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## GRADUATION 2025

# Southern Illinois News



May 2025



## SIC honors Dr. R. Edward Winters as 2025 distinguished alumnus



HARRISBURG, ILL. — Southeastern Illinois College is proud to announce Dr. R. Edward Winters as its 2025 Distinguished Alumnus, recognizing his lifelong commitment to education, innovation, and service. Dr. Winters will be honored in absentia during the commencement ceremony on Thursday, May 15 at 7 p.m.

A 1963 SIC graduate, Dr. Winters credits the college and its dedicated educators for helping him find his path. After overcoming personal and financial challenges, he was encouraged by his mother and SIC Dean Charles Helwig to attend SIC—an opportunity he calls “life-changing.” As a student leader, Dr. Winters helped

see SIC, page 5

## Roehm-Scheffer named SIC’s 2025 Outstanding Teacher



HARRISBURG, ILL. — Southeastern Illinois College has announced that Jennifer Roehm-Scheffer has been bestowed with the prestigious Loren P. and Velma Dallas Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award for the 2024-2025 academic year. This honor, awarded by a vote of her peers, recognizes Roehm-Scheffer’s exceptional contributions to education and her commitment to the success of her students.

The Loren P. and Velma Dallas Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award is reserved for individuals who exemplify excellence in teaching, demonstrate dedication to their field, and exhibit a profound impact on the academic and personal development of their students.

Roehm-Scheffer, a Spanish and English instructor at SIC, has served the college for nearly 18 years. Known for her approachable, student-first teaching style, she has been instrumental in creating unique learning opportunities both in the classroom and online.

Roehm-Scheffer has taught a wide variety of students — from dual credit high school students to traditional college students — and is highly respected for her ability to connect with learners at every level.

Former student Rachel Lands said Roehm-Scheffer’s influence extends well beyond academics.

“Mrs. Roehm-Scheffer is not just a college teacher to me, she is a lifelong mentor,” said Lands. “She opened my eyes to the intricacies, beauty, and value of learning another language, and I will always be grateful to her.”

see TEACHER, page 4

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# Discovery Park honors 2025 Junior Duck Stamp Art Contest winners

(Union City, Tenn) — Discovery Park of America hosted the winners of the Tennessee Junior Duck Stamp Art Contest in a special ceremony on Saturday, April 26, 2025. More than 250 attendees from across the state enjoyed an awards ceremony and a dinner provided by Discovery Park.

The Junior Duck Stamp Art Contest is part of the Federal Junior Duck Stamp Conservation and Design Program, which combines art and science to teach students about wetland and waterfowl conservation. The program encourages students from kindergarten through high school to create artwork depicting North American waterfowl species while learning about their habitats and conservation efforts.

“We are proud to continue our partnership with Discovery Park of America in promoting the importance of waterfowl conservation through the arts,” said Tara Dowdy, refuge ranger with the West Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge Complex and Tennessee State coordinator for the Junior Duck Stamp Program. “Discovery Park provides a perfect venue to celebrate the talented young artists and to help raise awareness about the need to preserve wetland habitats.”

The winning artwork, including the 2025 “Best of Show” piece by Glory Malone, 16, of Dover, Tennessee, will be on display at Discovery Park’s Art Hall until July 6. Additionally, the artwork will also be showcased on a digital kiosk in The William A. (Bill) Homra and Allen Homra Lodge for the remainder of 2025.

The Junior Duck Stamp Program, managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, involves students from across the nation who study waterfowl and their environments, then create artwork based on North American waterfowl species. The “Best of Show” from each state competition is submitted to the National Junior Duck Stamp Art Contest, where a panel of judges selects the national winner and awards scholarships to the top three artists. The national contest also honors the student with the strongest conservation message.


Proceeds from the sale of Junior Duck Stamps fund environmental education programs in Tennessee and nationwide.

The Junior Duck Stamp Program is inspired by the Federal Duck Stamp Program. Waterfowl hunters aged 16 and older are required to purchase and carry a duck stamp, which also grants free admission to national wildlife refuges.

For more information about the Junior Duck Stamp Program or to access resources for educators and parents, visit the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website. For more photos from the 2025 ceremony, visit Discovery Park’s Flickr album.



(Left to right) Jennifer Wildes, Discovery Park senior director of collections and exhibits; Glory Malone, Best of Show winner in the 2025 Tennessee Junior Duck Stamp Competition; Tara Dowdy, refuge ranger with the West Tennessee National Wildlife Refuge Complex and Tennessee Junior Duck Stamp Program coordinator.



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# 8 myths about tornadoes

More than a thousand tornadoes form in any given year across North America. The strong winds and powerful rains of tornadoes can decimate affected areas in a matter of minutes, reducing buildings to rubble, uprooting trees and causing widespread flooding. It is important to know what to do should a tornado strike. Unfortunately, myths abound in regard to tornadoes. To set the record straight, here are eight tornado myths debunked thanks to The National Weather Service, Norfolk & Dedham Mutual Fire Insurance Company, Geico, and Missouri Storm Aware.

**MYTH:** Outdoors, I should seek shelter from a tornado under an overpass.  
**FACT:** Stopping under a bridge or another raised structure to shelter from a tornado is a bad idea. Flying debris can be forced into the spaces between bridge and grade and impale people. The bridge itself may fall or rip apart. Also, it's

often impossible for people to grip onto girders if they exist, so they may be blown loose into the open. A low-lying valley or ditch is a safer place to ride out a tornado than beneath an underpass.  
**MYTH:** Tornadoes can't cross bodies of water.  
**FACT:** Tornadoes can form on land and easily cross lakes, rivers and other bodies of water. Tornadoes also can form on water.

**MYTH:** Tornadoes don't strike the same area twice.  
**FACT:** Tornadoes absolutely can strike an area multiple times. In fact, the town of Cordell, Kansas, was hit by tornadoes three years in a row on May 20.

**MYTH:** I can outrun a tornado in my car.  
**FACT:** Drivers may be able to avoid a visible tornado by driving away from it at a 90-degree angle relative to its path if it is a great distance away. However, a person should never leave the protection of a sturdy building to try to escape in a

vehicle.  
**MYTH:** I should open windows during a tornado to reduce damage by balancing the pressure inside and outside the structure.  
**FACT:** Even with the most violent tornadoes, most home frames can withstand the sudden difference in pressure with closed windows. Opening windows will allow rain and wind to enter a home, plus it wastes time and puts homeowners at risk of exposure to flying glass.  
**MYTH:** Tornadoes always can be seen.  
**FACT:** Sometimes tornadoes can be obscured or even invisible due to nearby clouds or rain.

**MYTH:** You only have to worry about tornadoes during tornado season.  
**FACT:** A tornado can occur just about any time of the year, and not just during spring. They also can happen all over the country and not just in "Tornado Alley."  
**MYTH:** The tornado itself is the most deadly aspect of the

storm.  
**FACT:** Flying debris poses the biggest threat when a tornado strikes.  
**MYTH:** Mobile homes attract tornadoes.  
**FACT:** Mobile homes do not attract tornadoes, but they are much more susceptible to damage than sturdier houses and office buildings. Tornadoes are serious storms that require fast action. Knowing fact from fiction can keep people safe during these storms.



## Tornadoes by the numbers

Millions of people experience the power of tornadoes each year. Tornadoes can cause severe injury, death and damage to structures. Numbers don't tell the whole story about tornadoes, but some illustrate just how big an impact these storms can have.  
1,000: The approximate number of tornadoes that occur across the United States in a given year, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.  
97: The approximate number of tornadoes that affect Canada annually, according to the Government of Canada.  
166: The speed of wind in miles per hour for a tornado to reach an F-4 category on the Fujita Scale for

Tornadoes. Tornadoes exceeding 200 mph are considered F-5 or "Incredible."  
530: The number of tornadoes that affected the U.S. in May of 2024. April through June tend to be the months with the highest rates of tornado activity.  
9,200: The cost, in millions of dollars, for the costliest U.S. catastrophe involving tornadoes. It occurred during the period of August 8-12, 2020, and involved Iowa; Illinois; Indiana; Kansas; Michigan; Minnesota; Missouri; Nebraska; Ohio; South Dakota; Wisconsin; Pennsylvania; Washington, D.C.; Maryland; Virginia; and West Virginia, according to the Insurance Information Institute.  
2.6: The size (in miles) of the largest

tornado ever recorded, which was the 2013 El Reno tornado, a storm that spread across Missouri, Illinois and Indiana.  
169: The number of 2024 tornadoes that occurred in Texas in 2024. Although many people think of Kansas as the state with the most tornadoes, a misperception that perhaps is due to the 1900 children's novel "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz," the National Weather Service says Texas averages more tornadoes per year than any other state. Kansas comes in second.  
131: The record number of tornadoes in Canada, which occurred throughout 2022, according to the Northern Tornadoes Project.

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# Shawnee College:

Commitment to community and inclusion

Shawnee Community College is a student-centered institution committed to access, innovation, and community development across southern Illinois. The College is governed by a dedicated seven-member Board of Trustees who provide strategic oversight and direction on behalf of the district’s residents.

The Shawnee Community College District No. 531 Board of Trustees is accepting applications to fill a vacant seat on the Board. The appointed individual will serve until the next regularly scheduled consolidated election for governing board members, which will be held on April 6, 2027.

**Eligibility Requirements**

Applicants must:  
Be a resident of Shawnee Community College District No.

531;  
Meet all qualifications outlined in the Illinois Public Community College Act (110 ILCS 805/3-7);

Be committed to the mission and values of Shawnee Community College.

**Trustee Responsibilities**

The Board is seeking candidates who demonstrate a commitment to public service, strong community engagement, and the ability to actively contribute to governance. Trustees are expected to:

Fully participate in the work of the Board by attending regular meetings, key college events, and professional development sessions;

Be knowledgeable about the diverse communities within the District and act in the best interest of those communities;  
Collaborate

effectively, build consensus, and balance the needs of multiple constituencies;

Support effective Board governance and uphold the authority and unity of the Board as a whole.

The Board of Trustees generally meets on the third Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. on the main campus in Ullin, Illinois. Occasional adjustments to meeting dates may occur due to holidays or scheduling needs.

**Application Instructions**

Application Deadline: May 31, 2025

Interested individuals are invited to submit the following materials:

A cover letter expressing interest and outlining relevant qualifications;  
A current résumé.  
Application materials should be

sent to:  
Tina Dudley  
Executive Assistant to the President and Board of Trustees  
Shawnee Community College  
8364 Shawnee College Road  
Ullin, IL 62992  
Email: tinad@shawneecc.edu

For questions or to recommend a potential candidate, please contact:

Steve Heisner,  
Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, at heisner@shawneecc.edu.

**Serving Your Community**

Serving as a Trustee is a meaningful opportunity to shape the strategic direction of Shawnee Community College and contribute to the educational and economic success of our region. Trustees play a vital role in ensuring access, quality, transparency, and accountability in public higher education.

**Commitment to Inclusion**

The Board welcomes applications from individuals of all backgrounds and experiences. We value diverse perspectives and are committed to fostering inclusive leadership that reflects the communities we serve.

To learn more about Shawnee Community College, please visit: [www.shawneecc.edu](http://www.shawneecc.edu)

TEACHER from page one

In addition to her teaching excellence, Roehm-Scheffer has played a key role in expanding Spanish language instruction in southern Illinois, including developing and teaching courses for Rend Lake College and Shawnee Community College through collaborative agreements with SIC. She has also contributed to numerous student success initiatives and served in leadership roles on campus, including as vice president and president of the Southeastern Illinois College Education Association.

“Education can open doors in a student’s local community or even all around the world,” said Roehm-Scheffer. “If the student knows they are supported and given all of the necessary tools to succeed, that’s exactly what they’ll do.”

SIC President Dr. Karen Weiss praised Roehm-Scheffer’s dedication to her students and the college.

“Jennifer’s passion for teaching and her dedication to her students is truly inspiring,” said Weiss. “She embodies the

very spirit of this award — making a difference not just in the classroom, but in the lives and futures of her students.”

The Loren P. and Velma Dallas Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award not only celebrates Roehm-Scheffer’s exceptional achievements but also honors the legacy of Loren and Velma Dallas, whose passion for education and dedication to southern Illinois continue to inspire future generations. Established in 1996 by Lorna Dallas-Brown and the late Ellen Wiggins, daughters of Loren and Velma Dallas, this award recognizes individuals who embody the Dallas family’s commitment to fostering excellence in education.

Each year the Dallas endowment through the SIC Foundation awards \$500 to the Outstanding Teacher of the Year.


As the recipient of this esteemed award, Roehm-Scheffer joins a select group of educators who have made a lasting impact on the lives of students and the community. She is also eligible for the 2025 Illinois Community College Trustees Association Outstanding Faculty Member Award.



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# Congratulations to all Graduates!!



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## City of Metropolis





SIC from page one

open the college’s first bookstore and student lounge, fostering a campus environment built on initiative and community.

Dr. Winters continued his education at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, where he shifted his focus from mathematics and chemistry to psychology, inspired by the field’s blend of science and human behavior. He went on to earn advanced degrees at both Wayne State

University and the University of Michigan, completing his doctoral research in sensory processes and human factors psychology.

“The marriage of science and human behavior was the perfect fit for me,” Dr. Winters said. “The encouragement and belief shown in me at SIC—by teachers like my mother and Dean Helwig—set everything in motion. I owe so much to those who supported me and hope every graduate remembers the power of a great

teacher.”

In a remarkable career spanning teaching, research, and industry, Dr. Winters founded Advanced Biomedical Devices, Inc. and WinMed, Inc., pioneering new technologies for cardiovascular care. He is named on multiple U.S. patents, including inventions that have become standard in life-saving heart procedures. Among his proudest accomplishments are medical devices that improved vascular access for

premature infants and neonates—work that required determined advocacy for vulnerable patients, even when the business case was overlooked.

“My proudest work has always been improving outcomes for those who needed it most, especially newborns and premature babies,” Winters said. “Sometimes it took a fight to convince others of the need, but the humanitarian impact always made it worthwhile.”

Throughout his

career, Dr. Winters has remained committed to education and mentorship, training healthcare teams, consulting for global medical leaders, and publishing research and technical materials used in the field today. He continues to credit SIC for providing the strong foundation that made all his future achievements possible.

“SIC’s mission is to empower students from all backgrounds, and Dr. Winters is living proof of the

impact community colleges can have,” said SIC President Dr. Karen Weiss. “His compassion, innovation, and lifelong commitment to service are an inspiration to our entire community. We are honored to call him one of our own.”

The Distinguished Alumnus Award is the highest honor given by Southeastern Illinois College to a former student who has demonstrated exceptional achievement in their field and a legacy of service.

## Area graduation ceremonies

**Southern Illinois University - Carbondale**

The May Commencement Ceremonies will be held on Saturday, May 10, 2025 in the Banterra Center, 1400 Arena Drive Carbondale IL.

9AM Ceremony for College of Agriculture, and Physical Sciences - College of Engineering, Computing, Technology, and Math - College of Arts and Media - School of Education.

1PM Ceremony for College of Health and Human Sciences - College of Business and Analytics - College of Liberal Arts - School of Medicine.

Friday, May 9, 2025 at 1:00 PM - SIU Simmons Law School Commencement Ceremony at the Shryock Auditorium.

SIU Online Commencement webpage honors the accomplishments of online graduates, visit [onlinecommencement.siu.edu](https://onlinecommencement.siu.edu) for more information.

In Total - There are 1971 Graduates, from 43 States, representing 13 Countries.

**Southeastern Illinois College Graduation - Harrisburg**

May 15th - The Commencement for the SIC Class of 2025 will take place at 7:00 PM in the Joseph C. Deaton Gym. This ceremony is for the Fall 2024, Spring 2025, and Summer 2025 graduates and is open to the public. For more information, call 618-252-5400 ext. 2401.

May 15th - SIC’s Nurse Pinning Ceremony in Deaton Gymnasium will take place at 4:00 PM. A brief reception to follow. For more Info, contact the nursing office at 618-252-5400 ext. 2331.

**Shawnee Community College - Ullin, Vienna, and Massac Campuses**

Commencement Ceremony is Friday May 16, 2025 - 6 PM at the Edward Smith Gymnasium Main Campus at 8364 Shawnee College Rd, Ullin, IL 62992. This is the Colleges 56th Graduation, with 365 students graduating, coming from 7 different states.

**John A. Logan College - Carterville Campus**

Friday May 16, 2025 - 5:00 PM and 7:30 PM - JALC will hold their 56th Commencement in the Donald L. Brewer Gymnasium and Convocation Center on the JALC Campus in Carterville.

Due to limited seating, the College will hold two ceremonies. The Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, Associate in Applied Science and certificate ceremony will be held at 7:30 pm. Seating is based on a first-come-first-serve basis. Additional seating with a live video stream will be available in the O’Neil Auditorium. All ceremonies will be live-streamed on the College’s official Facebook and YouTube pages. Links to official social media accounts - [www.jalc.edu](http://www.jalc.edu).

# Congratulations to all Graduates!!

## Wishing You A Bright & Happy Future!



### City of Harrisburg



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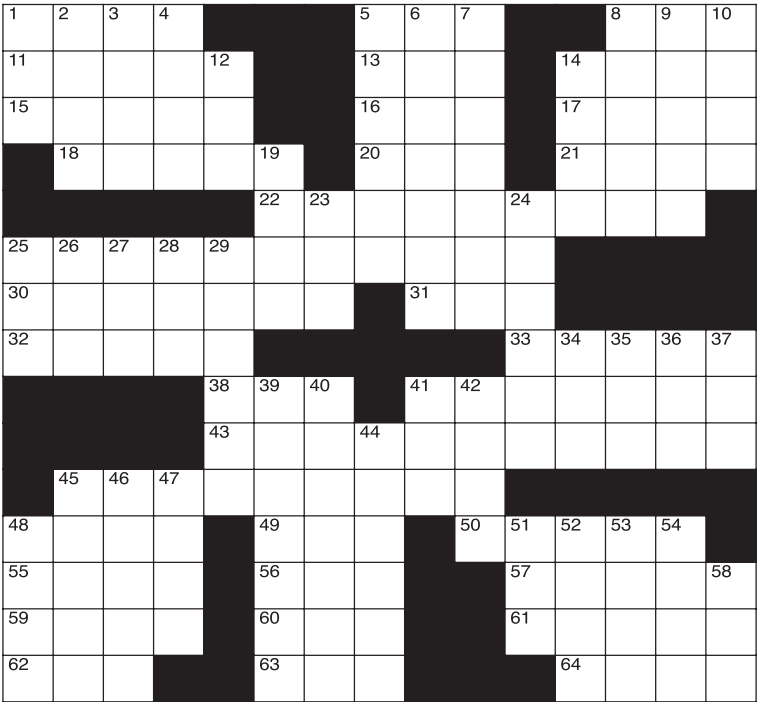
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Crossword Puzzle



CLUES ACROSS

1. Lions do it

5. In favor of

8. Rest here please (abbr.)

11. Pulpits

13. Leisure activity

14. Fertility god

15. Financial obligations

16. When you anticipate getting somewhere

17. Spanish river

18. Sporting events

20. Type of tree

21. Ceased to be

22. Persons

25. Synthetic resin

30. Relates to photochemical reactions

31. Father
32. Former Cowboys coach

33. City in Finland

38. Run batted in

41. Got through

43. They darken skin

45. In a harmful way

48. Form of weaving

49. City of Angels hoopster

50. Caucasian language

55. Syngman \_\_, Korean president

56. Sun up in New York

57. Paddled

59. Fishes

60. Affirmative

61. Nimble

62. Doctor of Education

63. Soviet Socialist Republic

64. A small island

CLUES DOWN

1. Cool!

2. Hebrew unit of measure

3. Swedish rock group

4. College army

5. Favor over another

6. Called it a career

7. Egg-shaped wind instrument

8. Israeli statesman

9. Hurries

10. Slog

12. Midway between south and southeast

14. Benedictine monk

19. Self-immolation by fire ritual

23. Family of regulator genes

24. Surrendering

25. Political action committee

26. S. American plant

27. Long-term memory
28. Bark

29. Breathes in

34. Take hold of

35. Everyone has one

36. Valentine’s Day color

37. Drivers’ licenses and passports

39. Outer walls of castles

40. Enters with force

41. One thousandth of an inch

42. Deceased Chinese politician

44. Sugary secretion of plants

45. Expressed pleasure

46. Shelter

47. Utilizes

48 Forest resident

51. Fashion accessory

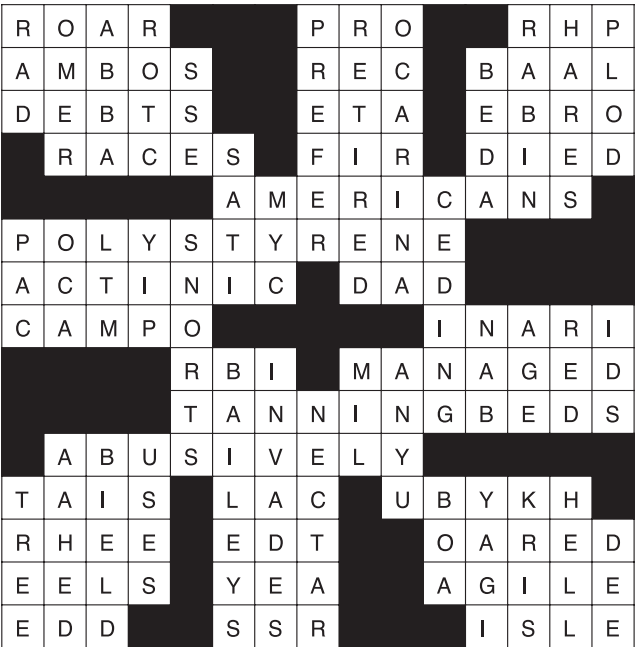
52. A sharply directional antenna

53. \_\_ Kristofferson, actor

54. A bad place to end up

58. MLBer Gordon

PUZZLE SOLUTION



Riddle Me This

A little girl goes to the store and buys one dozen eggs. As she is going home, all but three break. How many eggs are left unbroken?

Answer: Three

Crypto Fun

⓪ⓂⓈⓉⓊⓋⓌⓍⓎⓏⓐⓑⓔⓕⓖⓗⓙⓚⓛⓞⓟⓠⓡⓢⓣⓤⓥⓦⓧⓨⓩ⓪ⓁⓍⓎⓏⓐⓑⓔⓕⓖⓗⓙⓚⓛⓞⓟⓠⓡⓢⓣⓤⓥⓦⓧⓨⓩ

CRYPTO FUN

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Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to gardens.  
Each number corresponds to a letter.  
(Hint: 20 = E)

A. 21 20 22 20 16 6 5 8 20 25

Clue: Nutrient-dense foods

B. 11 4 19 12 16

Clue: Sweet produce

C. 11 8 26 10 20 4 25

Clue: Blossoms

D. 7 8 6 15 16 25

Clue: Trees, shrubs and grasses

Answers: A. vegetables, B. fruit, C. flowers, D. plants

Word Search

GIFTS FROM THE GARDEN WORD SEARCH

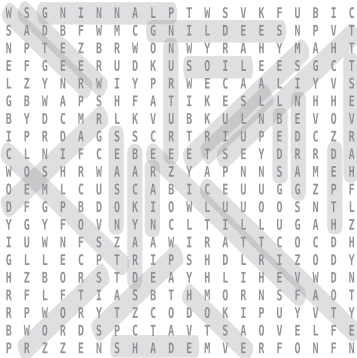


Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

- BACKYARD
- BEDS
- COMPOST
- CULTIVATE
- DEPTH
- FERTILIZE
- GARDEN
- HARVEST
- HOSE
- MEASURE
- NURTURE
- PESTS
- PLANNING
- RAIN
- RAISED
- ROOTS
- SEASON
- SEEDLING
- SHADE
- SOIL
- SUNLIGHT
- TILL
- WATER
- WEEDS

Word Search Answers



Guess Who?



I was born on May 4, 1979 in Mississippi. I had early plans to study engineering so I could work for NASA. However, I ended up in a multi-platinum pop boy band. I also advocate for human rights.

Answer: Lance Bass



# VICTORIOUS *Living* ...in a troubled world

## God, alone, gives relief from “The Code”



by Teresa LeNeave  
tleneave@ky-news.com

There seems to be an unspoken code for being a mom. Moms are expected to know how to fix everything from a skinned knee to a broken heart. She is expected to know how to heal the family’s emotional issues, their health problems and financial woes. The truth is, we burden ourselves with those expectations, but more importantly, like I just mentioned, it’s just the “code of motherhood”. Everybody expects it from a mom.

Every child and every husband expects mom to be “the glue that holds the world together”. Even in times

when a mom doesn’t meet the expectation, it doesn’t change the code.

This can be very a serious issue for moms because even moms need wise advice, encouragement, and a helping hand. Where do they get the encouragement they need?

Most women don’t think they know it all, but most of us think that we *should* know it all. We feel we should have everything under control in our homes. Everyone has heard the slogan “the hands that rock the cradle, rules the world”. With that kind of expectation placed on moms we tend to try to fulfill the prophecy. Keeping our families together is of

upmost importance to us. And, it certainly should be.

But, let me assure you, it’s liberating to know we are not perfect. We realize that when we face, and deal with, brokenness in our own lives, we need a Helper. Life’s not always good. Things happen that upset the apple cart. In those times, it’s the wisdom of God, friends, and other mothers around us that keep us on the path of sanity.

Admitting things are not always perfect is humbling and that one little statement helps us run to the only one who can really help; the only one who can step up to the plate when we need it. I’m talking about the one Helper who can really make a difference.

No pressure. Just love. In Psalms 103:1-5 there is a promise that we can always run to in times of need. In those verses, David found himself speaking to his own soul. **Moms, you can do the same thing. I can imagine King David talking to his own soul, and saying, “Don’t be discouraged. Don’t**

be unthankful. Do be thankful. Do confess what God does for you. Bless the Lord for all His benefits”. And then, he lists six specific benefits of the one man who can make a difference.

- Number One: The Lord forgives all thine iniquities. (He sets you up for success right off the bat).
2. He heals all thy diseases.
  3. He redeems thy life from destruction.
  4. He crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies.
  5. He satisfies your mouth with good things
  6. ... So that your youth can be renewed like the eagle’s.

Say to your own soul: “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name.” By doing that, we won’t forget his goodness and we realize our goodness ... and the times we come short of any goodness...are really in his hands. If we invite God into our homes, he’ll be the deliverer every time.

## Pursuing a pure heart

Bro. Brandon G. Bramlett  
Bandana Baptist Church

If you didn’t know any better, it might appear as though he was making a costly mistake. He would light a blazing fire, and let it burn until it was so intense that it made hell seem chilly. Next, when his crucible was hot enough, he would do something really bizarre: he would place silver or gold inside. The metals weren’t being burned for fun or fuel, however, but for refinement. In ancient

days, craftsmen would do precisely this in order to purify gold and silver. By heating the metals until the dross ascended to the surface, and then scraping it away, the result was the finest gold and purest silver you had ever seen.

And this is what Jesus meant when He commanded believers to be “pure in heart” (Matt. 5:8a). A pure heart is one that is being continuously refined in the crucible of God’s saving and sanctifying grace, leaving

behind a clean heart that is worth more than all of the gold and silver in the world. Jesus wants the hearts of His saints to be free from sin-impurities, contamination, and all other imperfections that do not belong. And purity is most vital in the heart, since the life we live flows from it (Matt. 15:19). If the spring of the heart is impure, then impurity will permeate one’s life through a stream of impure actions (Prov. 4:23).

Most importantly, only

the pure in heart “shall see God” (Matt. 5:8b). As David explained, “Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully. He will receive blessing from the LORD and righteousness from the God of his salvation” (Psalm 24:3-5). The writer of Hebrews likewise warned, “Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness

without which no one will see the Lord” (Heb. 12:14). And this is one of the many reasons for Christ’s sacrificial death: “[Jesus] gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works” (Titus 2:14).

To have a pure heart, we must acknowledge the wickedness of our hearts (Prov. 20:9), and plead for God’s cleansing, as David did: “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew

a right spirit within me” (Psalm 51:10). We must also immerse ourselves in the pure word of God (Psalm 12:6-7). The psalmist’s question and answer was spot-on: “How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word” (Psalm 119:9; cf. Prov. 19:8; John 15:3; 17:17).

This column is from 40 Days with Jesus, my 40-day devotional on Christ’s life, teachings, and miracles, available for purchase on Amazon.



By Gary Miller  
Outdoortruths.org

It was a beautiful morning. The rain was enough to get me wet, but not enough to keep me from pursuing another tom. I did, however, wait until I heard a gobble before I decided where to set up. Therefore, it was breaking day. When I began to move, I heard some hens and thought

I was busted. I turned around, went back up to the top of the hill and conferred with myself to determine what plan b would be. Evidently, those hens didn’t see me. Because after a few minutes two of them showed up with two other gobblers. I was about 100 yards away. When they got behind some brush, I quickly set up a few decoys, and settled in,

hoping to eventually lure them to me. That next hour was nearly perfect. Not only did I witness these toms strutting their stuff, but at one point a rainbow appeared just over their stage. And that was right before another gobbler decided to join the party. For a few minutes, I was able to ease my gun down, pick up my phone and take pictures and videos of my view. It was a rare morning, and after an extended period, they began to ease my way. Slow but steady. And now only 75 yards away. But then my perfect

morning changed. The nearby cattle decided they wanted the grass where my turkeys had congregated. So, they pushed my hopes in the other direction. But what I got that morning was more, and even better, than expected. But for success, I had to be willing to change my weapon from my shotgun to my camera. It’s just what the circumstances demanded. Don’t get me wrong, I was pretty upset with a few bovines, but after thinking about what had just transpired, I realized I was the only person invited to this

one-day-only production. I thought about the hill that overlooked it all that I sat on, that provided my amphitheater view. I thought about the sun pushing through the rain to paint my rainbow. And I thought about those three toms who performed for my pleasure. I’m not sure why God gave me this particular morning, and why it didn’t end with a dead bird, but I know this. The same God who provided the hens to start it, provided the cows to end it. And I was just there to enjoy it.

Join me on Tuesday

morning at 6:30 central time on Zoom to discuss this article. Go to outdoortruths.com for the link.

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Gary Miller has written Outdoor Truths articles for 21 years. He has also written five books which include compilations of his articles and a father/son devotional. He also speaks at wild-game dinners and men’s events for churches and associations. Stay updated on Outdoor Truths each week by subscribing at Outdoortruths.org



EATING WELL RECIPES • SPONSORED BY BIG JOHN



Quick & Easy Salsa

Ingredients:

- 2 (15oz) cans fire-roasted tomatoes or use 4 cups chopped fresh tomatoes (1 ¾ pounds)
- 1/3 cup chopped white or sweet onion
- 2 medium cloves garlic
- 1 to 2 medium jalapeño or serrano peppers
- 1 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 to 2 medium limes
- 1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt, plus more to taste

Directions

Place the chopped tomatoes in a colander set over a large bowl to drain. Reserve the drained tomato juice for later use (either to thin the salsa or add flavor to soups or other dishes). Cover the chopped onion in a medium bowl with cold water. Let it sit for 10 minutes, drain the water, and rinse the onion. Prepare the peppers according to your desired spice level. For mild salsa, remove all the white membrane and seeds from inside the pepper. For medium salsa, leave some of the membrane and seeds. If you prefer hot salsa, leave the membrane and seeds intact and use 1 to 2 peppers. Add the garlic to a blender or food processor and pulse until finely chopped. Scrape down the sides of the blender or food processor, then add the drained tomatoes, drained and rinsed onions, prepared peppers, cilantro, 1/4 teaspoon of salt, and the juice of half a lime. Pulse the ingredients until you reach your desired texture. Taste the salsa and season with additional salt or lime juice as needed. (We usually add 3/4 teaspoon of salt in total.) If the salsa is too thick, add a little reserved tomato juice from earlier. For the best flavor, allow the salsa to sit in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes before serving. The flavors will meld and develop over time.

May Foodie Holidays

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| May 1: National Chocolate Parfait Day   | May 16: National BBQ Day                    |
| May 2: World Tuna Day                   | May 17: National Cherry Cobbler Day         |
| May 3: National Chocolate Custard Day   | May 18: National I Love Reese's Day         |
| May 4: National Orange Juice Day        | May 19: National Devil's Food Cake Day      |
| May 5: National Hoagie Day              | May 20: National Pick Strawberries Day      |
| National Enchilada Day                  | May 21: National Strawberries and Cream Day |
| May 6: International No Diet Day        | May 22: National Vanilla Pudding Day        |
| May 7: National Cosmopolitan Day        | May 23: National Taffy Day                  |
| May 8: National Coconut Cream Pie Day   | May 24: National Asparagus Day              |
| May 9: National Foodies Day             | May 25: National Brown-Bag-It Day           |
| May 10: National Shrimp Day             | May 26: National Blueberry Cheesecake Day   |
| May 11: National Eat What You Want Day  | May 27: National Grape Popsicle Day         |
| May 12: National Nutty Fudge Day        | May 28: National Hamburger Day              |
| May 13: National Apple Pie Day          | May 29: National Biscuit Day                |
| May 14: National Buttermilk Biscuit Day | May 30: National Mint Julep Day             |
| May 15: National Chocolate Chip Day     | May 31: National Macaroon Day               |

Easy Goulash

This Ground Beef Goulash Recipe is a quick and easy one pan dinner that's pure comfort food.

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 cup onion, diced
- 1 green bell pepper, diced
- 2 lbs. ground beef, lean
- 3 tsp garlic, minced
- 2 15 oz cans tomato sauce
- 2 15 oz cans petite diced tomatoes
- 3 cups beef broth
- 3 tbsp Worcestershire Sauce
- 2 tsp seasoned salt
- 2 tbsp Italian Seasoning
- 3 bay leaves
- 2 cups macaroni noodles, uncooked
- 1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded

Directions

Add olive oil to large pot over medium-high heat. Add in the onion, bell pepper and ground beef then cook until beef is no longer pink. Drain any excess fat and return pot to stove top. Add in garlic and stir until fragrant (about 30 seconds). Pour in the tomato sauce, diced tomatoes, beef broth, Worcestershire sauce, seasoned salt, Italian seasoning, bay leaves and dried macaroni noodles. Stir and bring mixture to a boil. Reduce heat to a light boil and stir occasionally until the pasta is tender, about 20 minutes. Remove the bay leaves and stir in the cheddar cheese just before serving. Enjoy!



Strawberry Lemonade

Ingredients

- 1/2 pound fresh strawberries , stems removed
- 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar
- 4 1/2-5 cups water , divided
- 1 1/2 cups fresh-squeezed lemon juice

Directions

Use a blender or food processor to puree the strawberries. Strain them through a fine mesh sieve, if desired, to remove seeds. In a small saucepan, over medium heat, stir together sugar and 2 cups water. Bring to a boil, and stir until sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat and allow to cool to room temperature. Strain the lemon juice through a fine-mesh sieve into a 2-quart pitcher. Add simple syrup and pureed strawberries and stir to combine. Refrigerate until cold. When ready to serve, add 2 ½ cups of cold water and stir. Taste, and add more water if it's too sweet. Serve with ice.



Shop Big John for all the ingredients to these recipes!



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