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For more information call (423) 247-1671 or visit petworkstn.org.
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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
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."

MEET THE STAFF

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.
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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FRIDAY 2018
DJ MARQUES
MICHAEL HAWKINS

UPCOMING EVENTS
31-DEC - BILLY CRAWFORD

Holiday Inn
Holiday Inn Conference Center
3005 Linden Drive Exit 7, Bristol, VA
276.468.4100

FRIDAY 2018
DJ MARQUES
MICHAEL HAWKINS

Upcoming Events
31-DEC - BILLY CRAWFORD
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.
HAPPY 90TH BIRTHDAY,

MICKEY!

I ONLY HOPE THAT WE NEVER LOSE SIGHT OF ONE THING - THAT IT ALL STARTED WITH A MOUSE – WALT DISNEY

Making his debut on November 18, 1928, we commemorate the birth of that ever-lovable mouse that was one a rabbit called Oswald. That’s right, it has been 90 years since the picture tube first brought the sights and sounds of that black and white mouse from New York called, Steamboat Willie. One man’s dream to bring happiness and laughter to everyone has built one of the largest empires in the world, based on a mouse. Some of you may have the same question that we did: Just how did a mouse start a multibillion-dollar empire that spans the globe and has his hands in just about everything imaginable? Well, let’s go find out…..

Before 1928, Walt and his long time friend, Ub Iwerks had created a character for their shorts named, Oswald the Lucky Rabbit, when he was working for Charles Mintz of Universal Studios. Oswald was a hit for Walt and was going very well with audiences. Because of all his successes and popularity, Walt approached Mintz and requested a budget increase to be able to produce longer and better cartoons with Oswald. Mintz not liking the request, countered Walt with budget cuts, a decrease in Walt’s salary and to make things worse, revealed that he had secretly signed Walt’s employee to a new contract without him. This was a tough blow to Walt since he created Oswald for Universal, Mintz legally owned all rights to Oswald the Lucky Rabbit, and Walt had just lost people that he thought he could trust and count on. But here is where it all begins.

After Walt learning that he had lost his precious Rabbit Oswald and his staff, he was on the train ride back home from New York and started ideas of a new character. Walt and Iwerks went through many different characters, dogs, cats, there was even a cow and a horse that Walt dismissed, but would later turn up in the animated shorts as Clarabelle Cow and Horace Horsecollar. Finally, Walt got an idea from a tame mouse that was in his office at the Laugh-O-Gram studio in Missouri and Hugh Harman drew some sketches of a mouse around a picture of Walt in his office. Iwerks noticed these drawings and started sketching what would be the birth of the new Walt Disney character, Mortimer Mouse. Wait, what? Mortimer Mouse? That’s right, Mickey’s original name from Walt was Mortimer but Walt’s wife, Lillian, wouldn’t have it. She convinced Walt to change his name to Mickey and there began, Mickey Mouse.

Mickey didn’t have an easy beginning though. Mickey had his first screening in the short, Plane Crazy, on May 15, 1928 but it failed to impress the audiences and Walt could not find one person or company willing to distribute the short. After much disappointment, Walt started to create the second Mickey short, The Gallopin’ Gaucho, that once again, due to lack of interest found no distributor. While many people were urging Walt to scrap Mickey Mouse at this point with two failures, Walt could still see something special in his mouse and went on to create a third Mickey short, Steamboat Willie. Steamboat Willie was first released in New York City on November 18, 1928 and was a huge hit. Since this was the first Mickey film to find a distributor, it is considered by the Disney Company as the debut and birth of Mickey Mouse.

From his New York debut in 1928 Mickey Mouse has evolved through the years. The time period from 1929 through 1935 is known as the “Black and White Film Years”. In 1929 we see Mickey wearing his white gloves for the first time in the film, The Opry House. This was one of the first changes of Mickey since Steamboat Willie. Mickey’s popularity continued to rise during that time period and by 1932, Walt’s “Mickey Mouse Club” would have over one million members. To bring success even more in 1932, at the 5th Academy Awards, Mickey received his first Academy Award nomination for, Mickey’s Orphans.

The time period from 1935 through 1953 is known as the “Color Film Years”. Mickey finally receives color to his character in, The Band Concert, in 1935. In 1939, Mickey had his next noticeable transformation along with adding white to his eyes in the film, The Pointer and then in 1940 Mickey had his first full length feature film, Fantasia with his role as The Sorcerer’s Apprentice. This film lead us to the more modern Mickey that we started to see on the TV.

After the 1950’s came the television and films era. Mickey fans would see Mickey start to appear in many different cartoon shorts as well as full length Mickey films. This is also the time when Mickey would finally get a home. On July 17, 1955 Mickey helped to open Disneyland in Anaheim California and then Walt Disney World in Orlando Florida on October 1, 1971. Mickey would have several friends to join him during these years, Minnie Mouse, Donald Duck, Pluto and a whole cast of other characters.

Mickey Mouse has shown us over the last 90 years that it doesn’t matter how small you start out, anything is possible. And as Walt Disney always said, “All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them”.

The Nerd’s Corner

By Jason & Daniel Worley
jdworley@theloaferonline.com
Ice Skating Comes to Downtown Hendersonville

Hendersonville, NC - An exciting wintertime attraction is once again happening in Downtown Hendersonville this holiday season. Lace up your skates and take to the ice skating rink located at the Visitor Center at 201 South Main Street. The rink opens Tuesday, December 18 and runs through Tuesday, January 1.

The new Iceless Skating Rink is larger and offers optimal glide with the least amount of surface friction. The synthetic ice-skating rink is made from special polymers and features two curling lanes. Beginners can learn to skate easily on the synthetic surface with more control than on refrigerated ice. Enjoy roasting marshmallows for a tasty s’more, or playing a game of corn hole, checkers, or Jenga with your family and friends. The Skating Rink is open December 18th thru January 1st.

Price of admission is $8 for adults and $5 for children, which includes the skate rental. Group rates for 10 or more are available, by reservation. The hours of the rink are 11am-7pm, Christmas Eve 11am-3pm, Christmas Day-Closed, New Year’s Eve 11am-3pm, and New Year’s Day from 11am-6pm. Weather permitting.

The skating rink is a fundraiser for the Henderson County America in Bloom Committee. America in Bloom is a mentoring program that helps towns enhance environmental awareness, promote economic development, and improve quality of life.

For more information about the Skating Rink or if you would like to volunteer call Mia’s Marketplace at (828) 698-4600 or visit the web site, hendersoncountyinbloom.com.

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Friday: Catfish
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All meals come with 2 sides: greens, cabbage, yams, green beans, cream corn, mac & cheese, peas, peach cobbler, carrot souffle, cornbread dressing with gravy

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elcharolais.com
If you or your band are planning an upcoming performance and would like to be featured in The Spotlight, please visit theloaferonline.com. Due to the possibility of last-minute cancellations or changes, please call the location to confirm.

**- TUESDAY - Dec. 18-**

**Downtown Country**
- Jiggy Rays in Elizabethton 6:30pm

**Stemwinder Band**
- Rocks Wood Fired Pizza and Grill 6pm

**- WEDNESDAY - Dec. 19-**

**Live Music With Rusty Steele**
- Wild Wing Cafe JC 8:30pm

**Filth and Friends**
- The Hideaway 7:30 PM

**A Mayberry Christmas**
- Freedom Hall Civic Center 7pm

**Open Bluegrass Jam**
- Gypsy Circus Cider Company 6:30pm

**H.B. Beverly**
- Rocks Wood Fired Pizza & Grill 6:30pm

**- THURSDAY - Dec. 20-**

**Wolf Hills Jazz Quartet**
- Blackbird Bakery 8PM

**Farm & Fun Time Christmas Spectacular**
- Birthplace of Country Music Museum 7PM

**- FRIDAY - Dec. 21-**

**Wyldeheart**
- Wild Wing Cafe JC 10pm

**Hideaway Holiday Party w/ Dullside Vespers Aghori Skinsuit**
- The Hideaway 8pm

**Asylum Suite**
- Rush Street Neighborhood Grill 9PM

**DNDH WITH TOM’S HANDGUN**
- Capone’s 9PM

**Sucker Punch Live**
- O’Mainnin’s Pub 10 PM

**Bran & Cam**
- Blackbird Bakery 7:30pm

**- SATURDAY - Dec. 22-**

**James Meadows**
- Quaker Steak and Lube (Bristol, VA) 8pm

**Alli Epperson LIVE**
- Gypsy Circus Cider Company 7pm

**The 4th Annual Johnson City Jingle Bell Jamboree!**
- The Willow Tree Coffeehouse & Music Room 7pm

**Christmas Jazz Night**
- The Coffee Company 6pm

**Kenny and Angie Storie**
- Sunshine Mkt2 7pm

**Nightshift**
- Thompson’s Produce on HWY 107 7pm

**Southern Countrymen Band**
- Buffalo Ruritan Club 7pm

**Common Bond**
- Boogie Mo’s Bar and Grill 9pm

**Demon Waffle**
- Wild Wing Cafe JC 9:30pm

**Mind Modes/Love Unit/Vibe Emissions**
- The Hideaway 10pm

**The Return of House Music**
- Wonderland Lounge/Bar & Grill 10 PM

**METAL NIGHT w/ 1134, Amnesia & NeverFall**
- Capone’s 10pm

**Matt Smile**
- Quaker Steak and Lube (Bristol, VA) 8pm

**Karaoke w/ RUSTY**
- Johnson City Moose Lodge 1831 8pm

**Pickin’ On**
- The Sportsman Pub! - 8 PM

**Lauren Cole Band**
- Jiggy Ray’s Downtown Pizzeria 7pm

**Anthony Mangrum**
- Blackbird Bakery 8pm

**Jolly Jam w/ Area 52 & Tony and Rod!**
- CJ’s Sports Bar 5pm

**House Music**
- Wonderland Lounge/Bar N Grill 10am

**- SUNDAY - Dec. 23-**

**Down Home Christmas Show**
- The Down Home 7pm

**Old Time Music Jam Led by Art Lang**
- Sycamore Shoals State Historic Park 1pm

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For show times & more details, visit theloaferonline.com

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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
**THINGS TO DO**

**Tuesday- December 18th**
- F3 Free Men's Bootcamp at Founders Park 5:30 AM
- Erwin Tinsel Trail - The Gathering Place Park 8am
- Celebration of Trees - Historic Jonesborough 8am
- Holiday Elf Hunt - Bowman Jewelers 10am
- Santa Claus is Coming to Town - Barter Theatre 10am
- Santa's Village - Fort Henry Mall 11am
- Ugly Christmas Sweater Event - East Coast Wings + Grill 7:30pm
- Family Night: Cookies and Cocoa - YMCA of Bristol 4:15pm
- Bingo - Bristol Public Library 6pm
- Cookies with Santa - Blackbird Bakery 6pm
- 3rd Annual Ugly Christmas Sweater Party - Wonderland Lounge/Bar N Grill 6:30pm
- Texas Hold 'Em - CJ's Sports Bar 7pm
- FiA Free Women's Fitness Tues. Evenings - Founders Park 7 PM
- SINGO - Barley Waters 7pm
- Cornhole Tournament! - CJ's Sports Bar 7pm
- The Grinch Trivia - Johnson City Brewing Company 7pm
- Elf: The Musical - Barter Theatre 7:30pm
- The Santaland Diaries - Barter Theatre 7:30pm
- Reina del Cid - The Willow Tree Coffeehouse and Music Room 8pm
- Bingo - Tipton St. Pub 9PM
- Ice Skating - Hendersonville NC Visitor's Center 11am

**Wednesday- December 19th**
- FiA Free Women's Fitness Wednesdays - Founders Park 5:30am
- Erwin Tinsel Trail - The Gathering Place Park 8am
- Celebration of Trees - Historic Jonesborough 8am
- Holiday Elf Hunt - Bowman Jewelers 10am
- Santa Claus is Coming to Town - Barter Theatre 10:30am
- Santa's Village - Fort Henry Mall 11am

**Thursday- December 20th**
- F3 free men's bootcamp - Founders Park 5:30am
- Erwin Tinsel Trail - The Gathering Place Park 8am
- Celebration of Trees - Historic Jonesborough 8am
- Holiday Elf Hunt - Bowman Jewelers 10am
- Santa Claus is Coming to Town - Barter Theatre 10AM
- Santa's Village - Fort Henry Mall 11AM
- Wooden Snowflakes - Barter Theatre 2PM
- Christmas Party - Kingsport Civic Auditorium 4:30PM
- Annual Holiday Homebrew Bottle Share - Johnson City Brewing Company 6:30PM
- Christmas Trivia Night - Gypsy Circus Cider Company 7PM
- FiA Free Women's Fitness Thur. Evenings - Founders Park 7PM
- Farm & Fun Time Christmas Spectacular - Birthplace of Country Music Museum 7PM
- Elf: The Musical - Barter Theatre 7:30PM
- The Santaland Diaries - Barter Theatre 7:30PM

**Friday- December 21st**
- Ice Skating - Hendersonville NC Visitor's Center 11am
- Erwin Tinsel Trail - The Gathering Place Park 8am
- Celebration of Trees - Historic Jonesborough 8am
- Holiday Elf Hunt - Bowman Jewelers 10am
- Santa's Village - Fort Henry Mall 11am
- Pioneer Christmas - Fern Valley Farm 6pm
- Holiday Pub Crawl - Johnson City Farmers Market 6pm
- Xmas Bash - Maddie's Event Hall VFW Post 6975 7pm
- Elf Christmas! - reNEWed church 7pm
- Ugly Christmas Sweater Party - Machiavelli's Bristol 7:30pm
- Elf: The Musical - Barter Theatre 8pm
- The Santaland Diaries - Barter Theatre 4pm & 8pm

**Saturday- December 22nd**
- Ice Skating - Hendersonville NC Visitor's Center 11am
- F3 free men's bootcamp - Founders Park 6 AM
- FiA Free Women's Fitness- Saturdays - Founders Park 7:15am
- Erwin Tinsel Trail - The Gathering Place Park 8am
- Celebration of Trees - Historic Jonesborough 8am
- Breakfast with Santa - The Manna Bagel Bakery & Cafe 9am
- Wallabies 1st Annual Pancakes & Pajamas - WallabiesUSA 9:30am
- Holiday Elf Hunt - Bowman Jewelers 10am
- Holiday Market - Boone Street Market 10am
- Holiday Elf Hunt - Bowman Jewelers 10am
- Holiday Market - Boone Street Market 10am
- Santa's Village at the Fort Henry Mall - Fort Henry Mall 10am
- Photos with the Grinch & Santa - Grand Home Furnishings (Johnson City, TN) 12pm
- Children Christmas Party - Elizabethton Moose Lodge 360 2pm
- Community Christmas with Santa and His Elves - Carl's Food & Beverage 2pm
- A Gypsy Christmas with Bad Santa - Gypsy Circus Cider Company 7pm
- Elf Christmas! - reNEWed church 7pm
- Elf: The Musical - Barter Theatre 8pm
- Every Christmas Story Ever Told! (and then some) - Blue Moon Theatre Company 8pm

**Sunday- December 23rd**
- Ice Skating - Hendersonville NC Visitor's Center 11am
- Erwin Tinsel Trail - The Gathering Place Park 8am
- Celebration of Trees - Historic Jonesborough 8am
- Candlelight Christmas Service - Grace Fellowship Church 9:15am
- Elf Christmas! - reNEWed church 9:30am & 11am
- Santa's Village - Fort Henry Mall 12 PM
- Photos with the Grinch & Santa - Grand Home Furnishings (Johnson City, TN) 2pm
- Elf: The Musical - Barter Theatre 3pm
- Pioneer Christmas - Fern Valley Farm 6 PM
- Destination Family Christmas Party - Destination Church 6pm
- The Santaland Diaries - Barter Theatre 7pm

**Monday- December 24th**
- Ice Skating - Hendersonville NC Visitor’s Center 11am
- FiA Free Women's Fitness Mondays - Founders Park 5:30am
- F3 Free Men's Run Group - Science Hill Track 5:30 AM
- Erwin Tinsel Trail - The Gathering Place Park 8am
- Santa's Village - Fort Henry Mall 9 AM
- Holiday Elf Hunt - Bowman Jewelers 10am
- Christmas Eve Candlelight Service - Boones Creek Christian Church 5pm
- Trivia - Yee Haw Brewing Co. 7 PM
Who doesn't love Dolly Parton? She is an amazing singer/songwriter, has a bubbling personality, and has given us Dollywood. In the new Netflix film "Dumplin", based on the young adult novel of the same name, we are introduced to the character of Willowdean Dickson(Danielle Macdonald), a teenager who has loved Dolly since she was a child thanks to her Aunt Lucy (Hilliary Begley). Willowdean was primarily raised by Lucy, because her single mom Rosie (Jennifer Aniston) is always working to help support the small family. During her childhood, Lucy, who is a fun-loving and passionate lady, instills a love of Dolly in Willowdean, who was nicknamed Dumplin by her mom due to being overweight. To make matters worse Rosie is a former beauty queen and celebrity in their small Texas town. While Willowdean was young, Lucy introduced Ellen Dryver (Odeya Rush) to her niece, and the two become best friends and fellow Dolly fans. Willowdean's life is marked by tragedy when her beloved Aunt Lucy passes away six months before she and Ellen begin their final year of high school. A huge gap is left in her life because Lucy was always there to support Will when Rosie was busy with work. Rosie is a major player in helping as a judge during the local beauty pageant season, which Will finds ridiculous because of the over emphasis on beauty. She and her mom have a total disconnect over the beauty pageant world, and Will is resentful and embarrassed by her mom's role in these events. As her senior year begins, Will is suspended the first day after hitting a bully who was making fun of Millie Michalchuk (Maddie Baillio), another overweight girl. After she is sent home the first day of classes, Will begins rummaging through some of Lucy's belongings and discovers her aunt applied to be in the Miss Teen Bluebonnet Pageant(won by her mom) when was 16. This discovery leads Will to apply for the pageant as a way to lead a "protest in heels". Will's actions lead Millie to follow suit and apply as well, followed by Hannah Perez (Bex Taylor-Klaus), a "goth" type, who is about as far from a typical beauty contestant as you can get. Rosie is upset her daughter has entered the pageant, and warns her there will be a lot of hard work involved. Her best friend Ellen has also entered the pageant, but Will becomes upset Ellen is so enthusiastic about the rehearsals, and the two become estranged. In the meantime, Will has become enamored with, Bo (Luke Benward), a cook at the fast food restaurant where they work. Will becomes depressed as she misses Lucy, feels she isn't good enough for Bo or the pageant. During this time Will finds a flyer in Lucy's belongings about a biker tavern that is Dolly Parton themed, and she decides to go with Mille and Hannah. The trip to the venue proves life changing as she meets several Dolly Patron impersonators, who give her the confidence she needs to be part of the pageant and do it her way. During the pageant, Will performs a salute to Dolly via a few magic tricks, and the crowd loves her. I will not say what happens after the performance, less to spoil anything, but prior the her winning performance, she reconciles with Ellen, finally connects with her mom, and realizes she is good enough for Bo, who confesses his love for our sweet Dumplin. The film utilizes Dolly's songs throughout, some newly recorded, and Will and Ellen often quiz each other over Dolly songs. I love how the film relays the message of how you are good enough to do anything you want despite what the world reprieves you. The actors in the film are all wonderful, with Macdonalds charm being the catalyst that drives the film. Her character is a friend anyone would want to have. Aniston is perfectly cast as the prim and proper former beauty queen, and she has wonderful onscreen chemistry with Macdonald. Be sure to catch "Dumplin" now streaming on Netflix for a sweet tale of love and acceptance. (Rated PG-13) 🌟🌟🌟🌟🌟
Lo, it came to pass that I found myself sitting on the floor of my laundry room beside a pile of dirty laundry, binge-watching episodes of “Matlock” on my iPad, drinking Hot Chocolate. Was I doing laundry? No, that would have been a productive use of my time. Instead, I was simply hiding as my laundry room had become my only source of privacy in the house. When the days on the calendar crept closer and closer to December 25th, slowly—then suddenly—the number of people visiting or staying at my house increased dramatically.

I love my family, and I adore my friends. I love having my friends over and they know that they’re always welcome at my house. Yet for this particular Christmas, I wasn’t feeling too festive or much in the mood for entertaining. There was a lot of “fake it till you make it” going on as I wondered if I was in a slump for this holiday season, or if I simply had no desire to feel holly or jolly anymore. I was feeling weird about life. This had zapped my desire to be completely present when it came to festive shenanigans like decorating cookies with younger family.

So with a house full of family in just about every single corner, I retreated to the one spot no one lingers in, the laundry room. An hour or so of peace and quiet, being in my own world, was all I needed and wanted that day. I hoped that maybe a quick recharge of my batteries would perk me up to my usual, full tilt, Holiday Andy mode. Christmas is, as much as people say it like a cliche, my favorite time of the year. I usually am bursting at the seams with Christmas cheer, sometimes starting in early November to put decorations up.

So why was I feeling weird about life? I think it was for reasons that solely existed in my mind. I was feeling weird about things the way you do when you find yourself reaching your mid-30s and you start to wonder what you have to show for it. Social media contributed to this. You see the lives of your friends and random people you went to high school with but never talk to, you see how it’s all pitch perfect and they have the perfect family, house, and all the trappings that you’ve been told all your life is what makes you a “success.”

In the silence, I thought about my life. My joys, my hopes, my triumphs. All the things I had managed to do in my time on this Earth that once seemed impossible. I began to think that maybe, just MAYBE, I actually have it more together than I give myself credit for. I left the laundry room and went back into the kitchen where another batch of cookies was coming out of the oven—overseen by my Aunt. I then helped the excited young ones decorate. A smile came across my face, I began to feel festive.

My full tilt mode eventually came out that Christmas, as did my desire to eat as much butter related things as possible. I even one night said “screw it” and made a crown rib roast—which impressed everyone but the kids still wanted McDonald’s. Oh, well. You can’t win them all, can you? Merry Christmas. See you next week.

Batteries Not Included
By Andy Ross
aross@theloaferonline.com
THE TROUBLE WITH EXPECTATIONS

by Kathie Scalf

Human beings are faced with a tremendous amount of pressure to do “stuff.” Whether it is self-imposed simply based on what we see on social media or put on us by the people in our lives, a great deal of the things we do is based on the idea that at a certain point in our lives it’s what we “should” be doing. The trouble is, when you try to meet expectations before YOU’RE ready, it can cause more problems for you down the road, if you ever truly intend to reach those goals for yourself at all.

My very own marriage and subsequent divorce is a prime example of this line of thinking. I met my ex-husband when I was 27. He was a nice, safe guy that I needed in my life to settle me down. He was someone “secure” that would make a good husband. But from the beginning our relationship wasn’t quite right. We didn’t have a lot in common in the way of our personalities and something just always felt a tad uncomfortable. I ignored my gut instincts and pushed those feelings to the back of my mind, because I was convinced that I needed to be married by the time I was 30. I don’t know what I thought was going to happen - the world would end, everyone would suddenly refer to me as “old spinster” or accuse me of witchcraft and burn me at the stake?? Regardless, I got the ring and 2 months before my 30th birthday I walked down the aisle. And 2 years to the day of my wedding, he served me with divorce papers. In the 2 short years of our marriage, I went nuts trying to fix MYSELF to make the relationship better and he found someone else who actually did make him happy. At the time I was devastated, today I am grateful and have a better relationship with him than we did when we were married. If someone truly loves you-even if they don’t agree with your personal choices- they will never turn their back on you for pursuing your happiness.

This pressure seems to weigh even heavier on women, especially in the current climate of social media saturation. It’s so easy to feel inadequate after scrolling through picture after picture of happy couples with their children, or bikini fitness models, or cute Pinterest girls in their head-to-toe ensembles and cozy things. But that’s not real life. No one wants to publicly post pictures where they look like a hippo or talk about the fact that they haven’t slept with their perfect husband in months or that they sometimes hide in the bathroom from their “adorable” toddlers. If there’s one thing I’ve learned, it’s that everyone’s life is kind of a trainwreck. If it’s not debt or affairs or depression or parents who drive us crazy, it’s something else. No one has a life that is truly worth envying over your own.

We all need to grow at our own pace and stop trying to please everyone before ourselves. Each person has their own story to write and no one else has to read it except you. So stop doing things because it’s what “should” be done and instead start doing the things you feel in your heart. Life is so short, it would be a tragedy to wake up at 80 years old and have a lifetime full of regret or unfulfillment. Turn off the apps, tune out the critics, take off the pressure and let’s all have the courage to start living our own best lives before it’s too late!

XO- Kathie
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Last week's answers on page 13

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RP'B LGMD GQBD PI UIMXRLG IPJGMB PJGRM SRBFQTGB, RP PQTGB SIMG

XZP QHV XZSOPRIH PI UIMXRLG PJGS UIM JQLRXH ERPHGBGV DIZM IEH.
The Elizabethton/Carter County Animal Shelter is a Government operated Animal "Adoption Shelter." We only accept and adopt out domestic cats and dogs from Carter County. We do not accept Feral animals nor wildlife nor farm animals and we do not provide veterinary or euthanasia services to the public. We are a very small shelter and do not kill animals to make space to take in more animals. Just like a hospital, nursing home or human shelter, when we are full we are full. We do have a waiting list and, as we adopt pets out and have room, we will accept new animals.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concert Schedule</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BRISTOL TN/VA</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>PARAMOUNT</td>
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<td>Jan. 4 - An Evening with Dailey &amp; Vincent</td>
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<td>Jan. 25 - An Evening with The Cleverlys</td>
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<td>Feb. 9 - The Magic of Bill Blagg live</td>
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<td>May 5 - Home Free</td>
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<td><strong>JOHNSON CITY</strong></td>
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<td>FREEDOM HALL</td>
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<td>Mar. 15 - Casting Crowns</td>
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<td><strong>NORTH CAROLINA</strong></td>
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<td>HARRAH’S - Cherokee</td>
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<td>Jan. 19 - Air Supply</td>
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<td>Jan. 25 &amp; 26 - Jamey Johnson</td>
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<td>Feb. 15 - Colt Ford and The Lacs</td>
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<td>Mar. 23 - Foreigner</td>
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<td>Apr. 27 - Travis Tritt</td>
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<td>U.S. CELLULAR CENTER - Asheville</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 21 - Lindsey Stirling</td>
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<td>Jan. 12 - 3 Dog Night</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr. 14 - David Sedaris</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GREENEVILLE, TN</strong></td>
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<td>NPAC</td>
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<td>Dec. 21 - Bret Michaels (rescheduled show)</td>
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<td>Jan. 12 - MJ Live-a Michael Jackson Tribute</td>
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<td>Jan. 18 - Crowder (SOLD OUT)</td>
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<td>Jan. 25 - Dugger Band</td>
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<td>Feb. 17 - The Platters and The Drifters</td>
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<td>Feb. 24 - America</td>
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<td>Mar. 16 - Hotel California-A salute to The Eagles</td>
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<td>Mar. 30 - Murphys Celtic Legacy</td>
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<td>Apr. 26 - Tusk-The Ultimate Fleetwood Mac Tribute</td>
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<td>Apr. 27 - Rainbow Fish</td>
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<td>May 4 - The Texas Tenors</td>
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<td><strong>KNOXVILLE, TN</strong></td>
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<td>THOMPSON BOLING ARENA</td>
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<td>Feb. 15 - Luke Combs</td>
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<td><strong>NASHVILLE, TN</strong></td>
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<td>CITY WINERY</td>
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<td>Dec. 23 - Jane Lynch</td>
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<td>Dec. 31 - Marc Brousard</td>
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<td>Feb. 1 - Delbert McClinton</td>
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<td>Feb. 17 - Christopher Cross</td>
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<td>Feb. 18 - Procol Harum</td>
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<td>Feb. 27 - Justin Hayward with Mike Dawes</td>
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<td>Mar. 2 - Shawn Colvin</td>
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<td>Apr. 8 - John Parr</td>
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<td>Apr. 11 - Joan Osborne</td>
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<tr>
<td>RYMAN AUDITORIUM</td>
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<td>Dec 27 - Robert Earl Keen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 30 &amp; 31 - Old Crow Medicine Show</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 27 &amp; 28 - Kasey Musgraves</td>
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<td>Mar. 3 - James Bay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 19 &amp; 20 - The John Mellencamp Show</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TENNESSEE THEATRE</strong></td>
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<td>Mar. 19 - Kacey Musgraves</td>
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<td><strong>KNOXVILLE CIVIC AUDITORIUM</strong></td>
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<td>Mar. 5 - Joe Bonamassa</td>
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<td>Mar. 13 - Brothers Osborne</td>
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<td>Mar. 14 - Lauren Daigle</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CHARLOTTE, NC</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>OVENS AUDITORIUM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 15 - Experience Hendrix Tour</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 22 - John Mellencamp</td>
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<td>Apr. 28 - Whitesnake</td>
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<td><strong>THE FILLMORE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 17 - Jesse McCartney</td>
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<td>Jan 18 - Scotty McCreery</td>
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<td>CALL WQUT @ 477-1015 FOR MORE CONCERT INFORMATION</td>
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9 When the Wise Men had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the Star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.
10 When they saw the Star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

A couple short sentences in the Bible illuminate the most celebrated star in history, the Star of Bethlehem.

Twenty Centuries after the birth of the Christian Messiah, just think what the Star of Bethlehem actually was remains one of astronomy’s biggest mysteries.

Astronomers know it wasn’t a comet, a meteor, or a supernova. What it probably was involves the movements of the brightest planets Jupiter and Venus as watched by the ancient stargazers.

Those ancient stargazers were part Astrologers, part Astronomers, and part Mystics. They were probably Zoroastrian Priests from Persia, and we know them as the Magi, or Wise Men. In those days, they had something very amazing to watch in the years preceding the birth of Jesus Christ.

In fact, from 4 BC to 2 BC, the planets Jupiter, thought to be the King of the Gods, Venus, the goddess of fertility, and Mercury, the messenger, played tag in the feet of Leo the Lion and its regal star, Regulus.

The 21st Century battleground of Iran and Iraq is where the drama of the Star of Bethlehem is carefully watched thousands of years ago. The same stars were seen over the Northern Hemisphere, but it is in the “Cradle of Civilization” where the legends of the night sky were born. Called Sumaria, Mesopotamia, Babylon and Shinar, these forgotten civilizations are where man’s curious mind began to be nourished by people we know very little about.

The recorded history of the Shinar Plains began about 2,500 BC when the Akkadians and their king, Sargon, ruled and/or controlled 2371 BC to 2316 BC. A Moses-like ruler, Sargon, loved the heavens and ordered his priests to make constant observations and make records. The royal astronomer, Bel, wrote volumes on his observations, based on the earlier Sumerians works.

A hundred years after the death of Sargon, the Sumerians regained power, and under the dynasty of King Ur, the former glory of the arts and sciences were restored.

Finally, the Plains of Shinar were occupied by the peoples of the Syrian and Arabian deserts, the Amorites. They had a king named Hammurabi who reigned from 1792 BC to 1750 BC, and he is mentioned in Genesis as Amraphel, king of Shinar.

Hammurabi built a fabulous city near the present day Baghdad—the legendary Babylon. The famous gardens, the beautiful buildings and the symbol writing called “cuneiform” were some of the legacies of this intelligent civilization.

The priests of Babylon had more power than any such servants in previous centuries. And none had more power or access to royalty than the priest-stargazers.

The sacred duty of these priest-stargazers was to survey the stars and predict any events they foretold the welfare of the king and the empire. Babylon became the center for astronomical studies in the world. And the early Biblical stories of Genesis center on the Shinar Plains and another great city, Ur.

In the Bible, Abram was born, supposedly under the appearance of a bright comet. He refused to worship the stars as Gods, and sought a covenant more worthy. He was rewarded when the angel Gabriel appeared and told Abram about the one true God.

Abram made a covenant with God, and his name was changed to Abraham. He would be the father of the descendants of the long history of the Hebrews, also known as the Israelites and the Jews. Bible study refers to them as the Children of Abraham, and their beginnings are in the Plains of Shinar.

And this sets the stage for the Star of Bethlehem, the most famous star of history. This celestial symbol was the inspiration for a group of Wise Men, or Magi to travel a great distance to pay respect to a baby, born into poverty but destined to rule the world.

Who were the Wise Men, and what did they see?

It is in the story of the Plains of Shinar that the Biblical miracle of the Christmas Star is made clear. The sky that only a chosen few could have interpreted.

One of the mysteries of the “Star of Bethlehem,” as only described in the Gospel of Matthew, is that no common person saw it. No shepherds, no innkeepers, no politicians or housewives.

The Bible says that even King Herod didn’t see it—that’s why he summoned the Wise Men to his throne. Herod wanted the Wise Men to tell him where to look.

Therefore, the Christmas card image of a brilliant star shining down on the nativity like a search beacon is an artistic, not factual, concoction.

Natural sky phenomenon like an exploding star, called a supernova, or a comet would not have been recorded in history. And there aren’t any comets or “new stars” mentioned in the 25-50 years before the birth of Jesus Christ. Commonly seen bright meteors or a “shooting star” didn’t last that long. So, none of these could be the famous star.

The Star of Bethlehem was something in the sky that needed interpretation, and the only people allowed to “read” the horoscope of the starry night were special scholars.

We’ve established that throughout history there have been Priest-Stargazers revered for the forecasts they provided kings about business fortune, war and love.

These ancient stargazers carefully watched the star patterns over the Plains of Shinar, and noted the movements of the five naked-eye planets, the Sun and the Moon.

Those Shinar Plains were the homeland of the Old Testament “Children of Abraham,” God’s chosen people, according to the Bible. The stories of the Hebrews’ struggles, and the Biblical Old Testament prediction of a Messiah for the Children of Abraham would be well-known by all men of wisdom in the Fertile Crescent and beyond.

In fact, Persian priests for the religion of Zoroaster spent hundreds of years searching the skies for signs that a Hebrew king would be born and rule the region. This was an obsession with the Priest-Stargazers of the empires of the Persian lands, as they believed the future was in the stars.

In the Old Testament, the Children of Abraham have well documented stories of the trials of their epic existence. As sung about in Psalm 137, their home is Babylon.

In the Book of Daniel, King Nebuchadnezzar sent for the Chaldeans to interpret his dreams. In Babylon, the name “Chaldean” had a second meaning—“wise men.”

Shortly after the time of Daniel, the Fertile Crescent was again conquered, this time by Cyrus the Persian in 539 BC.

The Persian Stargazers were also priests who were known for their deep religious knowledge. They would be looking for signs of the Old Testament Hebrew Messiah. Another name for these Persian priest-astrologers was “Magi.”

Cyrus freed the Children of Abraham, and they returned to Jerusalem, 800 miles away, to rebuild their nation. Then they are forgotten in the Bible for 400 years.

The excluded Bible books, The Apocrypha, document some of this history of Abraham’s people during what is called the Silent Years.

The New Testament account of Jesus’ birth is a time of the Roman Empire’s peak, the 750th year of its founding, and the 25th year of Caesar Augustus being crowned Emperor. A coin minted in 4 BC commemorates the quarter century of Augustus’ rule. Bible scholars point to this historic event as the reason for the special tax that Joseph and pregnant Mary had to pay, thus Luke’s account of them traveling from Nazareth to Bethlehem.

Meanwhile, the science of astronomy was changing during the centuries before Jesus. The stargazers of Greece, who were philosophers and not priests, were beginning to comprehend the physical Universe.

From 500-325 BC, such great Greek thinkers as Thales, Plato and Aristotle put the facts back into astronomy, and steered clear of the sooth-saying of astrology

Then came Alexander the Great, who lived from 356-323 BC, just 33 years, like Jesus. He literally conquered the world, and the great library of the Egyptian city, Alexandria, stored the latest sky charts and concepts as recorded by the great Greek astronomers. The observations from the Shinar Plains and all the knowledge of the Priest-Stargazers were integrated in the works of the great Greek thinkers.

Unfortunately, the Romans, who wanted to claim the knowledge of the skies for their own, destroyed that library in Alexandria, containing some of the world’s greatest treasures from ancient civilizations.

And so it was that the Greek and Roman cultures intermingled with the science of the ancient Shinar Plains. The concepts were often wrong, but astrology kept Priest-Stargazers busy with horoscopes for their Kings. And a prediction in the stars was soon to change the history of the humanity.

NEXT WEEK THE CONCLUSION:
What the Magi Saw
Holiday Wish List

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The McKinney Center is celebrating the beginning of its sixth year of arts programming through Jonesborough’s Mary B. Martin Program for the Arts with a brand new catalog of classes that offers a variety of standard courses as well as exciting new classes and workshops for art students of all ages.

The McKinney Center has built a reputation of providing the best art classes in the region, using the areas most qualified artist-teachers. The small class sizes allow for individual attention to student needs, and the variety of courses offered allows students to dive deep into one medium or explore a wide range of courses from visual arts, music, writing, ceramics, dance and more.

Programming has now grown to the point that the McKinney Center now offers its courses in a semester-style format, with the spring semester building off of classes taught in the fall.

When the McKinney Center opened its doors for the first time, it offered several courses in painting, theater, and ceramics, and served sixty-five students. Today, students growth has grown exponentially, and the program has grown with the students’ needs. Children’s art now offers classes for youngsters in the toddler years up through teen years. Adult classes have grown to include both evening and morning classes to accommodate working adults as well as retirees. Homeschool classes are part of the McKinney Center’s regular programming, and one-day workshops have grown to provide artistic and social opportunities for adults whose schedules may be too busy for a weeks-long course.

A glance inside the new catalog will show courses offered by age groups and mediums, as well as a look at the coming courses for the next semester, so students can plan classes in advance.

A new “bundling” option has been added to several course offering, providing discounts on classes that build off of each other. Currently, the “Early Bird” discount is in place, discounting every course by $10 until the cut-off date of January 12, 2019.

The spring catalog in Children’s Art includes courses in painting and drawing, sensory art, anime, pottery, ceramics, kids clay, film, writing, dance, guitar, and bucket drums.
Daily Specials

Monday: 6oz burger w/bacon, cheese and all deluxe toppings including all-you-can-eat fries
Tuesday: Taco Tuesday $1.49 pork, brisket or chicken
Wednesday: Boneless wings 60 cents each
Thursday: All-you-can-eat pork ribs babyback St Louis $13.99
Friday: All-you-can-eat pulled pork and 2 sides $11.99
Saturday: All-you-can-eat smoked chicken and 2 sides $10.99
Let Us Cater Your Next Event!

Order your Smoked Turkey, Honey Glazed Ham, & Sides for the Holidays from $49.99

$5 OFF Any Two Entrees at Menu Price (Excluding Specials)

$3.99 BBQ Pork Sandwich & Regular Side Item (Limit 10)

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ETSU Professional Development to host Renaissance Child Winter Enrichment

JOHNSON CITY – Children in grades K-6 are invited to attend the Renaissance Child Winter Enrichment for a festival of winter fun from Wednesday-Friday, Jan. 2-4, 2019.

This three-day camp is sponsored by the Office of Professional Development in East Tennessee State University’s School of Continuing Studies and Academic Outreach.

Campers will participate in a variety of holiday arts and crafts, games and winter fun enrichment activities. The camp includes a trip to Ober Gatlinburg on Thursday to see the holiday lights and to ice skate.

Campers may be dropped off at ETSU’s Sam Wilson Hall at 8 a.m. and picked up at 5 p.m. each day. They should bring a bag lunch and drink each day and wear warm clothes for the field trip.

Registration is $135 per camper and includes the cost of the field trip.

For registration or more information, visit www.etsu.edu/professionaldevelopment or call the Office of Professional Development at 423-439-8084.

Johnson City hotels partner for third Hotels with Heart campaign, a blanket and sock drive to help keep those in need this winter

HOTELS WITH HEART
DECEMBER 9 - 22

Help us give the gift of warmth this holiday season! Drop off blankets & socks at participating hotels through December 22nd. Blankets will be presented to the Salvation Army’s Center of Hope and socks to the Downtown Day Center. Both agencies serve our local homeless population.

BLANKET & SOCKS DRIVE

Eleven Johnson City hotels partnered to collect blankets and socks this winter for the third Hotels with Heart campaign. Hoteliers are asking the community and guests to donate a blanket or socks anytime from December 9th through the 22nd. All donations will be given to the Salvation Army of Johnson City.

To donate, visit one of the participating hotels and drop off a blanket or socks in the box located in the lobby. Participating hotels include: Carnegie Hotel, Doubletree by Hilton, Holiday Inn, Holiday Inn Express, Fairfield Inn and Suites, Courtyard by Marriott, Comfort Suites, Best Western, Quality Inn Downtown, Hampton Inn, and Sleep Inn.

Last year, Johnson City hotels collected more than 155 blankets during the Hotels with Heart winter campaign and more than 500 toiletry bags and flip flops during the spring campaign.
HAPPY HOLIDAYS

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