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December 10–24 Adoption Specials
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December 10–21 Toy Drive for Shelter Animals

Bring a bit of holiday cheer to shelter animals waiting for their furever home. Donations may be dropped off at the shelter or one of the following locations:
- Kingsport Public Library (downtown)
- Woodstone Deli in Colonial Heights (upstairs next to JCPenney)
- Walkabout Sally’s in Fort Henry Mall (upstairs next to JCPenney)

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2141 IDLE HOUR RD, KINGSPORT, TN 37660

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Happy December!!! I love the Holidays. it’s my favorite time of the year. So the next few weeks make sure to check out all the great things going on in our community. I can’t believe it’s already been two months since The Loafer became part of our family. We have loved laying it out each week, getting to know new clients and are so thankful for all the support of our community. We will be having great gift ideas for those special people in your life, as well as great music and plays to go see. Let’s not forget the less fortunate this time of the year! As you know we sponsor an Adopt a Veteran event at Christmas time. We give them Christmas!! They fought for our country and this is the very least we can do for them to make their holiday a little better. If you would like more information or would like to help please call our office. Don’t forget to pick up Tri-Cities BEST Home Magazine that is on stands now and Tri-Cities Eats Magazine!! Always support our local businesses.

Happy Holidays!!

Kimberly Dugger
Publisher
MEET THE STAFF

KIMBERLY DUGGER
PUBLISHER
"Behind every successful woman is a tribe of other successful women who have her back."

JACLYN LAW
OFFICE MANAGER
"Laughter is timeless, Imagination has no age, and dreams are forever" - Walt Disney

KATLIN BUCHANAN
OFFICE ASSISTANT
"She is Clothed in Strength and Dignity and She Laughs Without Fear of The Future" Proverbs 31:25

LORI HOWELL
ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
"Behind every successful woman is a tribe of other successful women who have her back."

HALEY HOPKINS
DISTRIBUTION, TRI-CITIES BEST HOME MAGAZINE & TRI-CITIES EATS

LEONA GRACIA
SALES REPRESENTATIVE
FOOD BLOG
Chef / Bartender of the Week

Do you know a chef or bartender who we should feature on the weekly Food Blog column? We want to know!

Please call 423.722.3727 or email Jlaw@marketinnovationsjc.com to nominate.
A Great Disaster
Live at The Down Home
Concert to help support the band’s fifth studio album

JOHNSON CITY, December 15, 2018—The Johnson City based ensemble, A Great Disaster, returns to The Down Home this December to share some of their favorite original songs and stories. The band’s sound can be described as fusion-Americana, blending Appalachian folk and classic country impressions with healthy doses of jam-rock, jazz, and indie-pop influences. Proceeds from this concert will help support the fifth A Great Disaster studio album, Over a Dark Water, which is being recorded this winter at Rich Tone Recordings in Bristol, VA.

A Great Disaster will take the stage at The Down Home on Saturday, December 15. Doors open at 7 pm and the concert will last from 8-10 pm with one short intermission. Tickets are $12 general admission, $10 for students, and can be purchased either at the door or in advance online at downhome.com. The Down Home is located at 300 W Main St. in Johnson City.

For more information, follow A Great Disaster on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, or visit the band’s website at agreatdisaster.com.

Who are we?
We are a Christian family and hold firmly to our belief in God, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We read, trust, and believe the inspired God-breathed Word of the Holy Bible, and we hold tight to the traditional family values. We are proud Americans that love our country and our flag, plus we are Vols fans!

Special Niche- Michael and Vicki felt a special need to start “Our Home Doggy Daycare & Boarding”. There was a void for good people with good dogs to have a great, safe, and clean place to leave their faithful canine family members while the parents were away. Michael and Vicki have two dogs of their own that live happily together. They love their home and their pets, and they are confident that your dogs will love Our Home away from home too.

Slumber Party- Exactly, Michael and Vicki are always on site 24/7 and guess what? They sleep in the dog house, just to make sure that your loved one is safe and not home sick. They do not use crates unless you prefer that your pet sleeps in a crate.

Dog Gone it Fun- The best dog gone dog house rules for Our Home Doggy Daycare & Boarding is that it is a fun, safe, and comfortable place for your dog. Michael and Vicki evaluate the behavior, temperament, and compatibility of your dog before coming aboard. There is a “Meet-and-Greet” interview and a “Evaluation Day” for all first-time dogs. All dogs that stay must be friendly, non-threatening, well-behaved, and housebroken. The meet and greet allows everyone to see the facility and then decide if you want your dogs to have a great vacation at Our Home Doggy Daycare & Boarding.
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12-12 Open Mic Night
12-13 Bike Night with Rusty Steel
12-14 Karaoke with Missy and Marcus
12-15 Justin Michaels
12-16 Karaoke with Missy and Marcus
12-17 DJ Trivia 7pm

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12-16 Karaoke with Missy and Marcus
12-17 DJ Trivia 7pm

CALL FOR Sponsors for ADOPT A VETERAN

Sponsored by Market Innovations

This holiday season, support our veterans in need by providing clothing, blankets, and other necessities.

Contact Market Innovations to get involved.
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JLaw@marketinnovationsjc.com

December 18, 2018
6pm-9pm
Memorial Park Community Center
510 Bert Street
Johnson City, TN 37601

VETERAN OF THE WEEK

Do you know a veteran who we should feature as our Veteran of the Week? Let us know!

Please call 423.722.3727 or email Jlaw@marketinnovationsjc.com to nominate.
Breath-taking views, dozens of hiking trails, and a string of beautiful recreation areas make the Blue Ridge Parkway the most popular units of the entire National Park Service. Over 16 million explored its 469 miles of blacktop in 2017 alone! Unknown to most of these visitors, there are actually nine other roadways in the system. While five of these are little more than congested urban highways in the Washington, D.C. area, the remaining are more scenic in nature and usually serve to connect larger national parks together. Williamsburg's Colonial Parkway provides an easy route between the three historic parks that preserve our nation's oldest settlements. Rather short at only twenty-seven miles, John D. Rockefeller Jr. Parkway fulfills its purpose to connect Yellowstone with its southern neighbor, Grand Teton National Park. Natchez Trace Parkway begins just south of Nashville and follows its namesake trail deep into Mississippi; it is the second-longest at 444 miles. Foothills Parkway is probably the most unique of these scenic drives, as it currently consists of three unconnected segments. In addition, it isn’t considered to be its own unit, but instead is included as a portion of Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Originally authorized by Congress in 1944, the parkway originally came about due to a bit of jealousy on the part of Tennessee residents. More than a few people were upset when the Blue Ridge Parkway's route was finalized since it didn't venture through the Volunteer State. Years of pressure from Congressman B. Carroll Reece finally caused Congress to allow a second, smaller parkway to be developed that would serve to showcase the national park's iconic peaks from a distance. Construction of the roadway wouldn't begin for some time, as thousands of acres needed to be purchased across a seventy-mile swath of the Smokies' foothills. 1960 would see the first signs of construction atop Chilhowee Mountain.

By 1968, the first three segments of the parkway opened to visitors. Segment A begins at I-40 and ventures across English Mountain, while Segments G and H traverse the long ridgecrest of Chilhowee Mountain before descending to U.S. 129. Totaling twenty-six miles, these segments were all that consisted of the parkway for several decades. Later construction would include a section of U.S. 441 just north of Gatlinburg as well as the Gatlinburg Bypass, easing traffic congestion heading into the main entrance of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The next section of the main parkway between Walland and Wears Valley would prove difficult, first due to budget cuts and later due to construction difficulties. When work finally began again in mid 80's, engineers had trouble getting the roadway across the extremely steep terrain of Carr Mountain just north of Townsend. This led to a short 1.6-mile segment that would become known as the “Missing Link.”

It would take almost twenty years, from 1999 until 2018, for crews to build the intricate series of bridges that would span this gap. November 10th of this year finally saw the opening of segments F and E, giving motorists an additional sixteen miles of roadway to explore. Recently we were able to make it there ourselves during the peak of fall foliage, which for the foothills falls almost a full month after the leaves have reached their zenith in the Smokies' higher elevations.

We started at Walland and traveled east on the parkway towards Wears Valley. Immediately after crossing Little River, the roadway begins a sharp climb to the top of Bates Mountain. The very first pullover offers a fantastic view of the Little River valley and U.S. 321 far below, wiggling its way beside the river. Bates Mountain is fairly level and the next few miles feel very similar to Chilhowee Mountain. There are several overlooks that look toward the national park, but the best views are yet to come.

After descending to cross a valley, the road steepens considerably as it nears the former “Missing Link.” While it might have given many an engineer a headache, this is by far the most beautiful portion of the Foothills Parkway. Views rival that of the Blue Ridge Parkway, as Mount LeConte, Cove Mountain, and Thunderhead all crowd the horizon. Sidewalks and large shoulders encourage visitors to get out of their cars and walk this spectacular portion, including the newly-constructed viaduct. Similar to the Blue Ridge Parkways' iconic Lynn Cove Viaduct, this elevated roadway soars above the slopes to protect the fragile ecosystems clinging to the mountainside.

From this point on, the parkway gradually descends. Great views look out over Wears Valley and across to the towering slopes of Round Top and Cove Mountain on the other side. It all ends too soon we must exit onto Wears Valley Road. Visitors need to understand that while the work is completed, visitor amenities are still absent on this portion. There are no restrooms, trails, or campgrounds, but that will hopefully change soon. In addition, construction might begin on the next section sooner than one might think. According to a statement released by the National Park Service, environmental impact studies are already beginning. $20 million in funding will need to be secured in order to build section D. This will continue across Wears Valley and over Cove Mountain in order to connect with U.S. 441 just south of Pigeon Forge.
CBC, LLC Wins Award For Bringing Artificial Intelligence to the Tri-Cities

CBC, LLC, an A/R management firm based in the heart of the Tri-Cities, was announced the winner of the Top 10 Innovative Agency award on October 22, 2018.

This award recognizes that CBC, LLC has taken steps toward implementing a combination of artificial intelligence with a company-wide platform of communication capabilities. Not only has CBC, LLC incorporated texting and emailing of debtor communications, but they also have introduced Alex, their virtual agent that creatively combines the modern technology of mobile, browser, cloud computing, and voice- recognition. Alex has the ability to speak in 8 different languages and is available 24 hours, seven days a week, and 365 days of the year.

With technology advancing everyday, companies across the world are discovering new ways to innovate and leverage artificial intelligence to significantly enhance their customer service experience. Marc A. Carter, President of this award winning company, said, “Alex, our new virtual agent at CBC, LLC, is an excellent example of innovative customer service that is meeting a real need in our industry. We are now able to meet our customers’ needs around the clock, while providing easy, immediate support on a multi-generational and multicultural platform.”

Over the years, CBC, LLC has grown from a respected local provider to a nationally recognized firm serving the needs of more than three dozen state and multistate healthcare providers. The company prides themselves in being one of the most respected and effective collection firms in the industry, and has a corporate motto, “Large enough to handle your business, small enough to care!” With the help of Alex, CBC, LLC is able to handle extensive amounts of business on a monthly basis, while still providing the personal service that customers look for in a business.

For more information on the award winning company visit www.cbcollects.com or call 423-354-0035.

Amanda Anne Platt & The Honeycutters Return to Johnson City's Down Home on Dec. 14th

Amanda Anne Platt & The Honeycutters are on tour with their latest album, a self-titled disc released in June of 2017 on Organic Records. Lyricaly driven, the songs of Amanda Anne Platt & The Honeycutters blend the band’s old-school country roots attitude with their shared influences of rock and folk. Amanda says of the album, “I think it’s just about life and all that that entails. Including but not limited to death, strangers, birthdays, money, leaving, arriving, seasons, corruption, and love.”

“This is a band that does everything right,” says Goldmine’s Mike Greenblatt. “Platt deserves all that might come to her over this, her fifth (and best) album. Backed by pedal steel, electric guitar, keyboards, bass, drums, percussion, and vocal harmony, it’s Platt’s show as she writes, sings and co-produces. Complete with lyrics of introspection with the kind of words you can chew on long after the album ends, it also works on a lighter level by dint of the fact that it just sounds so damn good. Go as deep as you want. It’s all good, as they say.”

Based in Asheville, North Carolina, Amanda is a storyteller by nature with an incredible band backing her. Performing along with Amanda Anne Platt, The Honeycutters are Matt Smith (pedal steel and guitar), Rick Cooper (bass), and Evan Martin (drums).

There is an empathetic and charming wit ingrained in Amanda’s songwriting. She has a knack for accessing a deep well of emotion and applying it to her story-telling, whether she is writing from her own experiences or immersing herself into the melody of emotions in another person’s life.

“She’s soothing (even in the hurtin’ songs) and sobering (except for the drinkin’ songs) and nuanced in a way that I think tops even those rather famous ladies of the moment named Margo and Kacey... I’d be hard pressed to find a finer string of recordings from any band working in the classic country/mountain tradition in these last five years,” writes Music City Roots’ Craig Havighurst.

A homegrown entity, the band is critically acclaimed locally, regionally, nationally, as well as overseas. Amanda Anne Platt & The Honeycutters placed #2 (sandwiched between Jason Isbell and Gregg Allman) in their regional radio station WNCW’s year end listeners poll for 2017! The station’s Music Director Martin Anderson said to No Depression, “Amanda Platt writes songs on par with Lucinda, Isbell, Lauderdale, Hank Sr. In my opinion, anyway.”

After a phenomenal response in 2017, the band went on their second extensive tour of the UK this summer which also included shows in Spain, Belgium, and the Netherlands. The UK’s American Roots’ Magazine Mike Morrison writes, “This is a band whose back catalogue is a match for anyone’s and yet still they’re improving. Modern country music really doesn’t get much better than the highly individual style of Amanda Anne Platt and the Honeycutters.”

Amanda Anne Platt & The Honeycutters recently received a shout out from Fodor’s Travel Magazine in a write-up about the band’s hometown of Asheville, NC, and a couple of years back they were also featured on XPN World Cafe’s Sense of Place series.

Tickets for the show are $20 and available in advance at downhome.com or at the door on the night of the show. Show time is 8 p.m.

For more information visit downhome.com or honeycutters.com
If you or your band are playing in the upcoming week and would like to be in The Spotlight, go online to: theloaferonline.com. Due to last minute cancellations or changes, please call the location to confirm.

- SATURDAY - Dec. 15-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>House Cat &amp; The Roof</td>
<td>Bloom Cafe and Listening Room</td>
<td>8pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aaron&quot;Woody&quot; Wood</td>
<td>The Willow Tree Coffeehouse &amp; Music Room</td>
<td>8pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jaydub “Giant the Grey”</td>
<td>Sportsman Pub, Bristol TN</td>
<td>8pm</td>
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<td>BIG Son</td>
<td>Jiggy Ray's Downtown Pizzeria</td>
<td>8pm</td>
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<td>Momma Molasses</td>
<td>Blackbird Bakery</td>
<td>8pm</td>
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<td>JP Parsons</td>
<td>Quaker Steak and Lube (Bristol, VA)</td>
<td>8pm</td>
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<td>Corey Smith</td>
<td>The Paramount Center for the Arts</td>
<td>8pm</td>
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<td>Sam Collie Live</td>
<td>Model City Tap House</td>
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<tr>
<td>A Great Disaster</td>
<td>The Down Home</td>
<td>8pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ugly Christmas Sweater Party w/ Spank</td>
<td>Holston River Brewing Co</td>
<td>8:30pm</td>
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- SATURDAY - Dec. 15-

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>Soul Swagger</td>
<td>CJ's Sports Bar</td>
<td>9pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flannel</td>
<td>Wild Wing Cafe</td>
<td>10pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Real Life Heavies 3-band lineup!!</td>
<td>Capone's</td>
<td>10pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Well Dogs</td>
<td>The Beer Run</td>
<td>6pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alex Baughman acoustic show</td>
<td>Sunshine Mkt2</td>
<td>7pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Austin Moody and Friends present A Country Christmas 2018</td>
<td>The Mountain Music Museum Official</td>
<td>7pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christmas Dance w/ Railway Express</td>
<td>Fraternal Order of Eagles 3141</td>
<td>8PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southern Countrymen Band</td>
<td>Thompson’s Produce</td>
<td>7pm</td>
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- FRIDAY - Dec. 14-

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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Evening with The Tides Dance Band</td>
<td>Jonesborough Barrel House Southern Kitchen</td>
<td>8pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dirt Road Rising</td>
<td>Stateline Bar &amp; Grille</td>
<td>7pm</td>
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<td>Mahto and the Loose Balloons LIVE</td>
<td>Gypsy Circus Cider Co</td>
<td>7pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018 Tri-Cities Christmas Open Acoustic Jam for Toys For Tots</td>
<td>Stateline Bar &amp; Grille</td>
<td>7pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bill Edwards</td>
<td>Quaker Steak and Lube (Bristol, VA)</td>
<td>8pm</td>
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- FRIYDAY - Dec. 14-

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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Come See Us</td>
<td><a href="http://www.reverb.com/shop/honeycuttmsnc">www.reverb.com/shop/honeycuttmsnc</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For Great Holiday Savings</td>
<td>525 W. Oakland Ave. Ste 3</td>
<td>(423) 797-1954</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Johnson City, TN 37604</td>
<td>(423) 202-7788</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:choneycuttdrumz@yahoo.com">choneycuttdrumz@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Open on Sundays 1-6pm in December</td>
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Karaoke

**TUESDAY**
Karaoke w/ Crossroads & Josh Blevins at Dawg House Tavern
Karaoke at Zachary’s Steakhouse
Family Night Karaoke at CJ’s Sports Bar - Kingsport
Karaoke at Numan’s - Johnson City
Karaoke w/ Absolute Entertainment at Woodstone Deli - Kingsport

**WEDNESDAY**
Karaoke w/ Southern Sounds Karaoke at American Legion 8pm
Karaoke at CJ’s Sports Bar
Turn the Page Karaoke at VFW Post 2108 – Johnson City

**THURSDAY**
Karaoke w/ Absolute Entertainment at Macado’s – Kingsport
Karaoke at Zachary’s Steakhouse
Michael’s Krazy Karaoke at Stateline Bar & Grill
Karaoke at CJ’s Sports Bar
Karaoke w/ DJ Marquez Top Shelf Entertainment at Wild Wings Café JC
Karaoke at Numan’s - Johnson City
Karaoke w/ Absolute Entertainment at New Beginnings - Johnson City
Karaoke at Jiggy Rays Pizzeria
Karaoke at Wild Wing Cafe Johnson City

**FRIDAY**
Karaoke w/ Southern Sounds Karaoke at Sportsman’s Bar & Grill 9pm
Karaoke w/ Shane Rouse at Bear’s Bar
Karaoke at Kingsport Moose Lodge
Karaoke w/ Reverb Karaoke at The Cottage 8:30pm
Turn the Page Karaoke at VFW Post 2108 – Johnson City
Karaoke w/ Absolute Entertainment at Woodstone Deli - Kingsport
Karaoke w/ Toddzilla at Sportsman’s Pub
Karaoke at Elizabethton VFW
Karaoke w/ DJ Marquez & Top Shelf Entertainment at Holiday Inn (Exit 7) – Bristol, VA
Karaoke at Numan’s – Johnson City

**SATURDAY**
Karaoke w/ Toddzilla at Sportsman’s Pub
Karaoke at Kingsport Moose Lodge
Turn the Page Karaoke at VFW Post 2108 – Johnson City
Karaoke w/ Absolute Entertainment at Macado’s – Kingsport
Karaoke at Numan’s – Johnson City
Karaoke w/ Tony & Rod at CJ’s Sports Bar
College Football SATURDAYS w/ DJ Paul Gallo AND Post Game Karaoke!

**SUNDAY**
Karaoke w/ Absolute Entertainment at Woodstone Deli - Kingsport

---

**Trivia**

**TUESDAY**
Wild Wing Café JC- Trivia Tuesdays w/Challenge Entertainment 8:30pm
Johnson City Brewing Company- Trivia Tuesdays 7pm
Aubrey’s Johnson City- Trivia Night 7pm

**WEDNESDAY**
Tipton Street Pub- Trivia Wednesdays 9pm
Aubrey’s Bristol- Trivia Night 7pm
Johnson City Moose Lodge 1831- DJ Trivia 7pm

**THURSDAY**
Holy Taco & Cantina Trivia Night 9pm
JRH Brewing - Trivia Night 7pm

**MONDAY**
Barley Waters- Trivia Night 7pm
Yee-Haw Brewing- Trivia Mondays 7pm

Cryptogram: "When people are taken out of their depths they lose their heads, no matter how charming a bluff they may put up."

DropQuote: "Our actions are like the terminations of verses, which we rhyme as we please."
**Tuesday - December 11th**

- **Stuffed a Stocking Drive - Gabriel's Christmas ALL DAY**
- **Town Christmas Decorating Contest - Town of Unicoi ALL DAY**
- **F3 Free Men's Bootcamp - Founders Park 5:30 AM**
- **Erwin Tinsel Trail - The Gathering Place Park 8 AM**
- **Celebration of Trees - Historic Jonesborough 8 AM**
- **Winterfest Art Show - Sycamore Shoals State Historic Park 9 AM**
- **Santa Claus is Coming to Town - Barter Theatre 10 AM**
- **Santa's Village - Fort Henry Mall 11 AM**
- **Wooden Snowflakes - Barter Theatre 2 PM**
- **Appalachian R&C&D Holiday Open House - JRH Brewing 3 PM**
- **Library Movie: A Christmas Story - Bristol Public Library 6 PM**
- **National Lampoon's Xmas Vacation Trivia - Johnson City Brewing Company 7 PM**
- **Texas Hold 'Em - CJs Sports Bar 7 PM**
- **FIA Free Women's Fitness Tues. Evenings - Founders Park 7 PM**
- **SINGO - Barley Waters 7 PM**
- **Golf Hole Tournament! - CJs Sports Bar 7 PM**
- **Elf: The Musical - Barter Theatre 7:30 PM**
- **Santa Claus is Coming to Town - Barter Theatre 7:30 PM**
- **Bingo - Tipton Street Pub 9 PM**

**Wednesday - December 12th**

- **Stuffed a Stocking Drive - Gabriel's Christmas ALL DAY**
- **Town Christmas Decorating Contest - Town of Unicoi ALL DAY**
- **Erwin Tinsel Trail - The Gathering Place Park 8 AM**
- **Celebration of Trees - Historic Jonesborough 8 AM**
- **Winterfest Art Show - Sycamore Shoals State Historic Park 9 AM**
- **Santa Claus is Coming to Town - Barter Theatre 10 AM**
- **Santa's Village - Fort Henry Mall 11 AM**
- **The Santaland Diaries - Barter Theatre 10 AM**
- **Elf - The Musical - Barter Theatre 10 AM**
- **The Santaland Diaries - Barter Theatre 11:15 AM & 7 PM**
- **Bingo - Tipton Street Pub 9 PM**

**Thursday - December 13th**

- **Stuffed a Stocking Drive - Gabriel's Christmas ALL DAY**
- **Town Christmas Decorating Contest - Town of Unicoi ALL DAY**
- **Erwin Tinsel Trail - The Gathering Place Park 8 AM**
- **Celebration of Trees - Jonesborough 8 AM**
- **Winterfest Art Show - Sycamore Shoals State Historic Park 9 AM**
- **Santa Claus is Coming to Town - Barter Theatre 10 AM**
- **Santa's Village - Fort Henry Mall 11 AM**
- **Cookie Exchange - Noelle 11:30 AM**
- **SORBA Tri-Cities Pint Night and Dirty Thursday Night - Yee-Haw Brewing Company 5 PM**
- **2018 Annual KOSEB Awards - Meadowview Conference Resort & Convention Center 6 PM**
- **The Great Pie Exchange - Johnson City Brewing Company 7 PM**
- **Elf Trivia Night - Gypsy Circus Cider Company 7 PM**
- **Barley Waters Ugly Sweater Christmas Party - Barley Waters 7 PM**
- **FIA Free Women's Fitness Thurs. Evenings - Founders Park 7 PM**
- **Elf: The Musical - Barter Theatre 7:30 PM**
- **Barley Waters - Ugly Sweater Christmas Party - Barley Waters 7 PM**
- **FIA Free Women’s Fitness Thurs. Evenings - Founders Park 7 PM**
- **Elf: The Musical - Barter Theatre 7:30 PM**
- **Wooden Snowflakes - Barter Theatre 7:30 PM**
- **Christmas Family Movie Night - Kingsport Parks and Recreation 6:30 PM**
- **Nuncrackers - Kingsport Theatre Guild 7 PM**
- **Ugly Christmas Sweater Party - Tulips Grub & Pub 7 PM**
- **JCCF's Christmas Story Musical - Johnson City Community Theatre 7:30 PM**
- **Theatre Bristol's "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever" - Theatre Bristol 7:30 PM**
- **Every Christmas Story Ever Told! (and then some) - Blue Moon Theatre Company 8 PM**
- **Elf: The Musical - Barter Theatre 8 PM**
- **Wooden Snowflakes - Barter Theatre 8 PM**
- **The Comedy Zone - Maddie's Event Hall VFW Post 6975 8 PM**
- **Ugly Christmas Sweater Party - Wonderland Lounge/Bar N Grill 9 PM**
- **1940's USO Christmas Show - Jonesborough Repertory Theatre 7:30 PM**

**Saturday - December 15th**

- **F3 free men's bootcamp - Founders Park 8 AM**
- **Town Christmas Decorating Contest - Town of Unicoi ALL DAY**
- **Erwin Tinsel Trail - The Gathering Place Park 8 AM**
- **Celebration of Trees - Historic Jonesborough 8 AM**
- **Winterfest Art Show - Sycamore Shoals State Historic Park 9 AM**
- **Santa Claus is Coming to Town - Barter Theatre 10 AM**
- **Santa's Village - Fort Henry Mall 11 AM**
- **Holiday Market - Boone Street Market 10 AM**
- **All Day Gift Extravaganza - Noelle 10 AM**
- **Oyermountain Christmas Open House - Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area 10 AM**
- **Breakfast with Santa - Chuckey Depot School 10 AM**
- **Tangled in Tinsel ~ A Holiday Celebration - The Black Olive 8:30 AM**
- **HomeTown Throwdown - JRH Brewing 1 PM**
- **Christmas Market - International Storytelling Center 11 AM**
- **Lunch with Santa - Quaker Steak and Lube (Bristol, VA) 12 PM**
- **Every Christmas Story Ever Told! (and then some) - Blue Moon Theatre Company 2 PM**
- **Nuncrackers - Kingsport Theatre Guild 2 PM & 7 PM**
- **Wooden Snowflakes - Barter Theatre 2 PM**
- **Elf - The Musical - Barter Theatre 3 PM**
- **Stuffed a Stocking Drive - Gabriel's Christmas ALL DAY**
- **The Santaland Diaries - Barter Theatre 7 PM**
- **Santa Claus is Coming to Town - Barter Theatre 11:15 AM & 7 PM**
- **Every Christmas Story Ever Told! (and then some) - Blue Moon Theatre Company 8 PM**
- **1940's USO Christmas Show - Jonesborough Repertory Theatre 2 PM, 5 PM, & 7:30 PM**

**Monday - December 17th**

- **Stuffed a Stocking Drive - Gabriel's Christmas ALL DAY**
- **FIA Free Women's Fitness - Mondays - Founders Park 5:30 AM**
- **F3 Free Men’s Run Group - Science Hill Track 5:30 AM**
- **Erwin Tinsel Trail - The Gathering Place Park 8 AM**
- **Celebration of Trees - Historic Jonesborough 8 AM**
- **Santa Claus is Coming to Town - Barter Theatre 10:30 AM**
- **Santa's Village - Fort Henry Mall 11 AM**
- **Polar Express Party - Kingsport Public Library 4 PM**
I love animated movies that are not so childish they can be enjoyed by adults and are not so adult they can be enjoyed by kids. Such is the case with the new CGI animated film "Ralph Breaks the Internet", a sequel to the 2012 film "Wreck-It-Ralph" in which we met the lovable character from the arcade game Fit-It-Felix Jr. (voiced by John C. Reilly). The first film also introduced Vanellope von Schweetz (voiced by Sarah Silverman), a racer in the game Sugar Rush, and Ralph's best friend. The two are constant companions at a arcade, and during the course of the new film confront the instillation of Wi-Fi at the arcade, and a broken steering wheel on Vanellope's game. The aforementioned actions lead the two on a trip into the internet after they discover the replacement wheel for the game can be found on eBay. Once in the marvelous world of the internet, they purchase the wheel for Sugar Rush only to realize they have made an impossibly high bid and only have 24 hours to complete their purchase. The duo seeks help via Spanley, a pop-up advertiser who assigns them the task of stealing a car belonging to a character named Shank (Gal Gadot) from the online game Slaughter Race. While their plan almost succeeds, they are presented with an idea from Shank, who films Ralph in a humiliating situation, and advises the two to post the video on BuzzTube in order to make money. However, all is well that ends well. After all who wants an animated movie to end on a sour note? This film is a pure delight, with plenty of clever repartee between characters, and an ingenious depiction of the world wide web. I especially enjoyed the segment with the Princesses letting their "hair down" with Vanellope, and the racing scenes in the Slaughter Race segment, which would be at home in any of the "Fast and Furious" movies. For a fun time at the movies, I suggest you take a break during the busy holiday season and head to your local theater for a viewing of "Ralph Breaks the Internet", a film full of surprises. (Rated PG)
True Stories

In my early 20s, the friends I spent most of my time with and I shared one trait. We were obsessed with music. In particular, we had a strong obsession with the music of the CBGBs late ‘70s punk era. Our parties were often filled with the sounds that came out of the fabled venue. The Ramones, Blondie, Television, and especially Talking Heads. Of those bands, Talking Heads were probably the band we talked about the most. Whenever one of us would find an elusive Talking Heads album to add to our record collections, we would call one another to brag about it—this was before texting and well before the predominance of social media.

As part of our obsession with Talking Heads when we learned that the group’s frontman, David Byrne, had made a movie we had to get our hands on a copy. Incredibly enough, that wasn’t hard to do. Though Byrne’s lone outing as a director, 1986’s musical comedy “True Stories” was a disappointment at the box office and something of a cult film, it had been given a DVD release by Warner Brothers in the early days of that format’s life—it wasn’t out of print. The DVD was mastered from the same home video master of the film that had been created for the VHS and Laserdisc releases of the film, it wasn’t in widescreen, it was in good ol’ 4:3 AKA full frame.

“True Stories” is presented as sort of almost documentary/musical/ comedy. Set in the fictional town of Virgil, Texas the film is a loose narrative, a series of vignettes that show the town preparing for a “Celebration of Specialness” to mark the 150th anniversary of the town’s founding. The film is called “True Stories” as all the characters and events were inspired by stories in tabloid magazines that Byrne had encountered. There’s The Culvers (the late Spalding Gray & Annie McEnroe), a happily married couple who never speak directly to one another, Louis Fyne—played by John Goodman in his big screen debut—who is a lonely bachelor that takes out ads for a wife and even has a flashing sign in his yard that says “Wife Wanted.”

There’s The Lazy Woman (Swoosie Kurtz), who is so rich she can spend all day in bed being tended to by various machines, her assistant Mr. Tucker—played by the legendary Pops Staples of The Staple Singles—who also is a positive voucher practitioner that helps people with their troubles. The Lying Woman (Jo Harvey Allen) who tells anything about her life to anyone who will listen—including the time her mother sold the tail she was born with to secret agents working for Lyndon Johnson at a swap meet. Fyne, The Lying Woman, and Ramon—a singer who can hear people’s “tones” played by Tito Larriva—all work at Varicorp—a computer company who is sponsoring the celebration of specialness.

Like some of those early Talking Heads songs much of what “True Stories” focuses on is a celebration of the mundane, the beauty in everyday objects. The things no one thinks about as being special or unique. Though the town of Virgil is another small town with eccentric people, this film presents them as part of a tapestry of life. It’s not there to comment or make fun, they’re a reflection of America. “True Stories” is sort of “time locked” into 1986—which is OK—I think it’s intentional. It serves as a reminder of what life was like to an extent before everything becomes digital. Oddly enough, there’s forecasting of that as people who work at the computer company mention “the world is changing.”

The Celebration of Specialness concludes with a massive outdoor talent show—which doubles as a reason for there to be music in the film. The soundtrack is great, it’s a bunch of Talking Heads songs after all. Running at 89 minutes, “True Stories” is a delightful movie to spend some time with. It’s artistic and quirky, but also a little wholesome. Watching the film last night for the first time in a few years, I also found it an oddly nostalgic experience. Pinged my mind with memories of my early ‘20s, and my dimmest memories of the late ‘80s and how much of this movie felt like a short vacation to a time that wasn’t that long ago, yet a completely different place.

The Criterion Collection brings “True Stories” to blu-ray for the first time, and—as I mentioned about that previous DVD—marks the first time the movie has been released to home video in its original theatrical aspect ratio of 1.85:1. This blu-ray features a 4K restoration the film supervised by David Byrne and the film’s cinematographer Ed Lachman. This new transfer is simply stunning. It completely blows the decades-old home video transfer out of the water, I never really noticed what stunning colors “True Stories” had before, this blu-ray makes them shine beautifully. A new 5.1 DTS-HD MA surround soundtrack is also included, this new mix was supervised and approved by David Byrne.

Having been something of a “home video orphan” for years, Criterion brings a wonderful collection of bonus features to “True Stories.” There’s an hour-long documentary looking at the making of “True Stories” with Byrne and several of the film’s crew and creative team. “Real Life” a short documentary made on the film’s set during production, “No Time To Look Back” a visit to some of the locations used in the film 30 years later, and a short documentary about designer Tibor Kalman and his work on the film. Deleted Scenes and a Trailer round out the extras on the disc—all of these are great, and the documentary in particular on the making of the films adds much more appreciation to it for me.

Rounding the whole collection out are two really nice touches. A CD is included that contains the film’s complete soundtrack for the very first time. Both the score and the songs recorded by the actors in the film—that was also recorded by Talking Heads on an album of their own called “True Stories.” A booklet with essays is included, but printed and packaged to look like an old tabloid newspaper, complete with a middle fold.

With this wonderful new blu-ray from The Criterion Collection, I hope more people will discover “True Stories.” It’s a fun film that takes a look at the beautiful and extraordinary nature of every day in America. Even if you’re not a fan of Talking Heads or David Byrne, this one is worth a look. I hope you’ll check it out sometime. See you next week.
AGING AND THE ART OF MAINTENANCE

by Kathie Scalf

There's hardly a thing that scares me more in life than getting older, and with my birthday just a few weeks away I'm even more anxious about it than normal. After a certain point, birthdays become less and less of a celebration and more of just an uncomfortable reminder that time is whizzing by and there's nothing I can do to stop it. However, I will do everything within my power and finances to slow the cold hands of time so that I may hold on to my looks so long as god and modern medicine will allow me.

I get work done. I know many people, especially women, don't prefer to divulge this information. But I have no problems discussing the cosmetic enhancements I make to my face and hopefully the little bit of insight I can provide might help an interested party. Basically, as long as I can afford it, I will be filling, paralyzing, painting and spackling this melon of mine into a permanent state of youth, or at least some freak show that resembles it. Honestly, it's probably a good thing I have no money. God only knows what kind of trouble I would get myself into left to my own devices. Thankfully I turn my face over to an amazing professional who would never let me do something that was going to provide anything but beautiful and natural results. I would recommend Brooke Bentley and her staff at Advanced Medicine to anyone without hesitation. For the past 6 years I've turned to her and her team of specialists for everything from injections to lash extensions, facials, waxes, skincare and so much more and I've never been disappointed. Whoever you go to, make sure you do your homework and ensure the doctor comes highly recommended and is certified.

With all that being said, not all these procedures are a walk in the park. Believe it or not I am probably the most needle-phobic human being on the face of the planet. I have fainted every time I've gotten pierced or tattooed. The first time I went for Botox I passed out cold in the chair and that needle is miniscule. After 6 years of quarterly treatments, I have finally gotten past that but I still get anxious. Probably the worst experience I've had so far was when I did filler in my cheeks. My face was completely numbed prior to the procedure, however, like a moron I took a look at the needle as it was coming toward my face. She may as well have been holding a butcher knife.

"Is that the needle??!” I stuttered. “No. This is the needle that makes a hole for the other needle full of filler.” That did it. As soon as I felt the pressure of it going into my skin I started sweating profusely. Then I felt dizzy. “I need a trash can,” I mumbled as I was clumsily trying to remove my jacket. They handed me something that I knew was not going to be able to withstand what was about to come out of me. So, here I went jumping out of the chair, white as a sheet and fighting back nausea between seeing black spots dancing in front of my eyes. I took off toward the hall, just thinking if I made it to the bathroom everything would be ok. The last thing I remembered is everyone trying to stop me from doing that and the nurse yelling SHE’S NOT GONNA MAKE IT! I came back to life with my feet in the door of the bathroom and my head in the same nurse’s lap in the hallway while she waved actual smelling salts under my nose. I could see Brooke standing over me. “Did you at least finish the right side,” I asked hopefully. “No. We didn’t even start it.”

I have finally gotten past that but I still get anxious. Probably the worst experience I've had so far was when I did filler in my cheeks. My face was completely numbed prior to the procedure, however, like a moron I took a look at the needle as it was coming toward my face. She may as well have been holding a butcher knife.

It's not all about needles and injections. I highly recommend aesthetic procedures like dermal planing, microderm and chemical peels as well. A skilled professional will be able to consult with you and recommend a plan that will fit your budget and get you the exact results you desire. The way I see it, if I start tackling the old age monster now by doing little things (i.e. skincare, a little Botox and filler here and there, facials, etc) I won't have to have a full-blown, behind-the-ears face lift-n-tuck when I'm older.

No matter your feelings on the subject, we all want to look and feel our best. If you are comfortable growing older naturally I applaud you. But every person has the right to do what makes them feel beautiful. If that means filling your head like a pinata and buffing out every wrinkle and age spot, go for it. Do what makes you feel confident and happy with your body! And if anyone was asking, I am now taking donations for my face fund in lieu of birthday presents. =)

Please understand these instances are unique to me. I've seen my other friends go in and not bat an eye getting lip injections and those are way more intense. I am just sincerely more terrified of needles than you could possibly imagine. And at least it makes for humorous and humiliating stories like the one above. And yes, I will be getting that procedure again because my results were fabulous. That's the price of beauty.

It's not all about needles and injections. I highly recommend aesthetic procedures like dermal planing, microderm and chemical peels as well. A skilled professional will be able to consult with you and recommend a plan that will fit your budget and get you the exact results you desire. The way I see it, if I start tackling the old age monster now by doing little things (i.e. skincare, a little Botox and filler here and there, facials, etc) I won't have to have a full-blown, behind-the-ears face lift-n-tuck when I'm older.

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XO- Kathie

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The Christmas Star of Bethlehem

Part One: Ancient Stargazers

Astronomy’s Birthplace: Iraq

(Part 1 of 3)

(Editor Note: What was the most famous star described in the Bible that led the Wise Men to the manger of the Christian Messiah, Jesus? The Loafer’s astronomy columnist, Mark Marquette looks at the night skies of the time and the mindset of ancient peoples in a series of three articles that gives one explanation for the Star of Bethlehem.)

The time is 6,000 years ago and the place is a fertile paradise between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. Villages of primitive peoples began harnessing fire, clothing themselves in animal pelts and developing a crude, verbal language. And they began keeping track of time by worshipping the movements of the Sun and Moon.

This is the forgotten land called Shinar, the “Cradle of Civilization” and the birthplace of astronomy.

The peoples of antiquity who have populated this land around 3,000 BC have been called Sumerians, Babylonians, Akkadians, Chaldeans and Persians.

In the 21st Century, the peoples populating ancient Shinar are called Iranian or Iraqi, as the famous Fertile Crescent is today a hotbed of war and world politics.

Modern day Iran and Iraq are where mankind first brought the stars down to Earth and planted the seeds for the mystery surrounding the most famous star of all time: Star of Bethlehem.

Surrounding today’s Baghdad is where ancient minds spawned the concept of time as they carefully recorded rhythm of the Sun, Moon and stars.

Ancient stargazers convinced the common people of the times that gods ruled the Sun, Moon and planets as they wandered against a set background of star patterns named for extraordinary animals of the times—both real and imaginary. These early stargazers made the naive connection of sky phenomenon to the destiny of humans, giving birth to astrology. It seemed logical to people that change in the sky would affect changes to human lives as nobody knew the true nature of the stars.

The Moon changed its appearance day-by-day, repeating every 28 days. Sometimes the Moon covered up stars. Sometimes darkness covered up the bright Moon. And on real special times, the Sun disappeared in the middle of the day, only to return to normal within minutes.

For thousands of years, Bible scholars and stargazers have wondered what was physically in the sky that provoked the writer of the Gospel Matthew to record the short story about Magi traveling from afar, following “star” and paying homage to an infant Jesus in Bethlehem of today’s nation of Israel.

Understanding the concepts of the heavens developed from the land of Shinar is an important mindset to the unraveling of the mystery surrounding the Star of Bethlehem.

Born along side of astronomy was its illegitimate sibling of astrology. The first serious sky watchers became valuable to the royalty of the civilized peoples of ancient Shinar. Soon Kings and Queens hired these soothsayers to keep the Sun, Moon and planets as they wandered around the fixed patterns, today’s naked eye can see.

The astronomers in those priest/astrologers made their first discovery in keeping accurate time, an important duty for the dawn of civilized cities. The important religious feasts and sacrifices were determined by certain appearances of the Sun and Moon in the sky. Crops were planted and harvested by the appearance of certain stars on the eastern horizon.

As details of the sky’s movements were observed day after day, familiar patterns emerged and mankind became familiar with the exact length of the day, the year and the seasonal cycles the Earth went through.

In an attempt to explain their world in the context of their intellect, the ancient stargazers came up with many concepts that involved supernatural Gods performing the tasks that modern physics explains.

The unlocking of the secrets of celestial motion in the sky and the true nature of the Sun, Moon, planets and stars is a relatively new concept born by the great astronomer scientist Galileo just 400 years ago.

The previous five or six thousand years have had a human mindset of the Earth, not the Sun, being the center of not just the Solar System, but also the entire Universe.

The influence of the points of light in the sky on the human race led to the conception of many Gods to explain the eclipses of the Sun and Moon, the close gatherings of the bright planets, and the location of the Moon against the same background of stars.

Centuries of stargazing is placed against a backdrop of Kings, Queens and dynasties, the legends and destiny of these world leaders enhanced by the purported omens in the sky.

And over 2,000 years ago, something in the sky lead a group of “Wise Men” to visit a babe in a manger who filled an ancient prophecy of a Messiah for the Hebrews. What was it?

Today, the 21st century war zone of Iran and Iraq is the ancient Shinar Plains, talked about in the Old Testament Bible, and where peoples of antiquity gave birth to their ideas about the Sun, Moon and stars.

Now considered the cradle of all civilization, around 4,000 BC this region of the world east of Europe was a lush paradise and inhabited by an intelligent breed of human, the Sumerians.

Where they came from, how they got to Shinar, and where they learned their skilled ways is a mystery. But the Sumerians pioneered irrigation, and turned the land between the two mighty rivers into rich farmland that would be known throughout history as the “Fertile Crescent.” Then, they rebuilt the villages into towns, and created pottery, artwork and music.

It was the ancient Sumerians who developed a numbering system based on 60 units—still used today in the minutes of an hour and degrees in a circle.

So long ago were these intelligent inhabitants of the Shinar Plains, no names existing of their scholars or leaders.

The Sumerian people lived in the lands around today’s Baghdad, and they built temples to the Gods.

And their Gods were the revered deities who controlled the skies above with impact on humans below, which was interpreted by the moving Sun, Moon and stars.

The Sumerians made stargazing the religious duties of special priests, and the science of astronomy was born. The stargazer priest was soon revered throughout ancient history as a sort of psychic. And the maligned, false science of astrology was born.

To many civilizations before and after the Sumerians, the movement of the Sun and Moon were the whim of God. The Earth was the center of the entire visible universe—a concept not debunked until the 17th Century.

Carefully watched were the five wandering stars as they moved around the sky. Today we know them as Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn, named after Roman gods. They were given different names by many civilizations, but their prophesized impact humanity was a universal belief.

When one or more of these wandering stars brightened and were near each other, the stargazing priests interpreted the “conjunction” as a celestial message from the Gods. The fate of kings and empires could be at stake.

The general population of ancient peoples knew the sky well—the star patterns being the foundation of mythological stories told from generation to generation.

But it was up to the special stargazing priests to interpret the astrological horoscope of the heavens. Their powerful position helped shape the conquests and failures of history’s ancient kings and empires.

NEXT WEEK: part 2 of 3, The ancient concepts of the night sky.
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