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<p class="western">*****</p>

WELCOME TO THE SHOW!

The year is almost over and I still haven't broken my New Year's resolution, which is to never to go to another New Year's Eve party. Honest, I haven't been to one all year.

PRESIDENTIAL WIT & WISDOM ([click here to buy the book](#))

(None on the weekends.)

BIBLE VERSE OF THE DAY

"Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's." --*Matthew 22:21*

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. — [Luke 2:4-5](#)

[Jesus said,] "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am." — [John 14:1-3](#)

HEARTLIGHT DAILY VERSE, PRAYER & THOUGHT

(From VerseOfTheDay.com)

"Or again, how can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can rob his house." — [Matthew 12:29](#)

Thought: Jesus is quoting a general truism that was popular in his day, but was using the "strong man" saying to refer to Satan. Satan is the strong man that had us bound by sin and death and Jesus broke into house and stole us back because he could bind the strong man. He did this by becoming human and facing death with complete obedience to God and then rose from the dead to defeat death and give us life! Praise God! Jesus broke into the Strong Man's house. He overpowered him and bound him. And, what did he bring out of the Strong Man's house? Buried treasure, of course! And that treasure is us!!

Prayer: Thank you, Lord Jesus, for rescuing me from the dominion of darkness and ushering me into your victorious Kingdom of Light! Amen.

The Thoughts and Prayers for Today's Verse are written by [Phil Ware](#). You can email questions or comments to phil@heartlight.org.

"BIRTHDAY VERSE" OF THE DAY (*The chapter and verse correspond to the month and day!*)

Mark 12:30 NIV = Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'

TODAY IS SATURDAY – DECEMBER 30, 2017

(NOTE: Some holidays may be duplicated due to various calendars reporting conflicting dates)

WEIRD, WACKY, STRANGE, ZANY, ODD, BIZARRE, QUIRKY, UNUSUAL HOLIDAYS!
THERE ARE ONLY 360 SHOPPING DAYS UNTIL NEXT CHRISTMAS.

Today is **LET'S MAKE A DEAL DAY** ([audio clip](#)). The original version of this game show premiered on NBC-TV on this date in 1963. Contestants dressed in kooky costumes competed for prizes by making deals with host Monty Hall. Some prizes were best left unwon.

The **FESTIVAL OF ENORMOUS CHANGES AT THE LAST MINUTE** begins today. After all, you promised to get a few things accomplished this year –and this year is just about over!

Today is **FALLING NEEDLES FAMILY FEST DAY**, a time to gather around the Christmas tree and watch the needles fall. ***Live it up! Dance around the tree... barefoot!

Today is **NATIONAL ANTACID DAY**. ***If you're not already well stocked with it due to all of the holiday feasting, you'll want it on hand for post New Year's celebrations.

TODAY IS ALSO...

Bacon Day
Falling Needles Family Fest Day
No Interruptions Day

COMING UP NEXT (*Just a list, we are not endorsing the holidays posted below. Find more holidays and link to their websites at BrownieLocks.com*)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31

First Nights
Global Champagne Day
Look On The Bright Side Day
Make Up Your Mind Day
New Years Eve
New Year's Eve Banished Words List
New Year's Dishonor List
Universal Hour of Peace Day
World Healing Day
World Peace Meditation Day

MONDAY, JANUARY 01

Copyright Law Day
Commitment Day
Divorce Monday
Ellis Island Day
Euro Day
First Foot Day
Global Family Day
Mummer's Parade
New Years Day
New Year's Dishonor List Day
Polar Bear Plunge or Swim Day
Public Domain Day
Rose Bowl Game
Tournament of Roses Parade Day
World Day of Peace
Z Day

TUESDAY, JANUARY 02

55-MPH Speed Limit Day
Happy Mew Year for Cats Day
National Buffet Day
National Motivation and Inspiration Day
National Personal Trainer Awareness Day
National Science Fiction Day
Pet Travel and Safety Day

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 03

Drinking Straw Day
Earth at Perihelion

J.R.R. Tolkien Day
Memento Mori "Remember You Die" Day
National Chocolate Covered Cherry Day

THURSDAY, JANUARY 04

Dimpled Chad Day
I Am A Mentor Day
Pop Music Chart Day
Tom Thumb Day
Trivia Day
World Braille Day
World Hypnotism Day

FRIDAY, JANUARY 05

Bird Day
National Screenwriters Day

SATURDAY, JANUARY 06

Twelfth Night
Epiphany
Armenian Christmas
National Technology Day
Three Kings Day
Fruitcake Toss Day

SUNDAY, JANUARY 07

Golden Globes
Harlem Globetrotter's Day
I'm Not Going To Take It Anymore Day
International Programmers' Day
Orthodox Christmas
National Bobblehead Day
National Tempura Day

MONDAY, JANUARY 08

Argyle Day
Bubble Bath Day
Earth's Rotation Day
National English Toffee Day
Midwife's Day or Women's Day
National Clean Off Your Desk Day
National Joy Germ Day
National Weigh-In Day
National Winter Skin Relief Day
Show and Tell Day at Work
"Thank God It's Monday" Day
War on Poverty Day

TUESDAY, JANUARY 09

Balloon Ascension Day
Law Enforcement Appreciation Day
National Cassoulet Day
National Poetry at Work Day
National Shop For Travel Day
National Static Electricity Day
Panama's Martyr Day

ON THIS DAY

1809: Boston made it illegal to wear a mask at a party that included dancing.

1851: Asa Candler was born in Georgia. An Atlanta pharmacist, in 1887 he converted a medicinal tonic called Coca-Cola into a soda fountain soft drink.

1940: California's first freeway, the Arroyo Seco Parkway connecting Los Angeles and Pasadena, was officially opened.

1944: Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys debuted on the Grand Ole Opry, performing their hit "New San Antonio Rose," a revamped vocal version of their 1938 classic instrumental hit. The "new rose" was the first of 19 consecutive top five country hits for "The King of Western Swing."

1951: "The Roy Rogers Show" debuted on NBC-TV, starring Roy, Dale Evans, Pat Brady, Trigger, Buttermilk, Bullet, and Nellybelle. Nellybelle was a jeep. Dale wrote the theme "Happy Trails to You." The show lasted six years.

1962: Singer Brenda Lee's poodle burned to death in a Nashville fire. Brenda was injured trying to rescue Cee Cee.

1978: Coach Woody Hayes was fired as head football coach at Ohio State. He had punched Clemson player Charlie Bauman during the Gator Bowl after Bauman intercepted a pass.

1980: The Selective Service System sent a warning to Mickey Mouse at Disneyland in Anaheim, California, stating he was in violation of registration laws. Mickey, age 52 at the time, sent a copy of his registration card proving he was a World War II veteran.

1984: The world's oldest western lowland gorilla died at the Philadelphia zoo. Massa was 53 years 5 months old.

1995: Procter & Gamble announced it would resume Mr. Whipple's lifetime supply of free Charmin bathroom tissue immediately. Actor Dick Wilson, who had urged shoppers for 25 years not to squeeze the Charmin, had suddenly stopped receiving monthly shipments to his home in Nevada. A company spokesman said it was a goof-up, not intentional. ***You can't squeeze the Charmin – but apparently squeezing Mr. Whipple is perfectly fine.

1997: A Kuwait court fined pro wrestler Vader \$164 for assaulting the TV host of "Good Morning, Kuwait" after the interviewer asked Vader if wrestling was fake. He never did answer the question. ***I probably wouldn't ask him again either.

1998: In Troy, New York, a concrete company's safety meeting was interrupted when one of its unattended trucks rolled 50 yards across a street, over an embankment, and into the Hudson River. It sank immediately. No one was hurt. ***Sounds like someone should set up another safety meeting.

1999: Singer George Harrison and his wife were attacked in their home during a robbery. Though Harrison was stabbed four times, he and his wife were able to hold the attacker until police arrived.

2003: The federal government banned the sale of ephedra and urged consumers to immediately stop using the herbal stimulant linked to 155 deaths.

2004: Artie Shaw, the clarinet virtuoso and leader of one of the biggest of the Swing Era big bands, died at age 94.

TODAY IN CHRISTIAN HISTORY

1823: Charles G. Finney is licensed to preach. He becomes one of the US's most successful evangelists.

1838: Hanover College is chartered as a Presbyterian College in "the wilderness" of Indiana.

1843: Cumberland University is chartered in Tennessee as a Presbyterian school.

1852: Future U.S. President Rutherford B. Hayes marries "Lemonade "Lucy," so called because, as first lady, she forbade alcohol in the Executive Mansion. The Hayeses were both devout Methodists who began each day with prayer and organized Sunday evening worship services at the White House.

HOLLYWOOD, SPORTS AND CELEBRITY FIGURE BIRTHDAYS

- o actress ("Dollhouse", "Tru Calling", daughter Dana in *True Lies*) Eliza Dushku 37
- o golfer Tiger Woods is 42

- o actress (“7th Heaven”, “Out of This World”) Maureen Flannigan 45 ([audio clip](#))
- o actress (“State of the Union”, “Tracey Takes On...”, “The Tracey Ullman Show”) Tracey Ullman 58
- o TV reporter Matt Lauer 60
- o actor (“Twin Peaks”, Riff in *West Side Story*) Russ Tamblyn 83 ([audio clip](#))

BEE-BOP BIRTHDAYS

(Music Artist Birthdays From SongFacts.com)

1928 : [Bo Diddley](#)
 1931 : Skeeter Davis
 1934 : [Del Shannon](#)
 1937 : Paul Stookey
 1937 : John Hartford
 1939 : Felix Pappalardi ([Mountain](#))
 1939 : Kim Weston
 1940 : Perry Ford (Ivy League)
 1940 : Kenny Pentifallo (Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes)
 1942 : Michael Nesmith ([The Monkees](#))
 1945 : Davy Jones ([The Monkees](#))
 1946 : [Patti Smith](#)
 1947 : Jeff Lynne ([Electric Light Orchestra](#), [The Traveling Wilburys](#))
 1949 : William King ([The Commodores](#))
 1951 : Chris Jasper ([The Isley Brothers](#))
 1956 : Suzy Bogguss
 1969 : Jay Kay ([Jamiroquai](#))
 1978 : Tyrese

SECRETS OF THE UNIVERSE *(Answering questions that have plagued mankind for minutes!)*

How did we get Liquid Paper? Believe it or not it has something to do with the band, The Monkees.

The invention of typing correction fluid is credited to Bette Nesmith, the mother of former Monkee Mike Nesmith. In the 1950s, Mrs. Nesmith was a typist. One day, she brought with her to work a small brush and a bottle of white paint which she used to correct her typos. She shared her "Mistake Out" with other secretaries, and was soon approached by an office supply company to market her invention. She later renamed the product Liquid Paper, and in 1979, sold the rights to the Gillette Company for \$47.5 million. ***MARLAR: One of the few things the product couldn't completely cover up was the gosh awful band her son was a part of.

NEWS KICKERS

(None on weekends. Want a customizable version with your specific station tag, FREE? [Email me for more information!](#))

NEW NEWS KICKERS...

(Not posted on weekends and U.S. holidays.)

(This feature will be taking a break December 25th thru January 1st and will return Tuesday, January 2nd.)

NEWS KICKER EVERGREENS...

(Not posted on weekends and U.S. holidays.)

(This feature will be taking a break December 25th thru January 1st and will return Tuesday, January 2nd.)

AS THE JUNGLE TURNS

(Not updated on weekends and U.S. holidays.)

(This feature will be taking a break December 25th thru January 1st and will return Tuesday, January 2nd.)

[CLICK HERE](#) TO DOWNLOAD TUESDAY'S EPISODE – JANUARY 2nd, 2018

OPEN: And now, FancyMonkey.com, (Show Name), and (Station Call Letters) bring you As the Jungle Turns! Last time, the jungle animals were so busy trying to get so many things done that they didn't have time for anything else... meetings, planning, even talking to each other! They were getting annoyed with each other – and then, all at once, the animals shouted...

CLOSE: Do the turtles have a secret to staying calm, cool, and collected? Will they share the secret with the other animals? Tune in again next time, as FancyMonkey.com, (Show Name), and (Station Call Letters) bring you As the Jungle Turns!

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MOMENT OF DUH

An obituary in an Iowa newspaper turns out to be a Moment of Duh!

A woman walked into the newsroom at the Waterloo Courier and told workers they'd been duped. She said an obituary printed last week was a hoax, because the 17-year-old in the article was alive and walking the streets of Waterloo, Iowa. Reading the obituary could bring tears to your eyes. It states that 17-year-old Daniel "D.J." Reddout died of complications from surgery at the Mayo Clinic. The Courier's Managing Editor, Nancy Newhoff, says it would be sad, if it was true. "To put a fake obituary in a paper is the most tragic, absurd, and sad thing I have ever encountered, that someone would do this about their own child." Waterloo Police Captain Bruce Arends, says the plan may backfire, big time, because the obituary requested that donations be sent to the family. That, my friends, is called "fraud".

TOP TEN

TOP TEN INDICATORS THAT YOU ARE A FAN OF "MR. ED" ([audio clip](#))

- 10) You can say "Wilbur" with just the right inflection
- 9) You know which Mister Ed scenes were used in more than one episode
- 8) Actually somewhat surprised to hear the word "dumb" in a sitcom
- 7) You know all the words to "Pretty Little Filly"
- 6) Heated debates over which were the best neighbors: The Addisons or the Kirkwoods.
- 5) Feel compelled to say 'of course' twice (of course)
- 4) You know the answer to the question, "What can Carol do that Ed can't?"....Sew, of course (of course)
- 3) Was a time in your life when you couldn't decide between being an architect or being a horse
- 2) You know the Post's address and phone number
- 1) You're not surprised when your horse talks to you

THE FILES OF LAW & DISORDER

Sleeping on the job is never a good idea... especially if you're running from the law.

FILE #1: According to authorities, armed robbery suspect Robert Bell was nabbed catching some "Z's" on a couch, after he had broken into a woman's home. Before that, police in Athens, Tennessee, charge that Bell used the arrest of his partner as a diversion to steal a new patrol car. They had allegedly robbed a market. Officers say when they found the sleeping suspect, he reeked of alcohol. But he got to sleep it off -- in jail.

FILE #2: A Danish man's attempt to greet his friends blew up in his face -- literally. The 34-year-old man wanted to do something fun for his friends that were at the police station. He decided the best way to do this was with fireworks. He climbed up on to the roof and threw a firecracker into an air shaft leading into the station's bathroom, which subsequently blew up the toilet and started a fire. The man was arrested on the roof of the building and - after the fire was extinguished - spent the rest of the night in the cells with his friends. So it looks like he was able to greet them in person.

FILE #3: None of us like to get caught speeding, but most of us don't incriminate ourselves by videotaping the event. 37 year old Daniel Hicks is a tad bit different. The motorcyclist recently got his bike up to 175 miles an hour -- about the speed of a jumbo jet at take-off. Wanting to prove to his friends that he was "the man", he strapped a camcorder to the handlebars of his Honda Fireblade 900 to record the event. All didn't go as planned when he crashed his \$12,000 machine on the highway. Police rushed to the scene to find a surviving Hicks, and a surviving camcorder. They popped the tape in and he earned a 6-week stay in jail.

STRANGE LAW: In England it is illegal to stand within one hundred yards of the reigning monarch when not wearing socks.

THIS IS YOUR BRAIN ON DRUGS

"This Is Your Brain On Drugs" is about people doing dumb things under the influence, but addiction is no laughing matter. If you or someone you know needs help, there's a toll free number you can call 1-800-438-0380. That's the Addiction Hope and Help Line at 1-800-438-0380.

A heavily intoxicated, 42-year-old Jackson, Wyoming, man ordered a burrito from a convenience store, but passed out on the floor before he could pay for it. Police arrived, used money from the man's pockets to pay for the burrito and then hauled him off to jail for public intoxication.

PHONER PHUN

What good thing happened to you this past year that was a total surprise to you? Surprise marriage proposal? Surprise job-change to a warmer climate? Unexpected financial blessings?

BIBLE BRAIN BUSTER!

QUESTION: In what book of the Bible is bad breath mentioned?

ANSWER: Job (Job 19)

QUESTION IMPOSSIBLE

QUESTION: Doctors say people with pet fish do this easier than people who don't - what is it?

ANSWER: Fall asleep

TRUE OR FALSE

Pay attention! If our next player doesn't answer all ten T/F questions correctly we start all over from question #1! First person to answer question #10 correctly is our winner!

1. Every calendar year has at least one Friday the 13th. (True)
2. The only country in the Middle East that does not have a desert is Iran. (False, it's Lebanon)
3. Afghanistan has no rivers. (False... but Saudi Arabia doesn't have any!)
4. As beautiful as the Caribbean is, only 1% of it's islands are inhabited. (True)
5. It takes 2.4 minutes for light from the sun to reach the earth. (False... it takes 8.5 minutes.)
6. The largest mountain range is in China. (False... it's actually underwater in the Atlantic Ocean)
7. The inhabitants of Papua New Guinea speak over 600 languages. (True - in fact, it's closer to 700!)
8. Yellowstone National Park was the world's first National Park. (True)
9. 92% of all U.S. potato products originate in Idaho. (False... it's only 60%)
10. The D.C. in Washington D.C. stands for District of Columbia. (True)

TABLOID MATCH GAME

You have to match the blank in the tabloid headline with the word or phrase that has been removed!

CELEBRATE FESTIVUS (OBAMAS)

Former President Obama and former First Lady Michelle Obama have celebrated *Festivus* for the last ten years, and it has now become an Obama family tradition. Sources say they are pushing to make *Festivus* a national holiday – perhaps even replacing Christmas. Michelle Obama is raising money again this year of the *Festivus*. She is asking Americans to donate to The Human Fund. Checks can be made out to her.

THE WAY TOO EARLY IN THE MORNING TO UNDERSTAND THE PUNCHLINE EVEN AFTER TWO CUPS OF COFFEE JOKE OF THE DAY

JOKE #1

A History professor was explaining how society's ideal of beauty changes with time. "Take Miss America in 1921," he noted. "She stood 5'1" tall, weighed 108 pounds, and had measurements of 30-25-32. How do you think she'd do in today's beauty contest?"

One student piped up, "Not very well! She'd be about a hundred years old!"

JOKE #2 - A POST-CHRISTMAS POEM FOR WOMEN

'Twas the month after Christmas and all through the house
Nothing would fit me, not even a blouse.

The cookies I'd nibbled, the eggnog I'd taste.

All the holiday parties had gone straight to my waist.

When I got on the scale there arose such a number!

When I walked to the store (less a walk than a lumber).

I'd remember the marvelous meals I'd prepared;

The gravies and sauces and beef nicely rared,

The wine and the rum balls, the bread and the cheese

And the way I'd never said, "No thank you, please."

As I dressed myself in my husband's old shirt,

And prepared once again to do battle with dirt---

I said to myself, as I only can

"You can't spend a winter disguised as a man!"

So-- away with the last of the sour cream dip,

Get rid of the fruitcake, every cracker and chip

Every last bit of food that I like must be banished

'Til all the additional ounces have vanished.

I won't have a cookie-- not even a lick.

I'll want only to chew on a long celery stick.

I won't have hot biscuits or corn bread or pie,

I'll munch on a carrot and quietly cry.

I'm hungry, I'm lonesome, and life is a bore---

But isn't that what January is for?

Unable to giggle, no longer a riot.

Happy New Year to all and to all a good diet!

-Author Unknown

JOKE #3

A little girl asked her father, "Daddy? Do all Fairy Tales begin with Once Upon A Time?"

He replied, "No, there is a whole series of Fairy Tales that begin with 'If elected I promise...'"

USELESS FACTS

The fear of fear itself may make people more vulnerable to developing certain psychiatric disorders, according to a new study. Researchers found that people who are especially sensitive to the physical signs of anxiety have a higher risk of developing anxiety disorders, including panic attacks. ***Dang... now I'm afraid about being afraid of being afraid! I really AM sick!

Two UK pet insurance companies found in a recent survey that almost half of dog owners are worried that their dogs will be kidnapped or stolen. Many have used sick days to stay home with a new cat, dog or other pet. And workers increasingly want employers to provide "pet-ernity" leave so they can take time off work when they get a new pet.

***And that's in dog time, so a week off is actually close to two months!

FEATURED FUNNIES

The new pastor decided to visit the children's Sunday school. The teacher introduced him and said, "Pastor, this morning we're studying Joshua."

"That's wonderful," said the new pastor, "let's see what you're learning. Who tore down the walls of Jericho?"

Little Billy shyly raised hand and offered, "Pastor, I didn't do it."

Taken aback, the pastor asked, "Come on, now, who tore down the walls of Jericho?"

The teacher, interrupting, said, "Pastor, Billy's a good boy. If he says he didn't do it, I believe he didn't do it."

Flustered, the pastor went to the Sunday school director and related the story to him.

The director, looking worried, explained, "Well, sir, we've had some problems with Billy before. Let me talk to him and see what we can do."

Really bothered now by the answers of the teacher and the director, the new pastor approached the deacons and related the whole story, including the responses of the teacher and the director.

A white-haired gentleman thoughtfully stroked his chin and said, "Well, Pastor, I move we just take the money from the general fund to pay for the walls and leave it at that."

IT MUST BE TRUE BECAUSE I HEARD IT ON THE RADIO!

From the "no good deed goes unpunished" files...

Springfield, Michigan's Rodger Lake was plowing the snow from a driveway for a family friend who has a bad back. Lake was pushing the snow, including what had been deposited at the end of the driveway by city trucks, into the grass across the pavement. That was when a Springfield officer pulled up and wrote him a ticket for violating a law against pushing snow across streets. For his good deed, Lake is now facing up to 90 days in jail and a \$100 fine.

***MARLAR: The moral of the story? Don't ever do anything nice for anyone - ever!

INSPIRATIONAL INSPIRATION

TO A BUSY FRIEND

One day a teacher asked her students to list the names of the other students in the room on two sheets of paper, leaving a space between each name.

Then she told them to think of the nicest thing they could say about each of their classmates and write it down.

It took the remainder of the class period to finish their assignment, and as the students left room, each one handed in the papers.

That Saturday, the teacher wrote down the name of each student on a separate sheet of paper, and listed what everyone else had said about that individual.

On Monday she gave each student his or her list. Before long, the entire class was smiling. 'Really?' she heard whispered. 'I never knew that I meant anything to anyone!' and, 'I didn't know others liked me so much,' were most of the comments.

No one ever mentioned those papers in class again. She never knew if they discussed them after class or with their parents, but it didn't matter. The exercise had accomplished its purpose. The students were happy with themselves and one another. That group of students moved on.

Several years later, one of the students was killed in Vietnam and his teacher attended the funeral of that special student. She had never seen a serviceman in a military coffin before. He looked so handsome, so mature.

The church was packed with his friends. One by one those who loved him took a last walk by the coffin. The teacher was the last one to bless the coffin.

As she stood there, one of the soldiers who acted as pallbearer came up to her. 'Were you Mark's math teacher?' he asked. She nodded: 'yes.' Then he said: 'Mark talked about you a lot.'

After the funeral, most of Mark's former classmates went together to a luncheon. Mark's mother and father were there, obviously waiting to speak with his teacher.

'We want to show you something,' his father said, taking a wallet out of his pocket 'They found this on Mark when he was killed. We thought you might recognize it.'

Opening the billfold, he carefully removed two worn pieces of notebook paper that had obviously been taped, folded and refolded many times. The teacher knew without looking that the papers were the ones on which she had listed all the good things each of Mark's classmates had said about him.

'Thank you so much for doing that,' Mark's mother said. 'As you can see, Mark treasured it.'

All of Mark's former classmates started to gather around. Charlie smiled rather sheepishly and said, 'I still have my list. It's in the top drawer of my desk at home.' Chuck's wife said, 'Chuck asked me to put his in our wedding album.'

'I have mine too,' Marilyn said. 'It's in my diary'

Then Vicki, another classmate, reached into her pocketbook, took out her wallet and showed her worn and frazzled list to the group. 'I carry this with me at all times,' Vicki said and without batting an eyelash, she continued: 'I think we all saved our lists'
That's when the teacher finally sat down and cried. She cried for Mark and for all his friends who would never see him again.

DRIVE TIME DEVOTIONAL

If you're so busy you don't have time to spread peanut butter, help has arrived. Food researchers have developed peanut butter slices that are packaged like individual slices of cheese. Peel off the plastic wrapper, slap the "PB Slice" onto a piece of bread, and it looks and tastes just like creamy peanut butter. Not convenient enough? You can also buy ready-made frozen PB&J sandwiches at the supermarket – complete with the crusts cut off. Convenience is apparently more important than quality.

Professor Geoffrey Godbey at Penn State University did some research and found that 1/3 of Americans always feel rushed. But instead of helping us to slow down, every new convenience we create only increases what we expect of ourselves. The faster life goes, the faster we expect it to be.

No wonder we have a hard time getting to know God – we hurry through our five-minute devotional and think it's going to be enough quality time with the Creator of the entire universe. But think about it – how many lasting friendships have you created five minutes at a time?

Jesus was never too busy to pray and seek God's will. Even among the crowds, after teaching and healing, Jesus still sent his disciples to a mountainside to pray. Prayer was the foundation of Jesus' life and the source of His spiritual power.

How intensely do you seek God in prayer? Do you schedule time to be with Him just like you make time for meals every day? Do you get to know God by reading his Word, or are you content with what others have written about Him?

Our lives are filled with study, work, and scores of worthy activities. But if we have no consistent, unhurried time with the Lord, what kind of a friendship are we building?

LEFTOVERS

MID-AIR BIRTH?

You might think a woman eight months pregnant might choose not to go parachuting.

Not Marija Usova of Moscow. She ignored her doctor's warnings and went right ahead with her daredevil adventure. As you probably guessed, halfway through the jump she felt an enormous pain and realized she was in labor! Although close to passing out at times, she managed to control her descent and landed safely where she immediately began to give birth. Doctors on hand rushed to her aid and helped deliver the baby. Usova said the last words she remembers hearing were, "It's a girl!" before waking up in a hospital. So what do you name a baby like this? She chose Larisa which means Seagull in ancient Greek.

LIFE... LIVE IT

HOW TO KEEP YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

New Year's resolutions are easier to make than to keep -- but you can increase your chances of success by following these tips from experts.

- Limit the number of resolutions. One is best. Never choose more than three.
- Be specific. Vague goals are impossible to achieve.
- Choose an obtainable goal. Resolving to look like a fashion model isn't realistic for most people, but a goal of exercising daily is quite possible to achieve.
- Don't choose a resolution that you've been unsuccessful at year after year. You're likely to fail.
- Ask friends and family members to help you with your resolution so you have someone to be accountable to.
- If you fail to keep your resolution, dust yourself off and start all over again.

JUST FOR FUN

RING AROUND THE INTESTINE

A woman attempts to propose marriage to her boyfriend by buying him a ring... but he eats it!

A Norwegian man unwittingly swallowed a gold ring hidden in his porridge by his girlfriend as a surprise proposal of marriage. "Now I am 24 carats heavier," he said. Janne Grim, who hid the ring in her boyfriend's porridge at a Christmas party, said she thought her proposal had been ignored before realizing that it had been gulped down unnoticed. ***MARLAR: Although it is true – the quickest way to a man's heart is through his stomach.

FUN LIST

EASIEST NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS TO KEEP

- To not make more than one resolution (and... you're done!)
- To break all my resolutions
- Get into more arguments
- Put on 15 pounds

MORE SHOW PREP STUFF...

CLOUDVERTISING

Francisco Guerra whose company, Snowmasters Inc, makes machines that churn out fake snow for Hollywood films, is also the man behind the latest advertising sensation -- something he calls "Flogos". Basically these are foam clouds shaped like corporate logos that will float up to 20,000-feet into the air. The 4-foot shapes are made from tiny soapy bubbles filled with helium and can travel for 30 miles before evaporating into thin air. Guerra has invented a machine which can manipulate the bubbles into any shape and pump them into the sky at a rate of one every 15 seconds. He's already got Disney's attention and has been hired to send clouds shaped like Mickey Mouse above Disney World. And best of all, Flogos are environmentally safe because they are made from just water, air, helium and a little soap. (*Daily Telegraph*)

OTHER STUFF I WANT TO CRAM INTO TODAY'S PREP

(Not posted on weekends and U.S. holidays.)

(PERENNIAL) Does your family struggle to remember the blessings from this year? Here is a suggestion to keep that from happening in the year to come. They suggest a Memory Jar containing slips of paper to write down events (both happy and hard) throughout the year. The following New Year's Eve, open the jar and take turns pulling out a slip and reading the memory on it. It is a good reminder of the ways God has been with us through it all.

SOUL-GLO

(Feel-good stories! Only posted as new stories come available. Not posted on weekends and U.S. holidays.)

TOTALLY OUTRAGEOUS!

(Only posted as stories come available. Not posted on weekends and U.S. holidays.)

AND I LEAVE YOU WITH THIS THOUGHT

Most people celebrate Christmas with relatives. That's why New Year's Eve was invented. It's a chance to celebrate with people you actually enjoy celebrating with.

For many people the highlight of New Year's Eve is watching the ball drop in Times Square. Big deal. I've seen lots of balls drop this year -- I had season tickets to the (COWBOYS) games.

THE TICKET Movie Reviews with MARIE ASNER

Marie Asner has been reviewing films for over 35 years. Her outlets include radio, print and Internet. For more in-depth movie reviews of the following films, visit www.Tollbooth.org. Ratings from 1 (Low) to 5 (High).

DECEMBER 22-25, 2017...

Bright---How about living in a fantasy world where humans and fantasy creatures have co-existed for eons. This is an alternate Earth, and policeman Will Smith and his Orc partner, Joel Edgerton, are on duty. However, there is evil afoot and they have to find a magic wand before anyone else. Also in the cast are Noomi Rapace and Lucy Fry. "Bright" is rated PG 13. No rating.

Downsizing---Bet you thought this term mean problems in the work force. Think again. In this film, it concerns shrinking people (shades of "The Incredible Shrinking Man.") There is a purpose in this movie, though, and that is if you want to control populations and have the environment last, make the people smaller. Hmm, does that mean family

pets, too? One swipe of that paw and....! To begin the experiment, a group of people are purposely shrunk to four inches and live together, but then problems come forth. Stars are Matt Damon, Christoph Waltz, Udo Kier and Kristen Wiig. "Downsizing" is rated PG 13. Rating of 2 for fans.

Happy End---This is a depressing film about a family with poisoning and suicides in their past. The story centers on a teenage girl named Eve (Fantine Hardoin) with a troubled past and uncertain future. She eventually lives with her aunt (Isabelle Huppert) and still has problems. Others in the cast are Toby Jones and Jean-Louis Trintignant. French language film. "Happy End" is rated R. No rating.

Father Figures (also called "Bastards")---This film stars Owen Wilson and Ed Helms as fraternal twins. Their Mom is Glenn Close and they, as adult, find she doesn't know who their biological father(s) are. What to do? The search is on. Also in the cast are Christopher Walken and J. K. Simmons. "Father Figures" is rated PG 13. No rating.

Hostiles---Christian Bale stars in this western as an army officer in 1892, who agrees to escort a Native American tribal chief and his family back to their family ground. Of course, there are problems along the way with outsiders and weather. The cast includes Wes Studi, Adam Beach and Rosamund Pike. "Hostiles" is rated R. No rating.

Pitch Perfect 3---This is supposed to be the last film in the series, but then everyone says that. The group goes separate ways after winning their championship. Trouble is, they are bored, so along comes a chance to join the USO and entertain troops abroad. But, of course, they get into trouble. The stars include Hailee Steinfeld, Anna Kendrick, Rebel Wilson, Ruby Rose and Elizabeth Banks. "Pitch Perfect 3" is rated PG 13. No rating.

The Greatest Showman---Hugh Jackman is quite the performer, from "Wolverine" to Broadway. Here he takes on the role of P. T. Barnum and how he put together his wonderful circus. There are animals, clowns and trapeze artists, which brings us to singer, Zendaya, who plays Anne Wheeler. She is a trapeze artist who falls for P. T. Barnum's partner, played by Zac Efron. Zandaya did most of her own stunts in this film. Also in the cast are Rebecca Ferguson and Michelle Williams. Music by John Debney and Justin Paul. How to put a show together? The Big Top has it all. "The Greatest Showman" is rated PG. Rating of 2 for fans. For children over age ten.

The Phantom Thread---Daniel Day Lewis submerses himself in his acting roles. From "My Right Foot" to "The Last of the Mohicans" and now a fashion designer in "The Phantom Thread." Lewis has said that this is his final film and then he will retire from acting. However, sometimes a tempting role does come along... A phantom thread is a part of fabric/design in which, if you have the right thread, can unravel the garment. Much like a government, in which one small detail can bring the house down. In this film, set in the 1950's in London, Daniel Day-Lewis is a couture fashion designer to nobility, along with his sister (Lesley Manville) and they have a structured life. Enter the outspoken, Alma (Vicky Krieps) who gives new fashion inspiration to Daniel, but his sister begins to see the facade crack and doesn't know how her brother will handle, perhaps, love? Jonny Greenwood composed the score and the film was written and directed by Paul Thomas Anderson. "The Phantom Thread" is rated PG-13. Rating of 3 for fans of fashion and the stars.

DECEMBER 29, 2017...

Film Stars Don't Die In Liverpool---An odd title for a movie, but then this film isn't about your usual actress. It is about Gloria Grahame, an actress in the 1950's who won a Best Supporting Actress Award for "The Bad and the Beautiful." Other memorable roles were in "Oklahoma," "Sudden Fear" and "It's A Wonderful Life." Annette Bening takes on the role of Gloria Grahame, whose regular life was more colorful than her screen life. She had several husbands and married her step-son, here played by Jamie Bell. Also in the cast are Vanessa Redgrave and Julie Walters. "Film Stars Don't Die In Liverpool" is rated R. Rating of 2 for fans.

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