and plan. From their drapes and bedding, to their toothbrush and shower caddy, everything has to work together.

**TEN SUGGESTIONS FOR DORM FIRST-TIMERS:**

1. **Check the rules ahead of time.** Find out the bed dimensions (often longer than standard), whether they have stackable bunk beds available, what electrical items are allowed and what you can put on the walls.

2. **Divide and conquer.** Coordinate with your roommate to split up who will bring what. “I will bring the computer if you bring the mini-refrigerator.” Agree on any color schemes, themes, and bedding styles.
3 Space is biggest problem. Stackable storage units and effective planning are the solution. Plan your trips home to exchange seasonable clothing. Use such things as plastic storage units and hanging shoetrees to make every inch count. Check with your dorm to see if they have bunk beds available and create a living space underneath.

4 Take advantage of the blank wall space. Share your personality with pictures, scriptures, mirrors and decorative bulletin boards. (Note to parents: Every post card and note you send will probably end up on the wall. They really do love you. Keep their mailbox full.)

5 Check ahead to see about curtains or blinds. Sleeping comes at odd hours in college and a $20 blind can make all the difference in catching a mid-afternoon nap.

6 Food was stated as the biggest necessity by the kids we interviewed. Find out what is allowed but most say they couldn't make it without a mini-refrigerator, microwave, and sandwich grill (illegal in most dorms, but thought to be necessary contraband to many).

7 Other necessity items included a computer (preferably a lap top), an iPod with a really good set of headphones, a clip-on light for studying when your roommate is asleep, a 4-cup coffee pot (You won't be able to afford Starbucks anymore), a radio with a very loud alarm clock, a good oscillating fan, an iron and small ironing board, a TV DVD combo with the latest Playstation games, a phone, and some sort of couch, over-sized pillow or something to sit around on.

8 A comfortable bed is also a must. A good mattress pad, a couple sets of quality sheets, and a body pillow or two will help you sleep like a baby even on the most homesick nights.

9 Don't forget some good lighting. The fastest way to make that dull dorm room more "homey," is to turn off the ultra-violet lights and use your own lamps. Clip-on study lights are also a good idea, allowing your roommate to sleep while you "cram" for tomorrow's final. And a flashlight may come in handy if the lights go out some night.

10 But all in all, use your imagination. A little creativity can adapt the space to your own personality and make "moving out" the adventure you always dreamed it would be.

And some words of wisdom from your friends at Community Spirit...

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They love milk. This I've discovered. It's fat free and Vitamin D fortified, they don't care. And fruit juice? They go crazy. My houseguests LOVE anything sweet. And usually I'd be more than happy to oblige. I was raised by a truly southern woman who believed in hospitality or death. You fed your guests. You got them extra pillows and blankets. You gave them your toothbrush, if that's what they wanted. Just don't ask for that one back. You made their stay unforgettable.

Problem is, I want them to leave. Vamoose. Scram. Don't let the door hit you on the way out. Ants have invaded my kitchen. They've scared my petunia window plant to near dehydration and insulted my illusion of nature and man harmony. I want them gone.

They've attacked lemon seeds left on the counter, my honey bottle hidden in the cabinet, and have even broken the water tight seal of my dishwasher. I kill them, I send them swirling down the sink, and their extended family barges through the door. They take down their antennas, prop up their six feet, and ask, “What's for dinner?”

Drowning them with Windex, Fantastick, and Mr. Clean All-Purpose cleaner does not remedy the problem. Nor does shouting, stomping your foot, shooting them dirty looks, or calling their mother names.

After too many unfair fights where it was one very frustrated, frizzy-headed girl against a legion of them, I called Larry Tate, Guarantee Exterminating, to figure out how to evict them. And if so, would they leave quietly or was it going to get messy?

“Ants are the worst pests in the U.S. right now,” he said. “Tell me about it. I had heard of a few home remedies—excluding killing each one with a paper towel and malicious grin—and asked Larry if...
any of them really worked.
Leaving a bowl of sugar outside? “Some people try it and it works. Others do and it doesn't do them a bit of good.”
Using Clorox bleach around the sink? “You run the risk of whiting out your countertop.”
Horse apples hung around the house? “They are hard to find and don’t always work.” What exactly is a horse apple anyway?
Okay, everything sounded iffy. What does work? I’d hop on one foot while patting my head and rubbing my belly if I thought it’d freak them out enough to flee. They were pushing me out of my kitchen. Soon I’d be cooking meals on a propane tank in my backyard and showering with my garden hose.
“When it gets down to using the chemicals that are available, it’s trial and error,” Larry said. Some like sweet bait, some like protein. How nice for them. Should I marinate the bait in pineapple juice and grill it too? For an insect that crawled around on other people’s garbage, they were being persnickety.
And then there was the “type” of ant I had. I thought ants were just ants. Not so. There are Fire Ants (warm-natured little guys with a flare for stinging), Acrobat Ants (I’d like to see that), Pharaoh Ants (totalitarians), Ghost Ants (picture Patrick Swayze with antennas), and Crazy Ants (not even going to comment on that one). In Oklahoma, the most prevalent were Carpenter Ants, Pavement Ants, and Argentine Ants (made me think of a musical by Madonna, but I think they are talking color not country).
“If you can slow them down on the outside, you’ll have less problems inside,” Larry said.
Here’s how you trip up their six legs. First, mow the grass very short around the edge of your house. Give it a buzz cut. In fact, Larry even recommends using Roundup Weed Killer and eliminating the grass all together. Annihilate it.
Then sprinkle insecticide granules around the house and water them. It should have no affect on your pets, he said. Also, applying liquid spray around your doors, windows and the foundation of the house helps. They can never cross the threshold of your home if they can’t make it past the insecticide outside. It sounded ruthless. I liked it.
For inside, you can buy bait – sweet or protein. “You don’t have any idea what baits they’ll go after.” Again with the finicky diet. Some products have both baits available. However, ants may decide to ignore the bait entirely.
There are liquid sprays specifically for inside the house, as well as insecticide sprays with straws attached to reach the cracks and crevices.
After 34 years in the business, Larry said in his experience it takes a while to kill off the ants entirely and keep them gone. His usual first time visit and service usually costs under $100. Then monthly services to keep the pests at bay cost approximately $30. However, a professional can adapt the treatment until finding a chemical that rids your home of the unwanted visitors without searching for horse apples.
You can reach Larry Tate at Guarantee Exterminating Company, 665-2129.
For me, it’s time to get vicious. Either they start cleaning the house, making dinner, and folding laundry, or they leave.
Some of the best female golfers in the world are on their way to Tulsa. The LPGA (Ladies Professional Golf Association) Tour comes to Broken Arrow’s Cedar Ridge Country Club once again, offering our community a week of wholesome entertainment.

Even if you are not a golfer, the LPGA event offers you and your family a great time. Set on the beautiful green, rolling Cedar Ridge course, the tournament’s competitive excitement matches any professional sport. Only in this game, you and your family have the opportunity to get face-to-face with the players, close enough to catch the emotion of every chip shot and long putt. Not only will your family enjoy the beauty of the course, your kids will be exposed to a sport where etiquette is alive and well.

Susan Meeker of Octagon Sports Management, the tournament manager, explained that this John Q. Hammons Hotel Classic draws many of the best golfers in the country. A field of 144 professional women golfers are expected to compete for $1 Million dollars in prize money. In addition, two exemption invitations have been extended to amateur golfers, hand-chosen because of their ability and popularity. This year’s exemption players will be Duke’s Liz Janangelo and Oklahoma State University’s Annie Young. Both will bring along a crowd of fans to cheer them on.

“This tournament is great for Tulsa,” said local golf pro and volunteer general chairman Debbie Majors. “Cedar Ridge is the second longest course on the LPGA Tour. It is a favorite venue, one that makes the better players rise to the top.”

In addition to being a great show, the tournament is great for our community as well. “The pros love to come to Tulsa because of the wonderful hospitality they receive here and area economists estimate that the tournament brings in over $8 Million dollars to the local economy. And, it is an opportunity for the whole community to get involved,” Debbie said. “To run the tournament, we need over 600 volunteers, providing everything from transportation and marshaling, to welcoming the players. It really is a team effort.”

The tournament welcomes a list of respected sponsors which include John Q. Hammons Industries, Renaissance Tulsa Hotel & Convention Center, Oklahoma Ford Dealers, SEM Group LP, Tulsa World, American Airlines, Pepsi and Michelob Ultra. In addition, the tournament provides funding to its adopted charity, The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

Tickets for the John Q. Hammons Hotel Classic can be purchased on-line at www.johnqhammonshotelclassic.com or by calling toll-free 1-877-583-9925. Daily tickets (good-any-one-day, Tuesday thru Sunday) are available for $20 and weekly badges (good all week) cost $50. Continuing with the tradition of welcoming families, children ages 15-and-under are admitted free all week with a ticketed adult. On behalf of Mr. Hammons and the Renaissance Tulsa Hotel and Convention Center, the Tournament will again offer Monday as a free day to the public.
**Is having insurance a lack of faith?**

**RANDY C. COWELL, M.S., LUTCF, CFP, CSA**

*REPRINTED FROM JANUARY, 2003*

**Recently, I was working** with a couple on their retirement planning. We were discussing their long-term care policy when she stopped me and asked, “Does purchasing insurance demonstrate a lack of faith?” Hopefully, this article will help anyone who has pondered the issue of faith versus product.

Before we can fully appreciate what insurance can do to protect a family from the unforeseen and unexpected, let’s hear what Mr. Webster says about insurance: “An insuring or being insured against loss by fire, accident, death, etc.” Further study of the verb is even more revealing... “to make safe; protect.” I believe the operative word here is protect. Today we use insurance in a variety of ways. We protect our home and autos with it, our health and incomes are insured, and the ultimate insurance is on our very lives. These represent only a few of the types of coverages we can purchase. The question to be asked is, “Why should I pay premiums to insure any of the above? Will God not take care of me?”

The answer is in the Scriptures. Although they do not mention insurance specifically, many give us directions on taking care of our families now as well as into the future. 1st Timothy 5:8 speaks to the immediacy of need and the responsibility of the head of the household when it says, “If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”

What financial product can take care of the needs of a family facing the uncertainty of a house fire better than homeowners insurance? When a devastating illness requires costly life-saving medical procedures, what can come to the rescue better than a major—medical health insurance plan? We purchase liability coverage to protect our families from the losses associated with a frivolous lawsuit. It may not have any legal merit, and we may not be at fault, but still we must defend ourselves.

In Deuteronomy 22:8, Moses instructed those building a new home to, “put a guardrail around the edge of the flat rooftop to prevent anyone from falling off and bringing guilt both to the house and the owner.” (TLB) The Word is clear. We are to prepare for life’s challenges the best we can, as we trust in the Lord.

**PAPER PROTECTION**

Yes, we no longer have castles of stone and mortar with moats for defense. We now have contracts called insurance. But make no mistake, the fact that we do not live in fortresses with high walls for protection does not mean we are not under attack. This fact should not give us an excuse to pass the buck to God. In our preparation to defend ourselves, we will make ready our mighty fortresses. We must prepare, plan and seek wise counsel.

Recently, I had an appointment with a young widowed woman. With two boys to raise, more expenses than income, to say our planning was difficult would be an understatement. The fact that the husband had very little life insurance in place at the time of his death made it more so. In 2nd Kings chapter four, there is a beautiful story of a young woman who had also lost her husband. Unable to pay her debts, the creditor was about to take her two sons to become his slaves. The only commodity of value was a small amount of oil. The prophet Elisha instructed her to gather up as many containers as possible. She and her sons did as instructed, and they started pouring the oil into the containers. She poured and poured, and through the miracle of multiplication, they filled all the containers. Once completely out of things to hold oil, Elisha instructed her to “go sell the oil and pay your debts, and you and your sons can live on the rest.”

A miracle occurred as the oil was multiplied, and oh, what a miracle. The sons were saved from a life of bondage, and money was provided for. But what do we know about the husband? Was he some non-believer that thoughtlessly left his family’s well-being to chance? No, he was the son of a prophet who, due to lack of preparation, unwittingly subjected his family to an uncertain future.

**MIRACLES STILL HAPPEN**

I believe that similar miracles occur every day! These miracles come in the form of checks issued by insurance companies to families teetering on the precipice of financial ruin. You see, there is no other financial product that can be leveraged into literally hundreds of thousands of dollars just at the precise moment of need like insurance. Without these plans, the future of your family could be in jeopardy, financially burdened and potentially dependent upon welfare. In 2nd Corinthians 5:9, Paul writes “So our aim is to please Him always in everything we do, whether we are here in this body or away from this body in heaven.”

**THE LITMUS TEST**

I love receiving cards. This week, I received a beautiful thank-you card from a client. In it, she thanked me for assisting her and her husband with their financial planning. What spoke to my heart and confirmed that our planning was right on the mark was this comment she made, “I have more peace about our future situation than I did before coming to you.” The litmus test for any financial or insurance planning decision is whether or not it brings you peace. The only problem with insurance occurs when a person over-relies on it to the point of self-sufficiency. Place your faith and trust in God. Remember, it’s hard to be a light unto the world when our wicks have been extinguished due to lack of planning.

Randy C. Cowell is a columnist, author, and president of ACT Financial Services, Inc. in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He recently published his first book, God Good-Debt Bad, and welcomes your thoughts and prayers. He can be reached at 918-664-0081 or by e-mail at rcowell@htk.com. Randy C. Cowell is a Registered Representative of and Securities and Advisory services offered through Hornor, Townsend & Kent, Inc. Member of NASD/SIPC. HTK does not offer tax, legal and credit service advice. The views expressed are not necessarily those of HTK. ACT Financial Services, Inc. is not affiliated with HTK.
Avoid Pain, Pursue Pleasure?

N. Dane Tyner

Experts in human behavior tell us the primary motivations behind our behaviors are dual: avoid pain and pursue pleasure. That rule needs exceptions. Following that rule, without exception, is sometimes the cause of our problems and often the reason we do not solve our problems.

Think for a moment. Were these the primary motivations of Jesus? Hardly. Be honest for a moment. Are these your primary motivations? To what degree do these primary motivations trump out the leading of God’s Spirit and the dictates of wisdom in your life? These are serious issues of the heart, worthy of our serious attention.

Many of our societal problems are rooted in this issue. Divorce rates are high because what we embraced in our pursuit of pleasure ceased to provide that and instead became a source of pain. The stress of trying to keep up with the demands of life in our day, the pain of injustice in our world, and the agony of broken relationships, drive many of us to pursue the pleasure alcohol, other drugs, and other addictive experiences provide us — for a season. Our educational system is failing, in part, because much learning is unpleasant and very poor competition for all the pleasurable activities that surround us.

To solve these and similar problems we must prepare ourselves not to follow that deeply ingrained rule. We must choose to postpone pleasure and embrace what is unpleasant, if not painful. Let me be clear: I’m not advocating pain for pain’s sake, nor am I castigating your constitutional right to the pursuit of happiness.

Scripture declares, “There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven” (Ecc 3:1). Following that declaration, several specific activities are listed; in that list is “a time to weep” and “a time to mourn.” Clearly, God intends we face the pain that would cause us to weep, the loss that would cause us to mourn. His goal isn’t that we just feel bad. He is most interested in our being honest with ourselves. This is His path through our bad experiences.

Honesty is sometimes painful. In my work with people, I often acquaint them with the concept of “therapeutic pain,” pain that has a healing purpose. Pain accompanies some physical exercise that is advisable. I experienced this pain when a doctor set my broken arm after two different breaks eight years apart. (I assure everyone I felt more pain when he set the bones than when I broke them.) Therapeutic pain is experienced weekly in my office as people share life experiences laden with tremendous shame and/or pain. These are examples of unpleasant experiences we are wise to embrace and foolish to avoid. To avoid them is to avoid health.

My work undoubtedly inclines me to think of these motivational issues in therapeutic ways. But the choice we need to make, in contradiction to that basic rule of human motivation, applies in many ways. For instance, I’ve known gifted men in the ministry who would do well to study English grammar. I imagine they have not done so because that study is difficult and unpleasant, whereas studying theology is easy and exciting.

What good thing have you resisted doing because it was difficult or unpleasant? What painful experiences have you been consistently running from? Can you hear a small voice calling you to an unpleasant place you have too long avoided? When that small voice is God’s voice, going there is for our ultimate good. Let’s go.

Dane Tyner is founder and director of Home Improvement Ministry. H.I.M. is a Christian counseling ministry with offices in the 126 Center at 126th & S. Memorial. Contact the ministry at 918.369.4111. Visit the ministry website at www.forhim.org.
Four hurdles to starting a business

Jim Stovall

When it comes to career, one of the greatest dreams of many people is to own their own business. This paints mental pictures of being the captain of one’s own ship and being in control of one’s destiny. Most all people who are considered a world class success in business own or at least run their own operation. For the right person, there is nothing better than owning your own business. For the wrong person, there is nothing worse than owning your own business. For the right people, starting or running a company becomes liberating, creatively stimulating, and energizing. For the wrong people, it becomes pressure-filled, confining, and paralyzing.

There are a number of hurdles that anyone should consider before starting or running their own business. These hurdles build upon one another. You don’t go to the second hurdle until you have successfully navigated the first one; and unless you get over all the hurdles, you should not even consider being in business for yourself. Once you’re over the last hurdle, it doesn’t mean you win the race, it means you qualify to enter the starting blocks to begin the competition of owning and running your own business.

Always remember, there is nothing wrong with not being a business owner, leader, or entrepreneur. There are scores of people who function valuably and professionally within someone else’s corporate structure. This does not make them bad people. On the contrary, it makes them very good people at fitting into a vibrant team.

The following hurdles should each be successfully cleared before you move on toward the possibility of even considering starting or running your own business.

**HURDLE 1:** Honestly assess your temperament to determine whether or not you are suited to be an entrepreneur or a business owner. Are you a leader? Do you enjoy blazing your own trail, or would you prefer to follow someone else’s lead or a clearly delineated job description and career path? Ask friends, co-workers, and family members who will be honest with you to assess your temperament as well. Often, those around us see us more clearly than we can see our own strengths and weaknesses.

**HURDLE 2:** Determine whether or not you have a unique talent, ability, or opportunity. You have heard it said that if you build a better mousetrap, people will beat a path to your door. Obviously, it would be best to be the very first person to create a mousetrap. If not, you must determine if your mousetrap is really better and has either a cost or a quality competitive advantage compared to those currently on the market. You must also assess whether or not there are a sufficient number of mice—or in this case, potential customers—in your proposed marketplace. This area cannot be overestimated. Entrepreneurs fail every day because they are not honest with themselves. They feel they have a unique talent, product, or marketplace no one else has.

**HURDLE 3:** Do you have enough capital? Most entrepreneurs will tell you the term “enough” capital does not exist. There is more truth than one might imagine in that statement. When you are in business for yourself, everything takes longer, costs more, and is more difficult than you imagined. This is not negative thinking. It is the real life experience of most business owners. Too many “would be” entrepreneurs base all projections on the proverbial best case scenario. You would be much better off to base your projections on the worst case scenario and even cut it in half. If you can survive in that environment, you’ve got an excellent chance of making it. The only cardinal sin in business planning is to run out of money. Money buys you time, second chances, and many lessons. With money, you’re like a pilot flying 40,000 feet above the earth. Any problems can be dealt with at this altitude. You have a lot of time to make corrections, contingency plans, and pursue alternatives. Without enough capital, you are like that same pilot flying 100 feet above the ground. You can fly successfully if everything goes perfectly; but if there’s one mechanical error, fuel problem, or wind sheet, you are destined to crash and burn.

**HURDLE 4:** Do you have a passion for your new business? This may be the most critical hurdle of all. It’s got to be more than a good idea or an attractive business. You’ve got to be willing to live, eat, and breathe your new venture because, in reality, you will probably be forced to. Becoming an entrepreneur means you are willing to do things most people are not willing to do. This is only possible when you have an unbelievable passion to pursue your dream of owning your own business.

If you have gotten over these four hurdles, you may be ready to approach the starting line. If you are, indeed, going to launch into your own business, above all remember the best advice I ever heard about being in business for myself: Make sure you’re having fun. You got into this because you thought you would enjoy it. If you don’t enjoy being in business for yourself, you would be far better off having a job working for someone else.

On your mark. Get set. Go!

**Today’s the day!**

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OKC, Tulsa rallies planned to “Celebrate Life”

The Oklahoma Pro-Life Media Coalition (OPLMC) is inviting Oklahomans to attend one or two “Celebration Rallies” in August to celebrate the passage of substantive pro-life legislation in the recently concluded 2005 session of the Oklahoma State Legislature.

“It’s time to have a party!” said Mike Jestes, executive director of the Oklahoma Family Policy Council and chief spokesperson for the Oklahoma Pro-Life Media Coalition. “After years of diligent effort by concerned Oklahomans to enact common-sense pro-life reforms, the Oklahoma Legislature and Gov. Brad Henry finally acted this year to put those important reforms in place. So, it’s appropriate to celebrate this great victory.”

The pro-life legislation signed into law was H.B. 1686, authored by Rep. Rebecca Hamilton, D-Oklahoma City, and co-authored by a large number of legislators of both political parties. The final omnibus pro-life legislation included informed consent and parental notification language that had been a part of earlier bills authored by Rep. Kevin Calvey, R-Del City, and Sen. Glenn Coffee, R-Oklahoma City, among others.

Also winning legislative and gubernatorial support was language included in H.B. 1686 that was patterned after the federal Laci and Connor’s law, named for the late California woman, Laci Petersen, and her unborn infant son. This bill had been introduced in 2005 by Rep. Pam Peterson, R-Tulsa, eventually gaining broader support through H.B. 1686’s passage.

“We’re calling on Oklahomans to come celebrate these great victories for human life in Oklahoma,” said Paul Sublett, general manager of KQCV Radio and a founding member of OPLMC. “We’re planning two celebrations in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, to recognize our elected officials for their work and to honor the growing culture of life across the Sooner State. We’re hoping many Oklahomans will bring their families and join us for an afternoon of fun,” Sublett added.

Live music, drinks and snacks will be provided to attendees at both celebrations, which are:

OKLAHOMA CITY
Sun., Aug. 7, 2005
2 p.m. to 5 p.m.
State Capitol Park
18th & Lincoln Blvd.

TULSA
Sun., Aug. 14, 2005
2 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Memorial Bible Church
8720 E. 61st Street (between Memorial & Mingo)

Founded in 2003, the Oklahoma Pro-Life Media Coalition reaches 81.9 percent of Oklahomans through over two-dozen media partners. In addition to the rallies, the OPLMC has sponsored a legislative luncheon, the “I’m for Life” media campaign, and a variety of other projects.

For more information, call the OPLMC at (405) 787-7744.

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Beth knew something was wrong, yet her hometown doctor insisted it was nothing. Only by demanding a second opinion did Beth discover she had thyroid cancer. Her thyroid was removed but soon after, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. Beth was told she didn’t have long to live, and she felt things were spinning out of control.

Then her friend came across the website for Cancer Treatment Centers of America (CTCA). After she talked to doctors at CTCA, Beth “fired” her hometown doctor. As soon as she arrived at CTCA, Beth noticed something very different: the doctors listened to her.

With her integrated team of physicians, Beth explored her options, including an innovative form of internal beam radiation. Beth decided on a treatment plan with a full array of options that included chemotherapy, nutrition, radiation and mind-body medicine.

Beth’s determination to survive and search for CTCA helped to give her a second chance at life.

As inspirational as Beth’s story is, there are others. Many patients have discovered that hope and compassion live at CTCA.

If you or someone you know is suffering from cancer, we urge you to call one of our Oncology Information Specialists today. They are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to discuss the treatment options available at CTCA.

Please call for free information today.

1-800-227-3448, or visit cancercenter.com

No case is typical. You should not expect to experience these results.