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Local organization aiming to help homeless population this winter

Submitted by Anne Marck

During the coldest months of the year, the homeless population of Utah struggles to survive. The most recent Point in Time count in Utah, which is conducted by End Utah Homelessness, found that a statewide one-night count identified 3,687 homeless in January 2023. This number has been steadily rising along with the number of Utahns experiencing homelessness for the first time, which as of 2022, was 8,637.

The team members of Saints Peter & Paul Orthodox Church Soup Kitchen have seen that struggle to

survive up close. They've been serving hot meals to the homeless once a month since November 2022. After witnessing the suffering of people living on the streets, they decided it was time to take their mobile soup kitchen initiative to the next level.

Through the months of December, January, and February, the mobile Soup Kitchen, in collaboration with Supporting Trauma Survivors, LLC, is collecting and distributing warm clothing to the homeless.

They are asking for gently used, clean coats, hats, scarves, gloves,

socks, blankets, and sleeping bags for adults. Donations of non-perishable, individually pre-packaged food items such as granola bars, fruit leather, jerky, nuts, etc., which will be distributed along with the clothing, are also appreciated. Monetary donations are also an option.

If you want to help save lives this winter, please consider donating used or new items, or making a monetary donation to the mobile soup kitchen.

To donate clothing, put your items in a securely tied garbage bag and drop them off on the porch at one of

the collection locations below:

Anne Marck, 1029 S 730 W, Payson, UT 84651

Anne Marie Echols, 94 W 860 N, Santaquin, UT 84655

To make a monetary donation visit: links.servedaily.com/clothing-drive

For questions or concerns about the clothing drive, contact Anne Marck, the coordinator of this project, by calling or texting 385-299-8681 or email annemarck@gmail.com.

RSVP AmeriCorps Seniors: Empowering Seniors to Make a Lasting Impact in Communities

Submitted by Stephanie Benson

In the heart of Utah County, a group of local heroes quietly but steadfastly shapes our community for the better. More than 250 senior volunteers donated more than 15,800 hours last year as RSVP volunteers. The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), an AmeriCorps Seniors initiative launched over five decades ago, empowers individuals aged 55 and older to make an enduring impact in their neighborhoods.

"RSVP volunteers are the heartbeat of our communities, their dedication and passion are truly unmatched," Katie Chase, RSVP Volunteer Coordinator with MAG Aging & Family Services, said. "Their commitment to service inspires communities and brings about tangible change that ripples through our neighborhoods."

For years, MAG's RSVP, operating under the Corporation for National and Community Service, has be-

come a powerhouse of goodwill. Its volunteers engage in a multitude of initiatives tailored to address the specific needs and challenges faced by our community.

"One of the most remarkable aspects of RSVP is the sheer diversity of talents and passions our volunteers bring," Chase said. "Their willingness to lend a hand wherever it's needed is what truly makes our program so impactful."

Chase often finds volunteers among the recently retired who wish to leverage their years of expertise to do more with their golden years.

"RSVP is like a service club," Chase said. "In addition to connecting volunteers with meaningful opportunities, they can use their skills to lighten the load of social service and nonprofit organizations."

RSVP partners with local social services and nonprofit organizations

to place volunteers based on skills, interests and time availability. The contributions of RSVP volunteers significantly alleviate pressure on those organizations. By generously offering their time and skills, they amplify the capabilities of these entities, enabling them to serve communities more comprehensively.

"A great example of a program that benefits from this partnership is Friendly Callers," Chase said. "Our local 'Friendly Callers' do so much to help seniors who would otherwise feel very alone. Unfortunately, we have a lengthy waiting list for seniors in need. We can definitely use more volunteers."

Friendly Callers addresses companionship and isolation by matching seniors with a volunteer for one-on-one weekly phone conversations

Other RSVP volunteer opportunities include, but are not limited to, the following focus areas:

Tutoring & literacy for elementary age children

Companionship (Friendly Callers, hospice visits)

Food security (Meals on Wheels)

Senior Transportation

Hospitals & Museums

"From mentoring students in elementary schools to delivering meals to homebound seniors, volunteers can find myriad opportunities to give back to their communities in retirement," Chase said. "Age is not a barrier to creating a lasting and meaningful impact in our community."

To join RSVP, interested volunteers must be at least 55 years old, able to volunteer for at least one hour per week, and enjoy working with others to better our community. Call 801-229-3820 or visit magutah.org/rsvp to sign up.



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Springville Kiwanis Club Annual Food Drive & Sub-for-Santa Project Needs You

Submitted by By Springville Kiwanis Club

The Springville Kiwanis Club is working with community and business leaders to prepare for the annual Food Drive/Sub-4-Santa Project on December 9, 2023, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the old Springville gym behind the Museum at 26 E. 400 S., Springville.

With the support and generosity of Springville residents for over 30 years, the Springville Kiwanis Club has provided aid to citizens in need through the Food Drive/Sub-4-Santa project held each December. There is a great need in the community, and many helping hands are required to make this project successful and reach as many families in need as possible.

Before the day of the food drive, Springville churches distribute over 10,000 plastic food bags. These bags have been donated by Reams Springville Market, and labeled with labels printed and presented by Cop-

ies Plus. Springville High School Key Club and students, Kiwanis members, and volunteers placed these labels on each bag in preparation for delivery.

Last year, church groups retrieved thousands of filled food bags from Springville homes and brought them to the old Springville High School gym, where over 280 volunteers helped organize and fill over 500 food boxes; the Spanish Fork Deseret Meat Welfare Processing Facility donated empty boxes. Filled boxes were distributed to Springville families in need and Landmark High School, with the remaining food donated to the Springville Kiwanis Food Pantry located at the old Grant School.

The boxes distributed to families also included a \$40 gift card contributed by the Kiwanis Club raised through the Scone Booth during the Springville Art City

Days, along with a coupon for a free book donated by the Friends of the Springville Library. A limited number of "Youth Sports Vouchers" were presented by the Springville Kiwanis Club and Springville Recreation and handed out to families. In total, 45,000 pounds of food were collected and donated, \$12,400 in gift cards were distributed, \$1,800 in youth sports vouchers were circulated, \$400 was donated to purchase books, and hundreds of individuals gave thousands of hours to the project.

On the day of the Drive, Key Club members also filled 150 stockings donated by the Springville-Mapleton Chamber of Commerce with candy canes donated by My Lemonade Stand Company of Mapleton. These Christmas stockings were given to children of families utilizing the Kiwanis Food Pantry.

This project continues to grow

as the needs of our community increase and with the growth of charitable contributions and volunteers. This is a remarkable project to be a part of, with so many people coming together each year to make this project possible.

To register to assist the Kiwanis Club, go to Just Serve, <https://www.justserve.org/projects>, and search "Springville Kiwanis Food Drive and Sub for Santa" to sign up for this incredible project.

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ServeDaily.com/
Calendar

Utah Valley Model A Club serves as a place to celebrate classics and comradery

By Ariel Higgs

If you drove past the Engineering building in Provo on the morning of Nov. 4, you would have been greeted by a rather odd sight: vehicles from another time filling the parking lot.

While your first thought might have been that you accidentally stumbled upon a meeting of time travelers, the truth is quite different. This organized array of automobiles was a meeting of the Utah Valley Model A club.

These men and women are true car enthusiasts of one of the true classic triumphs of American engineering and manufacturing. The Ford Model A was the Ford Motor Company's second major success that replaced its predecessor the Model T that had been produced for nearly 20 years before that. The Model A is a priceless piece of American ingenuity and machinery that is beloved by many generations. The Utah Valley Model A club brings together classic car lovers from Lehi to Manti and everywhere in between, and is hoping to grow as it teaches others about these fantastic cars.

Why is the Model A so significant to this group? For many of these classic car gurus, it came down to the most basic of reasons: reliability, nostalgia, and parts. For many of the men and women in the Model A club, the classic car was one of the first cars they remember experiencing. It's the one their fathers worked on during the weekend or the one their grandmothers would drive

to pick up groceries in. For one club member, taking a drive in a Model A was the first date he ever took the woman he now calls his wife.

This classic car represents the past while also being practical enough to own in the present with original and even better made replication parts easily available. Between being good looking, practical, and invoking old world charm at a glance, it's no wonder why this car has such a powerful following.

The Utah Valley Model A club was started 11 years ago by Greg and Robert Mack along with their father. The founding of the club happened by accident, when they ran into trouble with their beloved Model A and reached out for help. While looking for other Model A owners to help them troubleshoot, it was suggested that they put together a chapter for the national Model A Club. Though they didn't think they'd be able to find enough members for such an endeavor, they began to spread the word. To their surprise, they had enough members to start up a local chapter. The rest, as they say, is history.

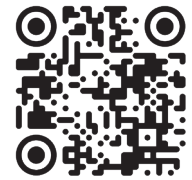
The Model A Club has many benefits for its members and the community, most notably, being able to meet with others who share their passion for Model A cars and socialize in monthly gatherings. These gatherings include everything from visiting the Engineering Department at BYU, to drives to



the Dream Mine in Salem. The members will also arrange garage days where they work on their cars together sharing expertise and learning tips and tricks from other auto enthusiasts. Their most exciting activities include driving tours where they drive their classic cars across the country making stops to historical and fun local sights on their way to their destinations.

If you're a lover of beautiful cars, road trips, or just enjoy spending time with great people, check out the Utah Valley Model A Club. These men and women are kind, knowledgeable, and incredibly welcoming. They love to learn and share what they know with the community

including the youth as often as they can, and are wonderful wells of knowledge about cars and what life has to offer. For more information, check out their website at <http://utahvalleymodelaclub.org/>.



See more Model A Club photos courtesy of club members on page 7.



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Springville Museum of Art Showcases Diverse Local Talent in Spiritual & Religious Art Exhibition

Submitted by Shannon Acor

The Springville Museum of Art is thrilled to announce the 37th Annual Spiritual & Religious Art of Utah exhibition, on display until Jan. 10, 2024. This exhibition showcases over 200 works of art created by local artists and celebrates the diversity of spiritual and religious beliefs within our community. These thought-provoking pieces were selected through a competitive jury process and reflect a diverse range of perspectives and artistic mediums.

The artists and artwork in this exhibition do not shy away from the deep questions of what it means to be human—including the search for purpose and meaning, the mysteries of life and death, and the profound connections that bind us all together. The artists' answers and explorations—put into the world in paint, clay, printmaking, pencil, assemblage, collage, video, film, and almost any other visual medium you can imagine—show



us the multitude of perspectives that exist in our collective human experience. This exhibition serves as a testament to the human spirit and its ability

to endure and find meaning even in the most challenging times.

Since its inception, the Springville Museum of Art has been dedicated to



Left: Tatiana Castro, Rebozo de amor
Right: Rose Dato Dall, Light in the Wilderness

providing a “sanctuary of beauty and temple of contemplation” to its visitors. The 37th Annual Spiritual & Religious Art of Utah exhibition

encapsulates this mission and purpose. The Museum invites you to visit and discover solace, meaning, and connection in the works of art created by

talented Utah artists.

The jurors for this exhibition were University of Utah art history professor Dr. Winston Kyan and established artist J. Kirk Richards. Award winners include Rose Dato Dall, Tatiana Castro, Michael Malm, Katelyn Field Garcia, Brian Kershisnik, Emily Christensen McPhie, Adam Thomas, and Ivan Thompson.

The exhibition will run through Jan 10, 2024. Museum hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, with extended hours until 8:00 PM on Wednesdays.

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Angelus Theater has events for all the ages this holiday season

By Ariel Higgs

‘Tis the season for weather that is too cold to actually enjoy yourself without multiple, unflattering layers of clothes. Let’s not forget the part of the season when Hallmark and Lifetime Channels get into a competition to see how many big city girls they can make fall in love before the bell tolls midnight on New Year’s leaving their corporate boyfriend’s hearts in pieces on the dirty city streets.

So what can you do when you don’t feel like frolicking in powdered ice and your binge watching sweats need a break? Look no

further than Angelus Theatre in Spanish Fork.

This season, the Angelus has several great performances already lined up to spice up your winter and introduce you to some fabulous talent while you’re at it. Returning for its third run at Angelus Theatre, Stephen Gashler’s “A Krampus Karol,” is a unique comedy musical with a dash of suspense to set it apart from your typical holiday production. It is a fun experience that the whole family will enjoy. The production dates are Dec. 11, 14-16, 18-23 from 7:30-9:30 p.m. Tickets

can be purchased online or at the door.

Another family fun event happening this season is An Elven Christmas. This event is free to the public and is especially geared toward children, though it is fun for all ages! It includes a heartwarming story about an elf finding the spirit of Christmas, making Christmas cards and taking photos with Santa and his elves. Facepainting and hot cocoa and cider are available for purchase at this event. Come check out this fun filled event that is sure to brighten your holiday season.

While this event is free, tickets are still required and can be reserved online or at the door. An Elven Christmas runs on Dec. 9 and 16 from 5-6p.m.

In addition to hosting performances of all kinds, Angelus Theatre offers several youth performing classes. These classes are designed to help children interested in theater learn more about drama and acting and improve their confidence both on and off the stage. For more information about their youth theater programs, please visit their website. <https://angelustheatre.com/>

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Utah Food Bank opening new warehouse facility to help families in need

By Ariel Higgs

Over the past few months, a large warehouse has appeared alongside I-15 near the Walmart in Springville. That in and of itself isn't a terribly unusual sight with how much south Utah Country has been growing; however the "Utah Food Bank" signage made it clear that this wasn't "just another warehouse;" this had the potential to be so much more.

In recent years there has been an increasing number of Utah households with a strained budget due to the rising price of necessities. The U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that over the past year, food prices overall have risen 3.5% and the average cost of eating out has risen 5.7%, and that's just the cost of food. The cost of other basic necessities including gas, and electricity also continue to rise with no clear end in sight, and wages are

not rising to meet the new strain.

In light of these increasingly difficult financial burdens, more people than ever are relying on local food banks to help them bridge those increasingly widening gaps between what people are able to make and what it truly costs to feed their families.

Utah County is in a unique phase of explosive growth with its population predicted to double by 2060. With this rapid increase in population, the ability to ensure those in need have access to the help they need becomes ever more important. Due to its vastness, the Utah Food Bank has been working hard to find ways to reach people in need in Utah county.

Many in the community are stepping in to volunteer for the Utah Food Bank. In fact, volunteers assemble most Friday mornings at

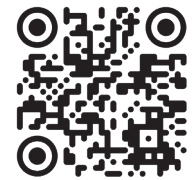
1138 W 100 S in the parking lot of the LDS meetinghouse to unload trucks filled with food from the Utah Food Bank and distribute it drivethru style to those who need it. The parking lot opens at 5:30 a.m., with distribution beginning around 7:30 a.m. and going until about 11 a.m.

While mobile food bank stops like these are amazing, the hours of operation can make it difficult for families who work at odd hours or single parent households trying to juggle the school drop-off line and work, to take advantage of the service. While other local food banks like Tabitha's Way help to fill this gap, there is more that can be done.

This is where the new Timpanogos Distribution Center comes in.

The warehouse, slated to open in early 2024 is one of the first steps that Utah Food Bank is taking to

address ease of access to food related services. The 77,032 square foot facility includes warehouse space, office/conference room space, and industrial kitchen space. In addition to facilitating the expansion of the Utah Food Bank and its programs, the location makes it easy for trucks to access and will provide more local jobs to strengthen the community here in southern Utah county. For more information or to find out how you can get involved check out their website utahfoodbank.org/about/timpanogos-distribution-center/.



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“You Deserve Warmth”: Lighthouse Donut, Coffee, & Dessert Co.

By Tim Jafek

Are you a cozy cafe person? Maybe just a fan of good fresh homemade donuts? I know just the place for you this winter season. Tucked away in the heart of central Provo is a cozy little cafe called The Lighthouse. Everything from the food, to the ambience, to the wonderful people who work there, is warm and welcoming.

To be honest, I don't know when winter is going to come this year, with it already the start of December and little to no snow. What gives? Even without snow, you can still cozy up to a nice cup of hot chocolate or coffee and enjoy the lovely winter.

I first fell in love with The Lighthouse the first time I went last winter. Not only was the food some of the best I've ever had, but they gave me foam art on my hot chocolate! As a non-coffee drinker, I felt amazingly appreciated. It turns out this was just the tip of the gold mine of joyful experiences I'd find going here.

Walking into The Lighthouse,



you'll be greeted with some instrumental music, sometimes Christmas music, sometimes hymns, and there are times when there is actual live music from the piano in their cafe. The owner, Rick and most of the rest of the staff are part of a local Mennonite community, a Christian community located in West Provo, near the new Provo airport.

Last year, I had the privilege of attending their Christmas nativity,

and it was just awesome! I've had a few really good conversations with Rick, the manager, and one thing he comes back to in running the restaurant is that he wants it to be an extension of God's love to those who come. From my experience, their restaurant is definitely a reflection of that.

From the calming instrumental music, to the art on the walls, to the bible verses on the walls and weekly interfaith bible studies held in their restaurant, The Lighthouse is a place many can feel comfortable at while enjoying a terrific meal.

I hope this little love letter to my favorite cafe can help convince you to drop by and

see what they're all about.

As a thank you for taking the time to learn more about an amazing local restaurant, I'm happy to include a coupon in the paper. This time, you get to enjoy their life-changing donuts, so you can get a free one with any purchase.

*In case you're asking, I love the sausage egg & cheese breakfast sandwich, hot chocolate, and glazed and maple donuts. I hope you come

to love them as much as I do. Lighthouse Donut, Coffee, & Dessert Co. is located at 1528 North Freedom Blvd. Provo.

About the Author:

Tim Jafek is a local foodie working to make the Provo community better through sharing good food and great experiences. Give him a follow on Instagram @provo.local.foodie for his full list of recommendations, photos, and menus. He loves to collaborate with local restaurants.

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Get to Know Spanish Fork Fire & EMS – Part 1

By Kevin Jennings

Not long ago, *Serve Daily* had the opportunity to visit with Eddie Hales, chief of the Fire and EMS Department in Spanish Fork.

Chief Hales has been the leader of the department for the past 18 months and comes as a fourth-generation firefighter from his family.

Growing up in Pleasant Grove, Hales was constantly exposed to the men and women of firefighting as his father was the fire chief there. According to Hales, a good portion of the adults he associated with were somehow associated with firefighting. He said that he learned early on that it takes a team to be able to get the job done, and that the collective team is all there for one purpose: to serve the community.

“I’m not here for me, I’m here for we, and we are here for them,” he said is a motto he lives by.

Ongoing Challenges

When asked about the types of challenges fire departments deal with these days, he said that one of the biggest ones is finding willing and able-bodied men and women who want to be firefighters.

Chief Hales explained the need for volunteer firefighters all around the country, with Utah County being no different. He said that Spanish Fork has a number of volunteers already, but that the nature of a volunteer department is that many have other obligations that take priority.

Hales further explained that just this year, the Spanish Fork Fire Department received 900 calls for assistance related to fire issues with another 3,600 estimated calls for assistance from the Emergency Medical Services side of the department. This works out to be an average of nearly 12 calls per day to just the

Spanish Fork Fire Department.

Additionally, The Spanish Fork Fire and EMS Department has the second largest coverage area in the state of Utah with nearly 584 square miles in its jurisdiction.

Hales encouraged those with any interest in becoming a volunteer firefighter, no matter which community they live in, to reach out to their local fire department for more information.

Hales noted that volunteering can even be the first step towards a fulfilling career as a paid firefighter in the future.

It was fascinating to learn that a fully equipped new ambulance carries a price tag in the neighborhood of \$500,000. A fully equipped fire engine is about \$1.1 million while a new ladder truck will run about \$2 million each, bells and whistles not included.

In our next edition of *Serve Daily*, we’ll continue with Part 2 – and

learn even more about the life-saving services rendered by those that selflessly serve their communities and fellow men. Until then, stay safe.

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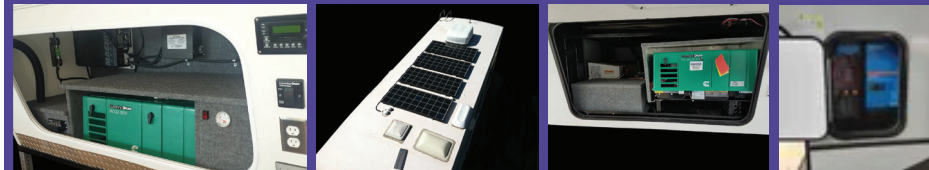
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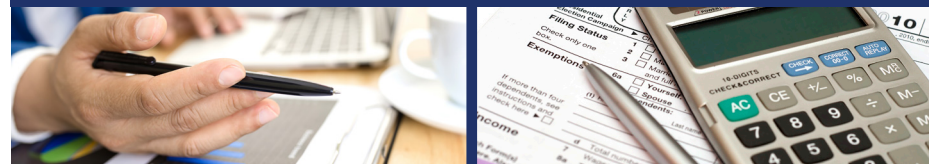
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Springville High Student Spearheads New ESL Peer Tutoring Program

By Alex Sousa

High school is hard enough, but to those who come to the United States with limited English-speaking skills, it makes it even more challenging. Springville High School senior Kailey Parkinson has taken it upon herself to create a program that better helps English language learning (ELL) students to better assimilate into the school system and more importantly, among their peers. In order to do this, Kailey has spearheaded the MLS Peer Tutoring program, which pairs multilingual students with others who are learning English as a second language.

The program is the first of its kind in the Nebo School District. With the help of her teacher, Kailey was able to develop, propose, and implement the program at the high school, with the hope that the program can be brought to other schools throughout the district.

“In a couple of my own classes, I saw kids who were struggling just because they didn’t know English or they didn’t speak or understand enough of it. I thought about how frustrating that would be,” Kailey said. “We had resources at school that we were not using. I thought we could kind of combine this problem and these resources and get a program started to help these students out.”

The initiative is structured as a hybrid interpreting and tutoring program designed to help native Spanish-speaking students at Springville High School acclimate to the classroom. It seeks to help them get a better understanding of the criteria and what’s going on during discussions and assignments.

Springville High School has a 25% minority student enrollment, with about 20% of those students being Hispanic. While many of those students do speak English fluently, often as a first language, others are still learning. Many of the teachers at Springville High School don’t speak Spanish, which creates a difficult language barrier between them and the ESL students.

Through the MLS Peer Tutoring program, bilingual tutors interpret

for the student while also helping them get their homework done and understand the classroom discussions. However, the program goes beyond translation, with the tutors helping the students learn to navigate the American school system, including how to use the websites students regularly use in class, such as Canvas and Infinite Campus.

“I hope that this program can be used as a tool for the teachers and staff here to help out these Spanish-speaking kids and help them to learn and understand better,” Kailey said. “I can’t even imagine how frustrating it is to sit in a classroom and not understand what’s going on and then for the teacher to be frustrated because they don’t know how to help these kids just because they don’t speak the same language.”

The idea for the program came to Kailey earlier in the school year, around the beginning of September. She had been talking to a teacher who told her he had a few students in his class who didn’t understand English. Parkinson thought that something needed to be done about the issue to ease the struggle for everyone involved.

With the help of Ivan Cardenas, a Spanish teacher at the high school, Kailey made a presentation about the tutoring program. They presented their proposal to some of the administrators, counselors and teachers at the school. Following their presentation, the program was quickly implemented in a first phase.

There have, of course, been struggles during the launch of the program. For it to work, they’ve been relying on bilingual students from the school’s dual-immersion Bridge program. The students, including Kailey, have been learning Spanish since the age of five. This is a resource that many of the other schools don’t have.

“We’re still sort of struggling with just how to do it and how to get it started, because we want the tutors and the ESL students to be able to form a relationship,” Kailey said. “We want them to build trust with one another and that’s just been



Kailey Parkinson with her Spanish teacher Ivan Cardenas who helped prepare the presentation about the ESL Tutoring Program.

a little bit difficult with lining up schedules, especially because we started in the middle of the year.”

Kailey is passionate about the project, and it’s something that she hopes will be able to continue. As for her, Kailey was recently named the Sterling Scholar for World Languages. She is also a member of the lacrosse team, the National Honor Society, and the Key Club, and she plans to graduate and pursue a degree in economics with a Spanish minor to pursue a career as a corporate attorney.

“I’m really hoping that this will make a difference in the lives of

everybody involved,” she said. “(I hope) that the Spanish-speaking kids will start to understand the curriculum, teachers will have a little bit of that stress lifted off, and that the tutors find something that they are passionate about and that they’re helping and serving others.”

**THE MAIN REASON I STARTED
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BECOMING SANTA: LOCAL MAN SAYS THE ROLE OF SANTA CHANGED HIS LIFE

By Ari Brown

The magic of the Holiday season wouldn't be complete without Santa Claus, and Payson resident Dodd Greer takes that statement very seriously – all year long.

It was about ten years ago when Greer was asked to play the role of Santa at a local church function, and he said that all it took was one night, and he was hooked. There was only one thing that he needed to improve: his appearance.

Greer described the suit he wore that day as “cheap, a little drab, very itchy and unrealistic.” He said that despite his attire, he loved playing the role of Santa, and that he knew that if he was going to do this again, he needed to up his game.

Greer said that he finds ways to carry the Holiday spirit all year long, including wearing Hawaiian shirts with a Santa logo on them, and playing the role in the Payson Scottish Festival that takes place in July. “We live in a very family oriented area with lots of families with young kids, and being accepted as Santa Claus can be very hard,” he said. “All the 11-year-old boys say you're not really Santa Claus, and the 8-year-olds ask, ‘Are you the real Santa Claus?’ And then of course, the little kids don't even ask; they know I'm Santa. That first year, I had such a great time, so at the end of the season, I started to grow my own beard and bought a nice Santa outfit.”

The outfit Greer invested in has a name in the world of Santa's, and it's called the “Coca Cola” outfit because it looks like the one in the iconic Coca Cola ads. He has since invested in other getups like the one Kurt Russell wears in “The Christmas Chronicles.”

“Everyone was talking about how cool Kurt Russell's costume is. It really is cool, and I had to buy it,” he said. “It has this long leather coat with fox fur all around it and high boots and a long cap. The kids love when I wear that one.”

A yearlong and multicultural Santa

For Greer, putting on the costume became a way of life that he wanted to maintain throughout the year.

“Over the years, my ‘neighborhood’ has really expanded, and so many now know me as Santa Dodd,” he said. “Kids see me at church, in the neighborhood or the store and they say, ‘It's Santa Dodd!’ Now it's just as natural as anything they could call me, and that's really wonderful for me. I love that they can get into the spirit just by seeing me even in the spring and summertime.”

Greer said that he finds ways to carry the Holiday spirit all year long, including wearing Hawaiian shirts with a Santa logo on them, and playing the role in the Payson Scottish Festival that takes place in July.

“I'm very Scottish and Greer is an English version of Gregor,” he said. “I've been the local Utah representative for Clan Gregor a few times, among other things related to the festival. Recently, the director asked me how I felt about doing a Scottish Santa at the festival, and luckily our clan colors are red, white and green, and those are the colors of my kilt. This year was as fun a time as I've ever had being Santa because I had kids say, ‘I didn't know Scottish people believed in Santa.’ I tell them that he was born in Scotland, and that it's where the Tartan Christmas wrapping paper came from. The kids really liked that.”

Greer also speaks Spanish, and said that many Spanish speaking children are often surprised and pleased when he speaks their language.

“I went on an LDS mission to Argentina, and throughout Latin America, Papa Noel is what they call me,” he said. “I've done Spanish speaking events with Papa Noel.



When the kids come up to talk to me, I greet them in Spanish and we break into a conversation. They say, ‘I didn't know Papa Noel spoke Spanish.’ I say, ‘Of course, Santa Claus has to speak every language.’”

The best part about being ‘Santa Dodd’

While Greer said he loves growing a beard, dressing up in cool costumes (including a kilt), his favorite part is the tender interactions he has with the children he gets to meet.

“Some of the sweetest experiences I've had are when I ask the children what they want for Christmas,” he said. “More times than I could tell you, kids have said, ‘Well, this is kind of weird, Santa, but don't bring me anything. My little broth-

er, he really wants a bike. Can you get him a bike?’ Or they'll say, ‘Well, you know, I'm just hoping to do something good for my mom because she's been kind of sick.’ Those things humble me and pull on my heartstrings.”

While Greer believes in the magic of the season, he knows that his position as Santa Dodd is unique, and he doesn't want to make promises he can't keep.

“I don't promise them anything specific; the only thing I promise them is that they will get something really special,” he said. “When I make that promise, I pass out a promise card that says that they will get something special as long as they promise to do something kind for someone else. I know and they take me very seriously. I have



passed out a lot of promise cards, and that's come back to me in countless ways."

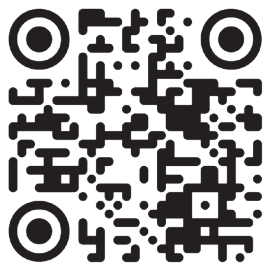
Greer said that playing the role of Santa Dodd has been one of the most rewarding experiences of his life, and that he has no plans of quitting anytime soon.

"I love doing this more than I love anything else other than being a grandpa and a great grandpa and a neighbor," he said. "I'm 75 and I'll do it as long as I'm physically able. Emotionally I'm, I'm sold; I really am. This is my other identity that I get reminded of every single day, and I'm so grateful for the opportunity to do this.

Greer, aka, Santa Dodd is available for family and community events,

and can be found on Facebook at facebook.com/SantaDoddUtah/.

Santa Dodd serves Utah and Salt Lake Counties.



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Young Mapleton Police Officer reflects on time on force, looks forward to years ahead

By Kevin Jennings

Being a police officer isn't an easy job, but one Mapleton police officer describes the profession as being extremely rewarding.

Mapleton police officer Andrew Hill, who is native to the area, said that his love for the community is what caused him to want to join the force two years ago, and it is readily seen in his interactions with others.

Serve Daily recently had an opportunity to catch up with Officer Hill and to learn more about him and his commitment to the citizens of Mapleton. One of those commitments includes doing presentations at the local elementary schools.

Hill said that he is often recognized as the officer who was bitten by a police dog while playing the part of the well-padded bad guy at an elementary school presentation.

While being recognized in the community is a perk of the job, Hill said that he joined the force because it was his "life's calling," and "it always felt right."

Shift work is a way of life for

officers, and Hill said that he enjoys the swing shift, which covers early afternoon and into the night hours. The reason he says this timeframe is his favorite is because it is the "best of both worlds," offering a chance to serve the citizens of Mapleton while also experiencing the more "active" aspect of law enforcement duties.

Hill spoke about the need to be thorough and on high alert even during routine traffic stops because you never know what you will encounter. He said that once during a routine stop, he noticed a gentleman in the rear seat of the stopped vehicle "trying to blend in with the upholstery." After a quick radio check of that person's credentials, Hill learned the suspicious character had an outstanding felony warrant, requiring him to place that individual under arrest.

One memorable call was when he was involved with a traffic stop and noticed a gentleman in the rear seat of the stopped vehicle 'trying to

blend in with the upholstery'.

After a quick radio check of that person's credentials, Hill learned the suspicious character had an outstanding felony warrant and that individual was placed under arrest.

Even though Hill has "made it" on the force, he said that it is important for him to keep learning from others. He often listens to police podcasts to inform him of scenarios officers may encounter and how to deal with them. He described having completed listening to a particular podcast when suddenly, an almost exact scenario played out in front of him, and he was better prepared to face the situation.

Hill said that with just two years on the force, he looks forward to being able to be in positions where he can better protect and serve the community that he has long called home.

When asked if he would encourage others to consider a life in



police work, Hill says he "definitely would." He encouraged those who have an interest in law enforcement to reach out to officers for more information on what steps you need to take.

On behalf of Serve Daily, we thank Officer Hill for his service, and wish him the best in the years ahead.

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Local mother of 9 on a mission to save children with special needs

By Ari Brown

As 16-year-old Salem Hills High School student Kai Belk stood at Times Square this past Sept., she looked up at the Jumbotron, and there she was dressed in pink and crowned like the princess she is. That day, Kai, who has Down syndrome, was standing next to Ghanaian royalty representing children like her in her native country who now have a chance of survival because her mother fought for her chance to live.

In 2011, Kai was adopted by her parents Laura and Mike Belk as the first child with Down syndrome to have been adopted from Ghana. According to Laura Belk, who has adopted several international children with special needs, it wasn't just the adoption process that presented challenges; it was so much deeper and even terrifying.

"Kai was taken by her birth father to the fetish priestess where he was

told that Kai was really a snake in human form, and that she needed to be turned back into a snake," Laura Belk explained.

What many people don't know is that in Ghana, children with disabilities are known as "Spirit Children," and have long been victims of ritual killings.

Area news network Al Jazeera published the investigative findings by journalist Anas Aremeyaw Anas who uncovered these ritualistic killings. An article published on Al Jazeera stated that each year an unknown number of disabled children are murdered "because of the belief that they are in some way possessed by evil spirits set on bringing ill fortune to those around them." The practice is said to stem from ancient tradition, and there is an unknown number of deaths that some believe is in the thousands.

When the Belks sought to adopt

Kai, they were shocked to learn that these types of things were happening at all, let alone today's day in age. Laura Belk explained that it took them a year and three trips to the country before they were able to adopt Kai, and that during that year, there were several times when they thought she wouldn't make it.

"They wouldn't let us get her," she said. "They keep asking, 'Why would you want to adopt a child like this?' It took us three trips over there to convince them to let us have her. It's a miracle that she survived because she was in an orphanage, and her birth father found where she was and we had to quickly move her to another location to try to keep him from finding her. He saw her as a curse, just felt as long as she was alive that that's why his life was hard, and he wanted to turn her into a snake. It was so difficult because every time we had

to leave her and come back home, I didn't know that she was still gonna be there when we came back. But miracles happened and thankfully, we were able to bring her home."

Raising Kai

For the past 12 years, the Belks have raised Kai as the youngest of their nine children, and say that their family would not have been complete without her.

"We have nine Children, one biological son with Down syndrome, and our youngest four have special needs and were adopted internationally," Laura Belk explained. "Kai is our youngest, and she is loved by so many, and just loves to be around others."

Kai was recently named Athlete of the Week at Salem Hills High

MISSION Continued on Page 16

School for her participation in the Unified Sports program, and her mom said that it has been a joy to watch her interact with her peers at school.

“This is the first year that she’s done Unified Sports, but she just loves it,” Laura Belk said. “She’s a part of the school choir and she just had a dance recital. She’s in dance class and wants to be on the stage with her friends and a part of what they’re doing. They’ve been so good at Salem Hills to include her and to accept her and to help her where she’s at and to make sure she feels successful in all these different programs and activities.”

On a mission to save others like Kai

Laura Belk said that upon learning that Kai was the first child with Down syndrome to have been adopted from Ghana, she made it her mission to save children like her daughter, and she has since created a nonprofit organization called Nurturing Nations to do just that.

“We started to look at other organizations and thought maybe we could join with them to try to advocate for these children, but then I found out that such a small percentage of donations actually got to the kids. I didn’t like that, so I started my own charity so that 100% goes to the children,” she said. “I donate all my time, and we pay for all our own travel because I wanted a charity that people could donate to that they know that’s actually going to be used to save a child’s life.”

“I can’t adopt them all; I wish I could,” she continued. “I have hundreds of children in Ghana, Mali and Uganda. They’re all my kids and I love them and I worry about them and I care for them. We work really hard to try to raise the funds that are needed to care for these children.”

Laura Belk explained that one of the main things that her organization does to help children with special needs in these developing areas is to provide educational resources to the children’s peers.

“We have a special care house

which is for Children who have severe disabilities, where our goal is to have the children with disabilities be in school and be educated with their typical peers,” she said. “The goal is to help children start to see children with special needs as their friends and to change that belief in that they are wicked or cursed.”

Another part of that education is to bring this to the attention of Ghanaian royalty, and that’s what is happening right now. Laura Belk is on a mission to educate all those of influence from peers to royalty to keep these special individuals not only alive, but give them a chance at a life where they can reach their potential and touch the lives of all they come in contact with.

“I’m really excited that I’ve gotten together with Ghanaian royalty,” she said. “They’re joining with me and they are wanting to change this as well. I’m excited to see where it goes from here.”

Nurturing Nations is actively searching for volunteers and donors especially this season. From Tuesday Nov. 28 (Giving Tuesday) until



Kai on a jumbotron.

the end of the year, donations will be matched up to \$10,000.

For more information, go to <https://www.nurturingnations.org/>



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Expressing Gratitude Through Service

Submitted by Lorene Moore

One of my favorite quotes is “A grateful heart is a magnet for miracles,” by author Jane Fuller who went on to say that “Most people don’t leverage gratefulness to its fullest potential.”

Gratitude is a feeling, and putting that feeling in action is service. Gratitude is the acknowledging of what you have. Service is the offering of what you have to others. Service in your community empowers that community to bless you further.

An article published by the Greater Good Center at UC Berkeley listed the following 10 reasons why people give:

Giving makes people happy

By far the number one reason people give was for the joy of it. Many studies have shown higher levels of happiness, satisfaction and contentment in people who volunteered their time.

Giving improves mental health

There is a growing body of evidence that suggests acts of generosity are associated with reduced psychological problems, such as anxiety and depression.

Giving can help us live longer

A 2012 Health Psychology study found that people who volunteer regularly actually live longer.

Giving increases our sense of connectedness

Giving makes us feel connected to those we give to, but it also makes those who receive feel more connected taking away from the sense of isolation that hard times can often create.

Giving is contagious

As we can often see in the “pay it forward” campaigns all around us, people who experience kindness are more likely to treat others with kindness.

Giving tells people what you value in the world

A scarcity worldview makes giving difficult, an abundance viewpoint makes not giving impossible.

Giving increases confidence

Giving moves our focus away from our own weaknesses and needs to allow us to see ourselves in light of our strengths and what we have to offer.

Giving makes people more likable

We all want to be valued, seen as trustworthy, and appreciated. When done so for truly genuine purposes, giving allows even the most difficult curmudgeon to show a softer, kinder side.

Giving allows you the opportunity to look at your blessings differently

People who give see their blessings as resources to share. Time, money, abilities, knowledge, and so much more are means to bless the lives of others as well as themselves.

Giving makes life more meaningful

For many people, there is a disconnect between who we think we are and who we actually are – in other words, what we say we value and what our actions show we value. Giving is a way to show ourselves and the people who matter most in our lives what is truly important to us.

We have so many opportunities in our community to serve and every one of them is an opportunity to impact our own lives as well as the lives of those we serve.

Tabitha’s Way

tabithasway.com
Tabitha’s Way provides free food & essential life-sustaining supplies to anyone in need with in our local

communities. They are always in need to food items and volunteers.

Feed the Kids

Feed the Kids pays lunch balances for students in local schools.

On their website you can volunteer, donate and nominate a child in need.

You can follow their podcast, Give Back, on all your favorite podcast platforms.

feedthekidsfoundation.org

Habitat for Humanity

www.habitatuc.org

They always need volunteers of all skill levels, whether it’s on a construction site, at the Habitat ReStore, in our office, serving on a committee, or at one of our events.

Bennion Central Utah Veteran’s Home

http://veterans.utah.gov/central-utah-veterans-home/

Always need people to come in and visit with the veterans.

Make cards or write letters, either to specific veterans or you can make up general blank cards that they can give to family members for birthdays, holidays or whenever they see a need.

They try to give every vet that comes in a homemade quilt, something that feels personal and helps them not feel like they are in an institution. So they are always in need of more quilts.

Nebo Legacy Mentoring Program (Nebo School District)

www.nebo.edu/mentor

A fun and rewarding program, Nebo Legacy Mentoring matches a carefully screened adult volunteer (Mentor) with a child (Mentee) in a school environment. Building a positive, new friendship helps to strengthen a Mentee’s self-esteem and school performance.

Reading & Donating Books to Local Elementary Schools

Nebo Reads is a program where every month Nebo Comfort Heating & Air’s employees read to students and donate a copy of the book we read for each of them to take home.

This is our company’s favorite program. I can’t tell you how many times I’ve been stopped in the store, the movies, at dinner or other places around town by kids telling their parents, “That’s the book lady!” Yep, makes my day every time!

Assisted Living Facilities

Facilities such as Elk Ridge Assisted Living and others need volunteers to come read with residents, visit them and share your talents (musical, art, games, etc.)

JustServe.org

JustServe.org is a website where the volunteer needs of organizations may be posted and volunteers may search for places to serve in the community, providing opportunities to help those in need and enhance the quality of life in the community.

You can work with other organizations on their projects and put your own projects on the site to have others join you.

Find service opportunities that speak to you and your family. Take advantage of these opportunities to leverage your gratefulness for the blessings in your life to its fullest potential. By doing so, you will see the power giving has to change your life, your family, your community and the world.

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Events?
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calendar

Tributes



Carol B. Klauck

Carol B. Klauck, a beloved resident of Springville, Utah, passed away on November 8, 2023, at the age of 86, surrounded by her family. She battled complications from lung cancer with grace and resilience. Carol was born on December 9, 1936, in Provo, Utah, to Doren D. Boyden and LaRella Provost. She graduated from Provo High School in 1954 where she showcased her talents as a cheerleader. In 1956, Carol married Edwin Allan Klauck and had four wonderful children. Though they later divorced in 1976, they maintained a remarkable friendship until Allan's passing. Carol dedicated much of her life to her family, exemplifying strength and commitment. From 1976 to 2010, Carol worked as a waitress at La Casita in Springville, leaving a lasting impact on her community. Her warm and welcoming demeanor made her a cherished figure among patrons and colleagues alike. Outside of her professional life, Carol was an avid golfer and a proud member of the Hobbie Creek Golf Course Women's Association. Golf brought her immense joy, and she cherished the camaraderie of her fellow

members.

Carol is survived by her children: Keri (Richard) Ofshe of Los Angeles, California; Kristi (Rand) Eardley of Holladay, Utah; Mike (Julie) Klauck of Mapleton, Utah; and Kraig (Ruben) Klauck-Lopez of South Jordan, Utah. She is also survived by thirteen grandchildren, seventeen great-grandchildren, an identical twin sister, Connie Boshard of Provo, Utah and a brother, Gary Boyden of Price, Utah. Connie and Carol were inseparable and best friends throughout their lives.

The family would like to express their deepest gratitude to Rachelle Bona, Laurie Blackett, and Nancy Leifson for the exceptional friendship and kindness they provided to Carol during her illness. Additionally, the kindness and support Carol received from her many friends and neighbors have been a source of comfort to Carol throughout her illness and to the family during this difficult time.

Viewings were held on Wednesday, November 15, 2023, and the funeral service was the next day at Provo City Cemetery.



Gail Marie Flannigan Sylva

Gail Marie Flannigan Sylva, our beloved mother,

sister, and grandmother, unexpectedly passed away on November 2, 2023, at the age of 71 in Lehi, Utah. She was born in Medford, Massachusetts, the fourth daughter of Lois and Don Flannigan. She married the love of her life, Joseph Sylva, on November 6, 1973, in Salt Lake City, Utah, and together they raised their family of five in Massachusetts and North Carolina.

Gail was a registered nurse and had a vibrant passion for gardening, kayaking, spoiling her dogs and chickens, walking, hiking, reading, bird-watching, doing family history work and studying the teachings of Jesus Christ. Her husband Joe, a sea captain, shared Gail's love for adventure. Gail and Joe traveled the country in their motor-home, creating lasting memories in many parts of the United States and Canada. Some of their favorite adventures included whale watching on Joe's boat, hiking the Grand Canyon, exploring New England, and collecting shells on the beach. After Joe's passing on November 11, 2011, Gail lived in their home in Saratoga Springs, Utah.

Gail's love for her family was unwavering and she cherished the time she spent with her children and grandchildren. She was their greatest cheerleader and she proudly proclaimed that she had the best family.

Gail was a kind, thoughtful, and loving friend to those who knew her, always looking out for those around her. Gail believed in the power of faith and prayer, continually trusting in God's grace to strengthen her throughout her life. She looked

forward to being reunited with her husband, daughter, parents, siblings, and grandchildren in the heavenly realm she envisioned as a place of joy, rest, and love.

Gail is survived by four siblings; her five children, Kristin (Jon) Frey, Kimberly (Joel) Bulleigh, Lisa (Jaron) Humphreys, Jennifer (Nick) Price, and Timothy Sylva; twenty-three grandchildren and one great-granddaughter. Her life was marked by strength, faith, and love for her family and her Savior. She will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege of knowing her.

Funeral services were held on Friday, November 17, 2023 at 11:00 AM in the LDS church building located at 49 East Centennial Boulevard Saratoga Springs, Utah.

Gail will be buried with her sweetheart in the Highland City Cemetery.



Kasey Jay Kenney

Kasey Kenney graduated from Springville High School. He married RaNon Tipton Chaussee and was later divorced.

Kasey was a member of the LDS church. He grew up in Payson and Springville, Utah. He was a member of the FFA in high school. He loved scouting and was an Eagle Scout.

Kasey loved to snow ski, play baseball, collect sports cards, hunting and fishing. He was a big fan

of the Patriots and Tom Brady.

He loved spending time with his son Hunter, whom he loved very much and was his pride and joy.

He is survived by his son Hunter Kasey Kenney, his stepson Christian Chaussee, his mother Kathryn Madsen Kenney, stepfather David Kenney, his grandparents Don and Betty Madsen, and Kay Ashby, step sister Heather Reeves, many aunts, uncles, and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his father Brad Melendez and grandparents Buck and Roma Kenney.

A celebration of life was held at Spring Creek Mortuary on Saturday, November 11, 2023.



Kathleen Palmer Wing

It is with heavy hearts and profound sadness that we announce the passing of our dear mom. Kathleen Palmer Wing, 76, passed away Tuesday October 17, 2023 at her home in Provo, Utah after a short illness. She was born on February 2, 1947 in Payson, Utah to Norval and Catherine Palmer. She attended Payson High School and graduated in 1965.

Mom worked various jobs throughout her life. She was an avid Nascar fan. She will be sorely missed and is survived by her 4 daughters, Kendra Lynn Palmer, Kerrie (Alan) Wyler, Kimberlie Paige, and Kandi Jensen; 8

grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren. She is also survived by her sisters, Shelia Jensen and Chris (Sam) Baldwin and her brother Dean (Eva) Palmer. She was preceded in death by her parents, Norval and Catherine; sweet and precious daughter Kelsey Jo Emery; sister Carol (Dee Dee) Palmer; brothers Steve and Craig Palmer; grandchildren, Krystal Ladawn Griffiths, Brooklyn and Bentley Tanner.

The family would like to give a special thanks to Harmony Home Health for the care they showed to our mom.

Graveside services were held Saturday November 4, 2023 at 1:00 pm at the Goshen City Cemetery, Goshen, Utah.



Lynn Reese Hansen

Lynn Reese Hansen born on June 21st, 1951 in Logan, Utah, completed his mortal journey on November 16, 2023.

Lynn is preceded in death by his Grandson, Ethan Hansen, his mother Betty Lou Reese Hansen, his father Wallace Devere Hansen, his brother Marc Hansen, and his sister-in-law Janet Hansen. Lynn is survived by his brother Doug Hansen and sisters Diane (Kent) Hoggan and Carrie (Scott) Davies, his sweetheart Linda Savage Hansen, daughters Angela (Boyd) White, Natalie (Neal) Peton, Ginger (DJ) Lewis, Laurel (Brian)

King and Lindsey (Ryan) Martineau and sons Ryan (Camie) Hansen and Reese (Laura) Hansen, 28 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren, whom he loved and adored.

Lynn was born and raised in his beloved Logan, Utah in the shadow of the Logan Temple. He received his endowment in the same temple he loved so much and served a full-time mission in the Gulf States, where he met the woman of his dreams, Linda, who was also serving in the same mission. He was enamored by her then which continues to this day. She was his sunshine, laughter, and love. Where mom went, dad followed.

Lynn and Linda were sealed for time and all eternity in the Logan, Utah temple on November 21st, 1972. They welcomed their first three children within the first three years of marriage, and continued totaling 7 children. Dad loved his children completely and never failed them. Our favorite memories of dad include family camping trips, listening to Simon & Garfunkel on road trips, his love of ice cream and peanut M&M's, his secret love of slapstick humor, and how happy he was when mom was near.

Not only was Lynn a father to 7 blessed children, but he also stepped in and became a dad to the 8 children that lived across the street. He loved his Sweet children like his own.

Lynn was an avid musician and played the drums. If his drums weren't around, he was drumming on tables, chairs, couches, and even his leg. He always had a beat, even until the very

end. He was also a gifted artist where his love for design took him into the field of drafting, and eventually into structural engineering. Dad's draftsman lettering was impeccable, beautiful, and art itself.

For anyone who knew Lynn, they knew 2 things. He loved God, Jesus Christ and the gospel of Jesus Christ above all, and our mother second. These loves never left him, even when dementia took most other memories away.

Lynn served faithfully in callings for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in innumerable ways. He showed his love to God through service and served in Bishoprics, as Bishop twice, in Stake Presidencies and High Counsels. How we miss his guidance, love, and direction which always centered around Jesus Christ.

The greatest legacy he leaves us all with is his example. He was goodness exemplified and was gentle, loving, had no guile, and was the ultimate peacemaker.

He led his family in love and righteousness and we know he will continue to lead us. We are so grateful for the way in which he lived his life, for we know where he is and that he will always watch over us.

Funeral services were Wednesday, November 22, 2023 at 11am in the Spanish Fork LDS chapel, 352 South Spanish Fork Parkway. No viewing was held, but visiting took place prior to the funeral from 10-10:45.

Condolences can be offered at www.springcreekmortuary.com.



Megan Madison Ruff

Megan Madison Ruff (formerly known as Megan Maureen Hammond, Megan Bird, and Megan Judkins) was born on June 16, 1976 to Wanda Ritch and Daniel Hammond. She grew up in Los Gatos, California, and Mapleton, Utah. Megan was 11 years old when she moved to Mapleton, Utah and became a part of the Ruff family. Megan died by suicide on October 28, 2023, in Kent, Washington.

We believe that even though Megan's death brought her relief from her physical and mental pain, this relief was likely overshadowed by regret about the circumstances surrounding her death. We take comfort in the hope that she is being helped on the other side of the veil by those who love her and have an interest in her progress in the eternities. We know death is not the end and believe God looks upon Megan's life in its entirety with a depth of compassion that we cannot comprehend. We trust all can be made right, eventually.

Megan's History:

Megan's life wasn't easy. She had many good years; however, in the last six or seven years, Megan's life was complicated by physical and mental pain. Near the very end of her life, Megan had trouble discerning between those who were helping and those who wished her

harm. We have reason to believe she has more clarity now. We sincerely thank all who reached out to help her in any way. Please know that your help made a difference to Megan and was meaningful to her family.

When Megan was 11 years old, and her parents were no longer able to care for her, she and her brother Brendan came to live with Howard and Kay Ruff, who later adopted her. Megan came to the Ruff family with lots of energy, a love for animals, a sense of adventure, and a keen mind. She quickly became the source of fun and practical jokes for her new little sister, Terri Lynn, and a small army of nieces and nephews. Megan graduated from Springville High School in 1995.

Megan quickly made friends in Mapleton, some of whom remained dear friends her entire life. We are grateful for them and the love and support they gave her. They traveled to Washington to help with her wedding, stayed in touch, read the world's longest texts, and never stopped loving her.

Her first dog, Matty, showed up, covered in dirt and manure and terribly matted, to a family wedding. Megan knew instantly this dog would become a fine pet. Sure enough, they immediately bonded, he learned tricks, and was beloved by the family for years. This pattern continued as Megan loved Kashmir I, Bindi, Coco, Kashmir II, and Mia. Megan also had other animals throughout her life.

Megan helped other people with their dogs and was known as "the dog lady." One day, however, she got asked to help

someone with their cat. Megan did not know if she could help a cat, but she went to help anyway. When she arrived, the cat's owner was distraught because her beloved animal had a terminal illness and had recently become very agitated. All the owner wanted was to make the cat comfortable during his last days. Megan entered the house, went over to pet the cat and immediately knew the problem. She looked at the owner and said, "He's upset that you changed things around. He wants you to put his bed back." The owner was stunned and quickly moved the cat's bed back to its original location. Megan and a very grateful owner watched the cat settle down in the bed.

Megan could be a fierce advocate for anyone who had been wronged or was disadvantaged. If you had a bully, there was no one better on your side. She often gave her money and her time to right a wrong or bring hope and comfort to someone who needed it. She saved her sister Debbie's life, and the life of her unborn nephew, when she refused to leave the hospital, even though visiting hours were over and the nurses came in repeatedly asking her to leave. As a result, she was the only one present in the room when Debbie, who had no monitors attached, had a grand mal seizure, and stopped breathing. Megan held her on the bed, screamed for help, and is the reason her sister was revived and gave birth to a healthy baby boy. She made several trips to California to advocate for and care for Brian, her brother, who was disabled. She often knew just what people needed.

Megan was a thoughtful gift-giver. She could pick out the perfect piece of jewelry, the perfect restaurant, the perfect song, or the perfect pet.

Megan loved to travel, spent time in Argentina, and was fluent in Spanish. Megan and Steve lived in Cancun, Mexico at one point. Megan loved the outdoors. She was charming and quick-witted.

We are grateful to all the friends, neighbors, and care-givers who tried to comfort Megan and ease her pain. We are grateful to Megan's ex-husband, Steve Judkins, who was her care-giver during the last several years of their marriage. We are grateful to Megan's biological family, who she gravitated to in her adult years, and who helped her extensively when she moved to Washington, particularly her sister, Linda, and Linda's children.

Megan is survived by Mia (her beloved boxer); her biological family: Wanda Ritch (mother); siblings: Linda (and Gerald) Carruthers, Stuart (and Sheridan) Hammond, Martha (and Brian) Jackson, Melissa, Katelynn (and Mark) Knight, D. Brendan Hammond, and 15 nieces and nephews; her adoptive family: Kay Ruff (mother); siblings: Larry (and Jennifer) Ruff, Eric (and Janine) Ruff, David (and Deon) Ruff, Pam (and Rick) Patterson, Sharon (and Greg) Slater, Anthony (and Kellie) Ramon, Patty (and Andy) Simpson, David (and Cathi) Steinberg, Liza Spencer, Timothy (and Brooke) Ruff, Deb (and Lars) Rasmussen, Terri Lynn (and Kaleigh) Bond, and 76 nieces and nephews.

Caring through action makes for a better community

By William Boardman

I love this time of year. For all that's wrong in the world, this is the season of "Good Will."

I see it in different businesses as someone wearing felt reindeer antlers greets a customer with extra joy. I see it on social media when people set up a pantry for families who are struggling financially, or when fundraisers are started to help neighbors struggling with a terminal diagnosis, purchasing bicycles for disadvantaged youth, or collecting stuffed teddy bears for children affected by unexpected tragedy. I see it in people taking time to drop by their neighbors' homes with a small gift in a spirit of goodwill.

I also believe that in this season (and this is not proven), as the number of impatient drivers in holiday traffic grows, the number of more patient drivers increases at the same rate – both possibly heightened by a certain Mariah Carey song. If you know, you know.

This holiday season catches people

more at their best and the whole community is better for it. I suppose there is a lesson in that. When each of us is at our best, the world is a better place. More importantly, the secret ingredient is the contribution we each make in our community. When we do things simply because we care, it is us at our best.

It's the support we give to meaningful efforts. It's the interaction with our neighbors. It's the acts of kindness that mostly go unnoticed.

Yep, I love this time of year. There seems to be plenty of opportunities to show, "I care." I think the world could use more of that; not the feeling of caring, but the action of caring, in what I like to call, caring through action.

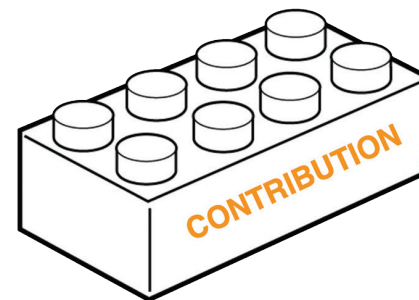
One of my neighbors shares peanut brittle this time of year. It lifts my spirits for two reasons: one, because it's delicious, and two, because it's such a nice gesture that says, "Hey, neighbor, I care."

You might add an element of

surprise to your contributions this time of year. Remember the "paying it forward" concept? I know some of you are already engaged in this. For instance, someone in line ahead of you at an ice cream parlor pays for their ice cream and they pay for yours, too! (Thank you for that, Mister, your surprise kind act will be remembered for a long time.)

You could also surprise someone by leaving an anonymous gift by showing up to spend time with a person when they're struggling. I'm sure you are creative enough to come up with some surprising gestures of goodwill. Surprises are a good way to create a moment that

BUILDING BLOCKS OF COMMUNITY



will be remembered for years to come.

So, there it is. One of the strengths of a community is the contributions, large and small, of its people. So, "Happy Holidays!" and "Merry Christmas!" Let the good will spread and grow. Let us be generous in what and how we contribute. Caring through action makes for a better community.

Pet of the Month

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Roxy is a 2-year-old border collie mix. She is really smart, very friendly, and has a decent amount of energy (but not over the top). She is great with other dogs, but not with cats. She needs to go home with someone who can give her plenty of exercise opportunities. Roxy has no known medical concerns.

Contact Utah Valley Animal Rescue if you are interested in adopting Foxy Roxy



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Shane Paoli took over the Springville and Spanish Fork Branch of the Farmers Insurance agency in January of this year and said he is eager to join the local community that drew him to southern Utah County. "Everybody knows everybody here, and that environment is awesome!" Shane said.



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Winter Driving Tips for Smart Drivers

By Kevin Jennings

Would you be surprised to learn that each year, on average, more than 5,000 Americans lose their lives in weather-related car crashes? Additionally, 418,000 individuals are injured due to weather-related car accidents, according to weather.gov.

While there are some accidents that are unavoidable, there are some things that we can do to better prepare for and navigate Mother Nature while on the road including some of the following:

Decide if a trip during poor weather conditions can be delayed. Sure, you may want to make it to the family gathering on time, but is braving a storm really worth the danger?

Prepare your vehicle with working windshield wipers and proper fluid levels. We all know that visibility is key in storms, and having working wipers and fluid to clear your windshield will ensure you can see the road.

Properly inflate tires. Tires that are inflated to the appropriate levels create better traction on the road and improve fuel economy.

Consider a half-tank of fuel to be your 'empty' level. This is a good rule of thumb anyway to make sure that you don't run out of gas, but this is particularly good during the winter months when slow going traffic is more likely. You don't want to be left on the road with no gas in dangerous weather conditions.

Make others aware of your travel plans, routes, and timelines.

If traveling beyond your daily commute, dial 511 for up-to-date traffic and road conditions. Every state has a 511 option, so use it to learn.

Carry an emergency kit in your car that includes many of the following items: cell phone and charger, blankets, flashlight and extra batteries, a first-aid kit, a sharp knife, fresh high-calorie foods, extra clothing, tissues, dry matches and a container to melt snow for drinking, a bag of sand or kitty litter for traction, shovel, window scraper/brush, small tool kit, a tow strap, jumper cables, candles and matches for heat, and a compass and paper maps in case your cell phone is in a dead area.

The Utah Highway Patrol also offers these ideas to consider:

Always buckle up, but especially so during poor weather travel.

Folks who are driving too fast are the primary reason for crashes in winter. Slow down and get to your destination safely.

Realize that the posted speed limit on signs are reflective of dry and ideal driving conditions. Wet, snowy, or icy conditions require an adjustment on your part to travel at less than ideal speed limits.

Accelerate more slowly, brake gently at greater distances, and avoid turning quickly to better maintain control of your vehicle.

Give yourself way more room with the car you are following – this greater following distance is a gift when used properly, so use it.

Use extra caution when changing lanes. The snowy and slushy conditions can form crests in the roadway that can cause you to lose control. Avoid those obstacles when possible.

Winter coats can interfere with car seat safety. It is much safer for the little ones to be safely belted into

their car seats, THEN place blankets or coats around them. Winter coats can actually leave enough room for the child to be totally knocked out of their car seats at point of impact. Pack the warmth around them, not WITH them.

All-Wheel drive and 4x4's may have superior traction in poor weather, but those systems don't help whatsoever with stopping and turning issues. Don't become a victim of this false sense of security.

Black ice causes many accidents. You should know that black ice often appears as a wet patch rather than a spot of ice on the roads.

Ice can form on bridges before it forms on a roadway because the freezing weather has more surface area, above and below the bridge itself, to cause wet areas to freeze and ice over.

If you get a chance to travel behind a snow plow or group of snow plows working the roadways, that is a very safe place to travel. Just be sure to

increase your following distance as you enjoy the safety.

Don't use cruise control. Roads and weather conditions are constantly changing in poor weather – YOU need to have complete control.

Wildlife can be much more active after winter storms as they search for food. Anticipate their needs and adjust your driving accordingly.

Finally – Give yourself more time to get to your destination. If you short yourself on time, it seems as if you hit every obstacle on your path. When you allow plenty of time, you'll usually get there early, but with much less stress and you'll likely make better driving choices along the way. Just take it slow in any snowy weather travels.

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Wills ~ Trusts ~ Probate

When is it too Late to Sign a Will or Trust?

By Ken Prigmore of Prigmore Law in Spanish Fork, Utah



William James, an American philosopher and psychologist, said, “When you have to make a choice and don’t make it, that is in itself a choice.” In Utah, when you don’t sign a Will or Trust, choices will be made for you based on state law.

Your first and foremost goal is to sign your plan before your death. What happens if you never get around to signing an estate plan? The answer depends on your situation. Were you in a second marriage? Did you leave any debts? Did you leave behind minor children? Did you own real estate, or more than five vehicles? Did you have over a hundred thousand dollars in the bank? Each answer can change what happens to each asset in each unique circumstance.

Sooner is usually better

Life insurance companies put a great deal of time and effort into predicting outcomes. They will benefit if they can determine when you are likely to die and then price your insurance accordingly. Those predictions are most useful when applied to a large population. Each individual

lifetime will vary, and there is no way to accurately predict how long an individual will live. Sometimes life gives us plenty of notice, and other times our passing is a surprise to everyone.

Adding challenge to this problem is the one in three possibility that we will die with some form of dementia. We may spend a significant portion of our last years without the understanding needed to make estate planning choices.

The easy answer to these concerns is to sign your estate plan now, while you still can. If you want to make changes to that plan later, based on new circumstances, you will often be able to do so, but why risk waiting for the change before making a plan, and then losing the ability to choose?

Capacity

The true line in the sand, regarding when you can sign a Will or Trust, is mental capacity. In the state of Utah, you must be of “sound mind” to sign a Will or Trust. This is further defined as knowing how much property you have and knowing who your natural heirs are.

When does all this matter? Consider a sole surviving parent who dies, leaving a Will that gives their entire estate in equal portions to all of their children. If this is the result desired by all of those children, no one is likely to challenge that Will in

court. Without a challenge, the Will is going to stand.

When a Judge makes decisions in probate court, he or she will always ask if there is anyone present that disagrees with the decision. If everyone with an interest has properly been notified of the court hearing, and there are no challengers, the Judge will grant whatever is requested by those present.

If there is no real estate transferred in a Will, then the assets named in the Will are often distributed without even going to probate. If third parties such as banks or the department of motor vehicles are involved, probate may still become necessary.

When Challenges are Made

Whenever there is a disagreement over how much property should be paid to a particular heir, there is a very real possibility of a challenge to the Will. This is most likely when someone is left out of a will, or if someone received an unusual amount of assets prior to their parent’s death, and then the estate plan gives them an equal share of what remains. If a challenger can show evidence that the decedent signed the Will when evidence exists that they were not of sound mind, the judge has the ability to declare the Will invalid. If someone has already been diagnosed with any mental health

issues, this can become a challenge to the creation and signing of a Will or Trust.

If you are aware of someone who has unduly influenced a loved one, you can report the situation to Utah’s Adult Protection Services. An investigator with experience in similar situations will contact those involved to learn what may be going on and help to protect the aged and infirm.

Shielding the Will or Trust

One solid method of protecting a Will or Trust is for a signer to visit their primary care physician near the date of the signing of the Will or Trust. The doctor can write a letter or make a clear notation in their records. The doctor must state that the patient is able to identify their heirs and their property, or make some other clear statement about the patient being of “sound mind”. Any later challenge to the validity of the Will or Trust has small chance of success in the face of such evidence.

Visiting a doctor can sometimes be a risky move. Each state has its own rules defining capacity necessary to sign a will. Some doctors are casual in their analysis of capacity, and may ask the wrong questions. One client of mine visited a doctor in preparation for signing his will. The doctor asked him how much money was in his bank account. He

didn’t know. He later explained to me that he has his son do his bookkeeping for him, so he did not know the amount. Unfortunately, the doctor put a permanent notation in the client’s medical record stating that he did not have capacity.

The doctor may have been trying to ask a question that met the required standard of knowing what your assets are. A better approach might have been, “Do you own any assets? How many different parcels of land? Where are they located? Do you have any investments? Who manages them for you? A good follow up question could be to ask how many children they have and whether a child has children of their own and how many. This question shows whether the patient knows their natural heirs, whether they intend to gift to them or not. If a doctor doesn’t already know the answers to these questions, it may be helpful to have a close family member present that can confirm whether the patient’s answers are correct. The best approach is to perform one of the commonly used tests of mental capacity.

After going to the doctor, some clients will invite their heirs to read their new estate plan, and then ask them to sign a statement that the heir accepts the plan and won’t challenge it when the client passes away. This can help if

there is any question regarding the capacity of the client. Including all possible heirs in the process will also guard against manipulation by a single heir. Keeping your wishes private is always up to the client, but sometimes doing so may backfire and allow a jilted heir an opportunity to reverse those wishes later after the client has died.

Too Early to Sign

Minors (under age 18) are unable to make a Will in Utah. Most minors die without a spouse or children, which will result in their assets being given to their parents.

Is it Too Late?

Whether or not it is too late to sign a Will or Trust is a great question to ask an estate planning attorney. With over seventeen years of experience, we can answer your questions and advise you on your options. Give us a call today! See ad on page 21.

THIS ARTICLE OFFERS GENERAL LEGAL PRINCIPLES AND IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR ACTUALLY MEETING WITH AN ATTORNEY TO DISCUSS YOUR SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES. DO NOT TAKE ANY ACTION BASED ON THIS ARTICLE WITHOUT FIRST DISCUSSING YOUR PROBLEM WITH AN ATTORNEY.

‘TIS THE SEASON TO SERVE.

FIND SOMEONE DAILY AND DO SOMETHING TO PUT A SMILE ON THEIR FACE.

'Twas the day after Christmas, and all through the house,
 All the garbage was strewn on the floor and the couch;
 The stockings, once hung by the chimney with care,
 Were down on the ground, contents flung everywhere.
 The children were still nestled snug in their beds,
 Asleep, with their favorite new toy by their heads;
 And Momma and I, still in need of a



nap,
 Were staring at wrappings no longer a-wrap.
 Looking over the living room, so full of clutter,
 That I thought it was hopeless and started to mutter;
 There was paper, and boxes, packing peanuts, and more,
 There were those stupid twisty ties-- all over the floor.
 Then, all of the sudden, I moved like the Flash,
 And gathered up garbage to throw in the trash;
 The Wife and I picked up and swept

with the broom,
 And worked 'til we'd cleaned up most all of the room.
 When what to my wondering ear did appear,
 But the sound of the garbage truck rumbling near;
 With a little old driver, all bearded and thick,
 That he looked, for a moment, like a grungy St. Nick.
 I gathered my bags and I ran to the street,
 For I knew that the garbage truck I had to beat;
 'Else I'd live in a house full of garbage all week,
 And if it sat around that long, no doubt it would reek.

I stuffed bags in my dumpster, one, two, three, and four,
 And when I thought it was full, I stuffed in several more!
 I filled it so full I could not close the top,
 It was bursting with garbage; it was ready to pop.
 Then the truck it approached, and it was sort of smelly,
 It picked up my trash and dumped it into its belly.
 And dropping my empty bin back to the ground,
 The truck pulled away with a loud revving sound.
 And the driver yelled out as he left in a streak,
 "Merry Christmas to all! I'll be back here next week."

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Hi I'm John Bird with Utah Health Insurance Advisors in Spanish Fork. I'm a father of 4 children, two boys & two girls from 20 down to 8 years old. I love spending time with my wife and kids, doing anything outdoors especially motorcycle riding, car rides, skiing and baseball. I love what I do for a living as we get to help families and individuals daily with researching and recommending quality Health Insurance options that can really help you when the need arises. My company specializes in Health, Life and Medicare Insurance and Supplements that can enhance your basic coverages. We offer individual

Marketplace plans and also have Off-Exchange options too for your best selection of quality Health Insurance plans anywhere. I can help you to navigate the best plan options for you and your family. With our awesome plan analysis tool we can quickly identify the best plan to help you confidently pick the right plan. Enhance your plan with Supplements, we've seen these additional benefits help so many families from an unforeseen accident and illness. Our goal is to help protect you and your family and be your lifetime go to agent. We offer benefits for Dental, Vision, Hearing, Cancer,



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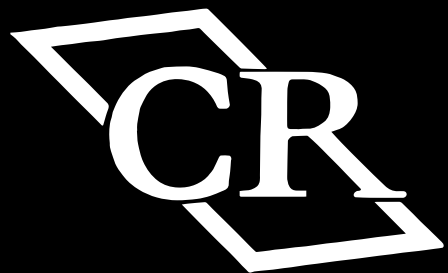
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