

A Fresh Start

That's what New Year's resolutions are all about—right? Wiping the slate clean and starting over. For many of us, the desire to begin anew is strong. Perhaps we have gone down the wrong path or have continued to do something we know is bad for us—like smoking or overeating. On January 1, we are determined to set things right, to begin again.

In the past, I haven't been overly successful with my resolutions. Like other people, I was initially motivated, got behind, became frustrated, and stopped.

When an attempt at radical change proves fruitless, a person's resolve can quickly wither away. The effort to do better is undermined.

What we need is a truly brand new start—to actually begin again with a new life.

Impossible? Not at all. In fact, the new life you've always wanted is well within your grasp. Jesus Christ explained this "fresh start" to a distinguished man named Nicodemus who came to visit him. Nicodemus knew Jesus was a great teacher and that God was with him. But Jesus made a startling statement to Nicodemus: "I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

Jesus was saying that a new life, a fresh start, requires a radical transformation that can only happen with rebirth.

You may think what you've done in the past prevents you from undergoing such a transformation. The Bible says anyone who acknowledges that his or her life has been marred by sin is eligible for God's offer of new life. "When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:4-5).

When you admit your need and trust Jesus Christ, who died for your sins, as Savior and Lord, you've taken the first step. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Don't let false starts and broken resolutions keep you from a happy new year and a happy new life in Christ—forever.

[Jim Kraus]

"The new life you've always wanted is well within your grasp."

NAME & ADDRESS:

HAVE A GOOD DAY AND A SPLENDID *forever!*



|| January 2018 ||

These Volunteers Rock!

It's a parent's tried and true solution for a fussy or irritable baby—getting comfortable in a rocker and letting the repetitive motion relax the little one into slumber. But what about the newborns in the hospital who are wards of the state or who have parents unable to be with them every moment? Although nurses would love to extend that personalized care, they certainly don't have the time.

Alexis Verzal Children's Rehabilitation Unit, part of the Madonna Rehabilitation Hospitals group in Lincoln, Nebraska, has found the solution: baby rockers. Volunteers rock the babies recovering from illness and injury.

"We see a lot of children who have sustained head injuries for a variety of reasons," says Jody Macke, a nurse therapist in the pediatric unit. "It helps the children recover more quickly when the baby rockers are there."

It's a win-win solution, because the baby rockers find it just as enjoyable. "I absolutely love it," says Bess Jensen, 73, who was the hospital's first baby rocker and has been cuddling babies for six years. "I won't give that up for anything."

Of course, this special volunteer program isn't exclusive to Lincoln, Nebraska. It's worth checking out the hospitals in your own area to see if a similar opportunity exists.



Abandoned No More

Consonno, Italy, had been a Las Vegas-inspired tourist destination in the late 1960s and early 70s until a devastating landslide left the town inaccessible. The natural elements robbed the playland of its former glamour, but what remains attracted a different clientele—professional hide-and-seekers. (Yes, there is such a thing.) Since 2010 the ghost town has come to life with competitive teams for the annual Nascondino World Championship.

Eighty international teams, made up of five players each, compete. Players have one minute to find a hiding spot. Then they

must reach home base (a large soft mattress) before the seeker and within the time limit. Teams receive points, and the 20 teams with the most points advance to the final round.

The 2017 winning team was Mucche Arrosto (“Roasted Cows”), who proudly reclaimed the trophy for Italy, after a French team upset in 2016.



How Bluetiful

Crayon enthusiasts wept tears of Dandelion yellow in late March when Crayola announced that it was killing off the crayon color and making room for a new hue of blue in its classic 24-pack crayon box. Now, after nearly six months of deliberation and gathering the opinions of 400,000 fans on what the new shade should be called, the company has announced its new crayon: Bluetiful.

It might not be original, but it's better than the color's chemical name—YInMn Blue—and certainly much easier to pronounce. Crayola executives debuted the new addition to their color lineup in a big way by unveiling a jumbo-sized version of the crayon. Measuring 15.6 feet in length and weighing in at 1,352 pounds, the behemoth stick of Bluetiful set a Guinness World Record for the world's largest crayon.

That one crayon would color a whole lot of beautiful skies. And maybe an ocean or two.



Customer service and subscription number: (800) 692-9912. Jim Kraus, publisher; designed by Heather Swardstrom. © 2018 HAVE A GOOD DAY, vol. 50, no. 9, January 2018. *Have a Good Day* (ISSN 1062-2829) is published monthly by Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 351 Executive Drive, Carol Stream, IL. Printed in the USA. *Have a Good Day* is a registered trademark of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved. Subscription \$14.00 per month per hundred copies. Canada \$16.00 per month. All rights reserved. Photo of woman rocking a baby copyright © Rhbabiak13/Dreamstime. All rights reserved. Nascondino World Championship 2016 in Consonno, Italy by Garyharkness. Image of crayons © iStockphoto/skodonnell. All rights reserved. Image of dog © iStockphoto/Rami_Gil. All rights reserved. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Have a Good Day, Subscription Services, PO Box 405, Mt. Morris, IL 61054.

Thanks, Brian

Lee DiBella of Watertown, Connecticut, and her companion, Brian, were best friends for nine years. When the mixed breed dog died, DiBella wrote an obituary to honor this faithful pet, who had helped her through many difficult times, and it went viral. DiBella's words about Brian touched many dog owners' hearts.



“A lover of couches and blankets, Brian's favorite activities included barking at things not there, cuddling alongside you, taking over his mother's bed, and trying to figure out who exactly was ‘the good boy.’ . . . The quickest way to Brian's heart was with a quality scratch and a rub of his belly. . . . Though the pain [his mom] feels without him is great, it in no way would compare to having never had him in her life. At the wishes of Brian's family, give your dog an extra hug, belly rub, and treat.”

Making Restitution

When someone is arrested for stealing, you hope the person will be remorseful and turn his or her life around. That's exactly what one ex-drug addict did five years after the crime. At that time, he pickpocketed a new server's wallet at a restaurant. The thief took the Best Buy card and all the cash, and then tossed the wallet away.

Shortly afterward, the

guilty person received treatment at a rehab facility and completed four years of sobriety. When he found the woman's Best Buy card among his things, he decided to make amends. He tracked her down and wrote a letter, expressing his regrets and enclosing \$140.

He promised never to “hurt someone in a way ever again and will continue to live an honest life. I wish you nothing but happiness, prosperity, and good health.”

Just for laughs



“How do you make the menu drop down for more options?”



“I need an app that will prevent my wife from buying more apps.”

Don't bother to give God instructions—just report for duty.

Faith is not a pill you take, but a muscle you use.

It is better to keep a friend from falling than to help him up after he falls.