

THE
New Era

SEPTEMBER

2003

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NEW FRIENDS
AT INSTITUTE, P. 20

LIFE IS UNFAIR, P. 10

FINDING THE
RIGHT ONE, P. 44

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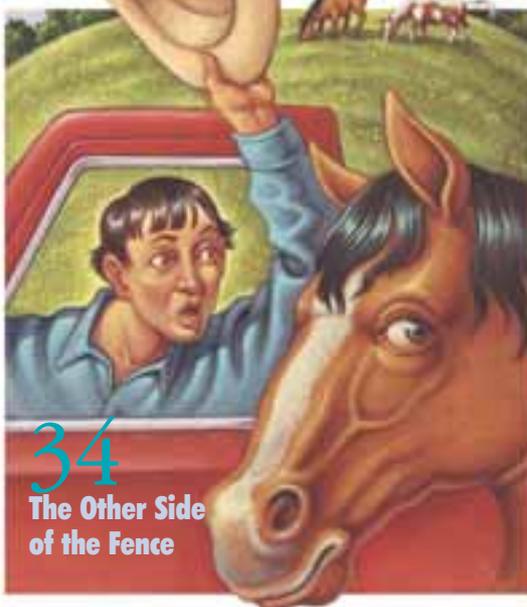
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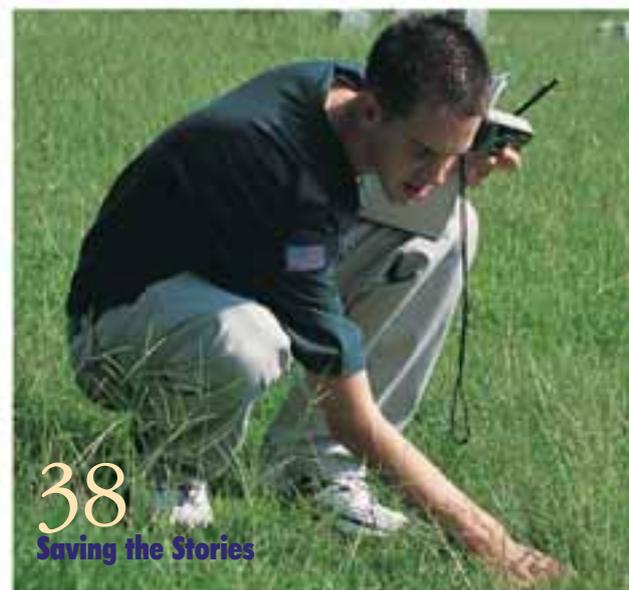
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Cammie Shorts love
participating in institute
at the College of Eastern
Utah. See "An Open
Door" on p. 20.

Cover Photography:
John Luke (front and
back)

Making new
friends is
part of
participating in
institute, as Nick
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See "An Open
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The Book of Mormon

READ ALL ABOUT IT

BY PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY



The Book of Mormon is as current as the morning newspaper and much more definitive, inspired, and inspiring.

The Book of Mormon's appeal is as timeless as truth, as universal as mankind. It is the only book that contains within its covers a promise that by divine power the reader may know with certainty of its truth.

Its origin is miraculous; when the story of that origin is first told to one unfamiliar with it, it is almost unbelievable. But the book is here to be felt and handled and read. No one can dispute its presence.

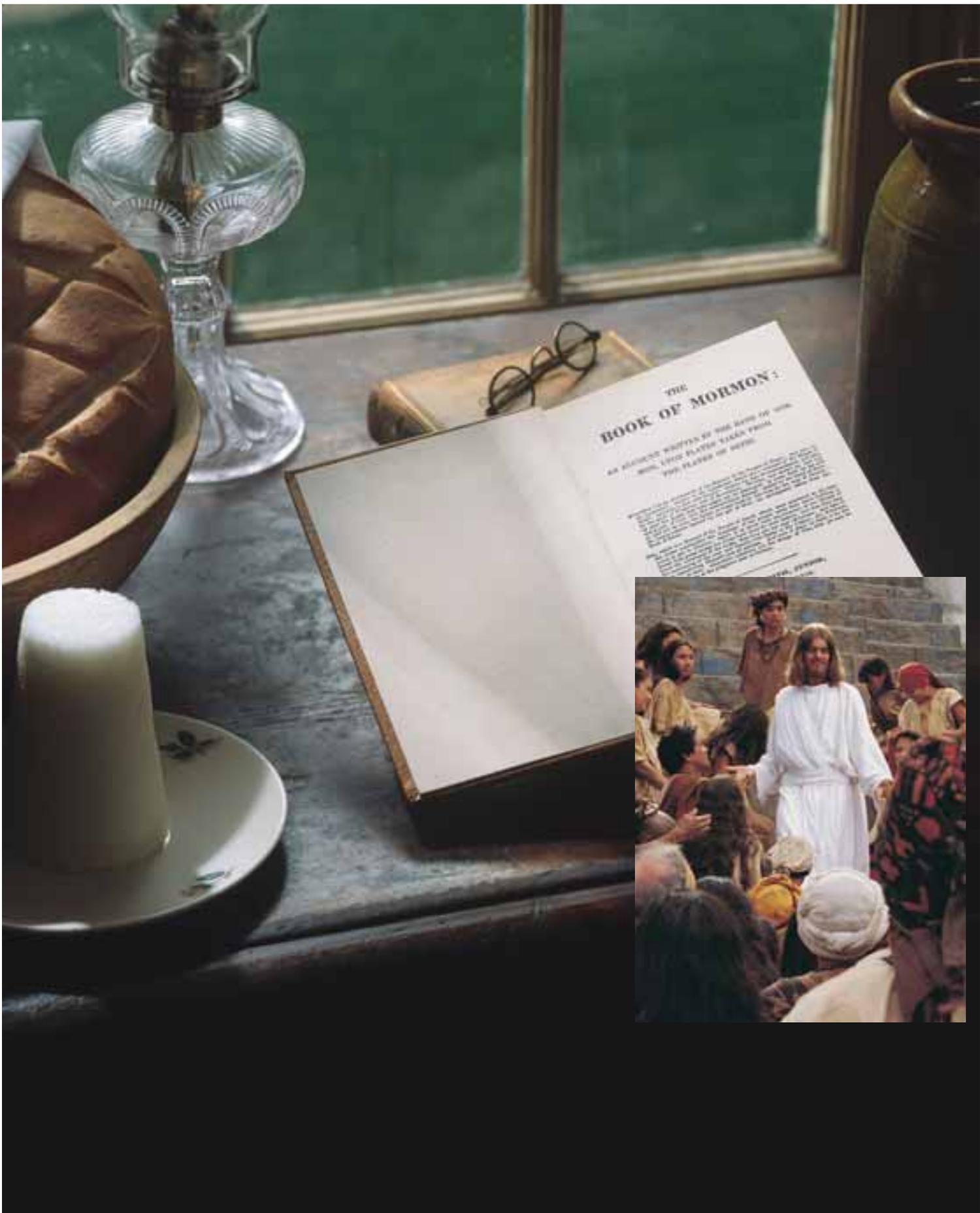
All efforts to account for its origin, other than the account given by Joseph Smith, have been shown to lack substance. It is a record of ancient America. It is the scripture of the New World, as certainly as the Bible is the scripture of the Old. Each speaks of the other. Each carries with it the spirit of inspiration, the power to convince and to convert. Together they become two witnesses, hand in hand, that Jesus is the Christ, the resurrected and living Son of the living God.

Its narrative is a chronicle of nations long since gone. But in its descriptions of the

problems of today's society, it is as current as the morning newspaper and much more definitive, inspired, and inspiring concerning the solutions to those problems (from *Ensign*, June 1988, 2).

Newsflash

I would like to urge every . . . boy and girl who is old enough to again read the Book of Mormon during this coming year. This was written for the convincing of the Jew and the Gentile that Jesus is the Christ. There is nothing we could do of greater importance than to have fortified in our individual lives an unshakable conviction that Jesus is the Christ, the living Son of the living God. And, my brothers and sisters, that is the purpose of the coming forth of this remarkable and wonderful book. May I suggest that you read it again and take a pencil, a red one if you have one, and put a little check mark every time there is a reference to Jesus Christ in that book. And there will come to you a very real conviction as you do so that this is in



Parley P. Pratt wrote of the Book of Mormon: “I knew and comprehended that the book was true, as plainly and manifestly as a man comprehends and knows that he exists.”

very deed another witness for the Lord Jesus Christ (from *Ensign*, July 1997, 72–73).

Breaking Story

If there is any message that runs through all of the Book of Mormon, it is this great, transcendent message—that when the people lived in righteousness, they were happy and they were prospered; and when they fell into wickedness, they were miserable, they were at war, they were in poverty, they were in trouble. That theme goes all the way through the Book of Mormon. As it was true then, so it is true now. The way of happiness for the people of this Church lies in following the ways of the Lord (from *Ensign*, Aug. 1997, 3).

Get the Scoop

The test of the book is in its reading. I speak as one who has read it again and again and tasted of its beauty and depth and power. Could Joseph Smith, I ask you, the young man reared in rural New York largely without schooling, have dictated in so short a time a volume so complex in its nature and yet so harmonious in its whole, with so large a cast of characters and so extensive in its scope? Could he of his own abilities have created the language, the thought, the moving inspiration that has caused millions over the earth to read and say, “It is true”? . . .

I have read the Book of Mormon, which he translated by the gift and power of God. By the power of the Holy Ghost I have received a testimony and a witness of the divine origin of this sacred record. Joseph Smith did not write it of his own capacity. . . .

I heard President [Heber J.] Grant (1856–1945) on several occasions before I met him. As teenage boys, my brother and I came to [the] Tabernacle at conference

when there was room for anybody who wished to come. As boys are wont to do, we sat in the balcony at the very far end of the building. To me it was always impressive when this tall man stood to speak. Some kind of electricity passed through my boyish frame. His voice rang out in testimony of the Book of Mormon. When he said it was true, I knew it was true (from *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 52).

Extra! Extra!

In August 1830, as a lay preacher, Parley Parker Pratt (1807–57) was traveling from Ohio to eastern New York. At Newark, along the Erie Canal, he left the boat and walked 10 miles into the country, where he met a Baptist deacon by the name of Hamlin, who told him “of a book, a strange book, a very





strange book! . . . This book, he said, purported to have been originally written on plates either of gold or brass, by a branch of the tribes of Israel; and to have been discovered and translated by a young man near Palmyra, in the State of New York, by the aid of visions, or the ministry of angels. I inquired of him how or where the book was to be obtained. He promised me the perusal of it, at his house the next day. . . . Next morning I called at his house, where, for the first time, my eyes beheld the ‘Book of Mormon’—that book of books . . . which was the principal means, in the hands of God, of directing the entire course of my future life.

“I opened it with eagerness, and read its title page. I then read the testimony of several witnesses in relation to the manner of its being found and translated. After this I commenced its contents by course. I read all day; eating was a burden, I had no desire for food; sleep was a burden when the night came, for I preferred reading to sleep.

“As I read, the spirit of the Lord was upon me, and I knew and comprehended that the book was true, as plainly and manifestly as a man comprehends and knows that he exists” (*Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*, 1938, 36–37).

Parley Pratt was then 23 years of age. Reading the Book of Mormon affected him so profoundly that he was soon baptized into the Church and became one of its most effective and powerful advocates. . . .

Parley Pratt’s experience with the Book of Mormon was not unique. As the volumes of the first edition were

circulated and read, strong men and women by the hundreds were so deeply touched that they gave up everything they owned, and in the years that followed, not a few gave their lives for the witness they carried in their hearts of the truth of this remarkable volume (from *Ensign*, June 1988, 2).

Share the Good News

Each time we encourage others to read the Book of Mormon, we do them a favor. If they read it prayerfully and with a sincere desire to know the truth, they will know by the power of the Holy Ghost that the book is true. . . .

Without reservation I promise you that if you will prayerfully read the Book of Mormon, regardless of how many times you previously have read it, there will come into your hearts an added measure of the Spirit of the Lord. There will come a strengthened resolution to walk in obedience to His commandments, and there will come a stronger testimony of the living reality of the Son of God (from *Ensign*, June 1988, 2).

Special Edition

Read the Book of Mormon itself. Read it again and again. Ponder its beauty. Reflect upon its many magnificent passages. Think of the complexity of the detail of its historical accounts. Pray about it, and the Holy Ghost will bear record to you, as He has to me and to millions of others, that it is the word of God, a voice crying from the dust to this generation in declaration of the divinity and the reality of the Lord Jesus Christ as the living Son of the living God.

The Lord Himself has spoken concerning our study of this great latter-day work. He has said: “Search these commandments, for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in them shall all be fulfilled.

“What I the Lord have spoken, I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, my word shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled, whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same” (D&C 1:37–38) (from *Ensign*, Sept. 1985, 6). **NE**

FINDING A FORTUNE

BY ELDER D. REX GERRATT
Of the Seventy



When you see a \$10 bill, you really don't know how much it may be worth.

One day, when I was 13 or 14 years old, I went to the grocery store that was a couple of blocks from my school. The store had spectacular ice cream, and my classmates and I went there often during our lunch hour to get ice-cream cones.

One day when we had our ice-cream cones, I looked down at my feet and saw a \$10 bill lying on the floor. A U.S. \$10 bill more than 50 years ago was really something to a young man. Satan tried to tempt me with: "Think what you could do with this \$10 bill."

Because of the teachings of my parents, I didn't listen. I took the money over to the cashier and told her I found it on the floor. She said, "Well, you are an honest young man. Let me write your name on this note, and if someone doesn't claim this \$10 bill, I will see that you get it back."

I left it with her. That afternoon a young man came in to see if she had seen a \$10 bill. She said, "Yes, and here is the fellow's name who found the money."

This boy looked me up to thank me, and we became close friends.

But that is just the start of the story. Because of our friendship and his good

feeling toward me, he introduced me to his family. As the children in the family grew up and married, I became a good friend with their families as well. And over a lifetime, I have been a close friend to 10 or 12 families just because of that \$10 bill. I have been in their homes. As a bishop, I have interviewed some of their children. I have been invited to temple weddings and other family occasions during the past 50 years. I have enjoyed great friendships, not only with those kids but also with their parents over that time. They are a wonderful family.

I am grateful that I wasn't really tempted to keep that \$10 bill, because my wonderful father and mother taught me the principle of honesty. I am grateful for the blessings that have come to me throughout my life from being honest—honesty has opened many doors. It is a wonderful feeling to be able to look people in the eye and say, "I have always tried to be honest."

I have talked to my own nine children about being honest. I told them that when you see a \$10 bill, you really don't know how much it is worth. It has a face value, but my friendship with that family is worth more than a fortune. They are such a blessing in my life. **NE**



VANILLA
STRAWBERRY
CHOCOLATE

McKULL'S

BY CHAD MORRIS

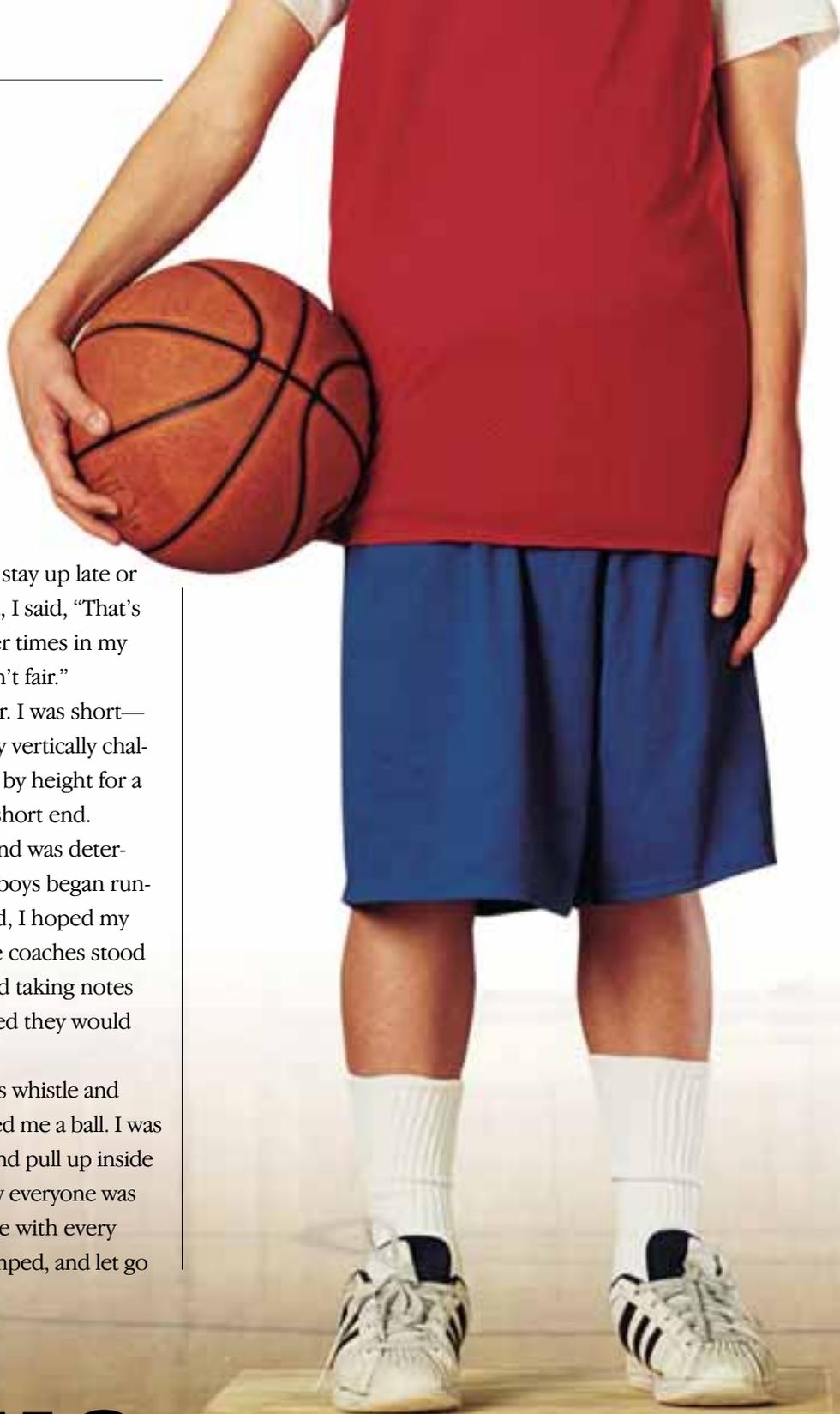
Though life isn't fair, give it your best shot. The Lord will make up the difference.

Whenever my older brother got to stay up late or he got more ice cream than I did, I said, "That's not fair." Then, and at many other times in my life, the answer always came back: "Life isn't fair."

In junior high, I didn't think life was fair. I was short—not just a little below average, but officially vertically challenged. One day my entire grade lined up by height for a picture. I was at the end of the line—the short end.

Despite my height, I loved basketball and was determined to make the team. As a gym full of boys began running drills to win their places on the squad, I hoped my many hours of practice would pay off. The coaches stood in the middle of the gym, observing us and taking notes on their clipboards. At my size, I just prayed they would notice me.

After warm-ups, the head coach blew his whistle and explained our first shooting drill. He handed me a ball. I was one of the first to dribble from half court and pull up inside the three-point line for a jump shot. I knew everyone was watching; my shaking hands reminded me with every dribble. I stopped at the top of the key, jumped, and let go



**COMING
UP**

short





“Certain mortal ‘whys’ are not really questions at all but are expressions of resentment. Other ‘whys’ imply that the trial might be all right later on but not now, as if faith in the Lord excluded faith in His timing. Some ‘why me’ questions, asked amid stress, would be much better as ‘what’ questions, such as, ‘What is required of me now?’ or, to paraphrase Moroni’s words, ‘If I am sufficiently humble, which personal weakness could now become a strength?’ (see Ether 12:27).”

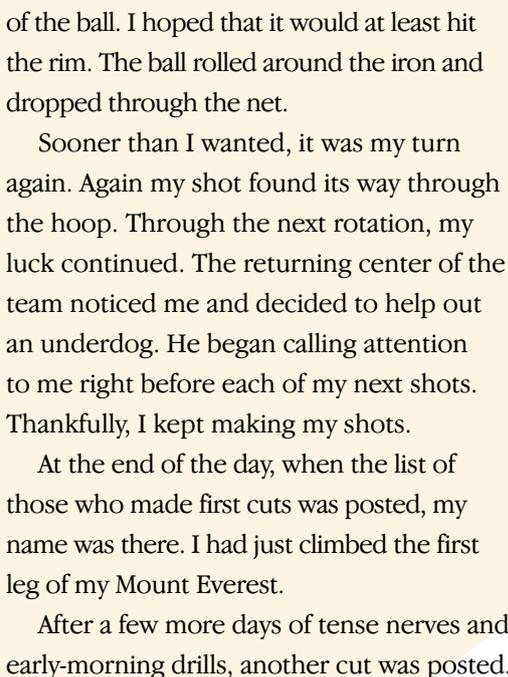
—Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Apply the Atoning Blood of Christ,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 22–23.

of the ball. I hoped that it would at least hit the rim. The ball rolled around the iron and dropped through the net.

Sooner than I wanted, it was my turn again. Again my shot found its way through the hoop. Through the next rotation, my luck continued. The returning center of the team noticed me and decided to help out an underdog. He began calling attention to me right before each of my next shots. Thankfully, I kept making my shots.

At the end of the day, when the list of those who made first cuts was posted, my name was there. I had just climbed the first leg of my Mount Everest.

After a few more days of tense nerves and early-morning drills, another cut was posted.



I made it past my second hurdle. With only one or two cuts left, my chances were getting better, but my competition was stiffer.

At the end of the week, tryouts were over. I tried to remain calm as I walked to the coaches’ office to see if I made the team. My name was missing from the list.

The assistant coach, who was also my science teacher, pulled me aside. “You’re a good little ball player. You’ve got a lot of potential.” His compliments didn’t help my

disappointment. “It’s hard to cut people. It’s just that right now you don’t have the size to play for the team. Maybe next year.”

Why me? One of my dreams crashed, and it wasn’t because I didn’t try or practice. It was because of something out of my control. Life just didn’t seem fair.

Why Me?

Although I have read the Book of Mormon several times, only recently did I realize how unfair Ammon’s success could have felt to Aaron, Ammon’s brother. They and other Nephites went to teach the Lamanites. Yet while Ammon was defending the king’s flocks, being overcome

by the Spirit, and baptizing King Lamoni and his people, Aaron and his companions struggled. The Lamanites “had cast them out, and had smitten them, and had driven them from house to house, and from place to place, even until they had arrived in the land of Middoni; and there they were taken and cast into prison, and bound with strong cords, and kept in prison for many days” (Alma 20:30).

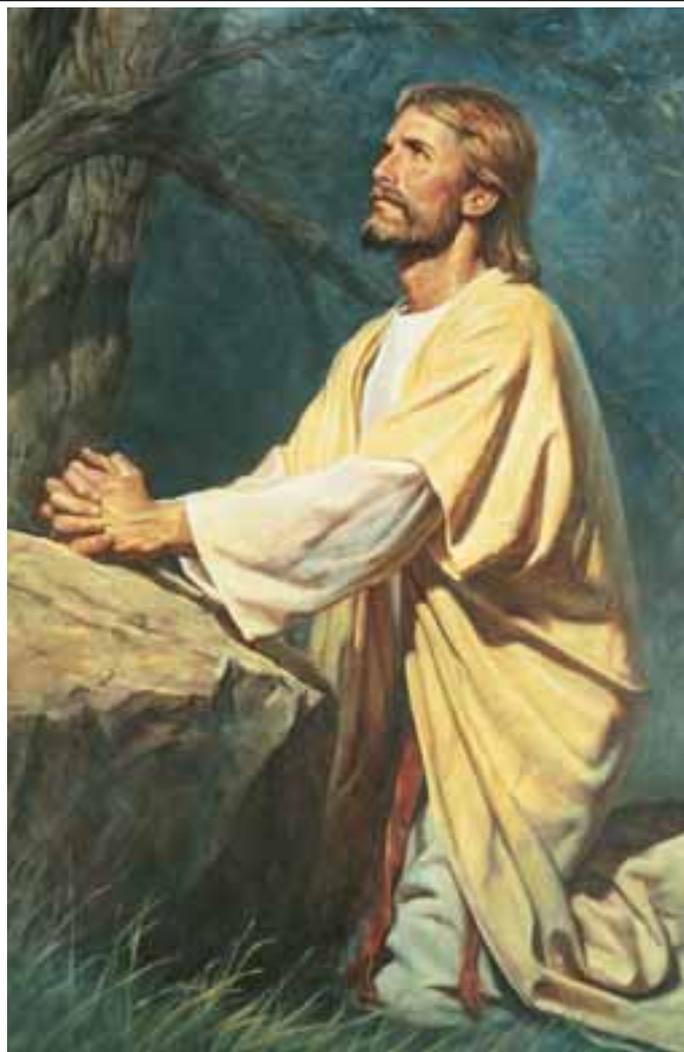
Think of all the reasons Aaron had to ask, “Why me?”

Ammon was seeing great success while Aaron had seen only failure and prison walls. Even Aaron’s deliverance from prison was another of Ammon’s successes. Aaron’s life wasn’t fair.

Despite the unfairness, Aaron showed no signs of resentment. Out of prison, he immediately resumed his missionary service with the attitude of asking what the Lord wanted him to do. Then the Lord blessed him. Aaron taught and baptized Lamoni’s father, the king over all of the Lamanites, and his household.

I realized, to a small extent, that my situation was like Aaron’s. Others around me had great success, but for

Compared to Ammon’s life, Aaron’s seemed unfair. Yet after his release from prison, Aaron preached without resentment to the Lamanites.



reasons beyond my control, I didn’t. I had a choice: I could wallow in self-pity, asking, “Why me?” or, like Aaron, I could be patient and trust in the Lord.

I’ve realized that, though my life isn’t fair at times, I can cast my cares on the Savior. Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, “The Atonement will not only help us overcome our transgressions and mistakes, but in His time, it will resolve all inequities of life—those things that are unfair which are the consequences of circumstance or others’ acts and not our own decisions” (“Jesus Christ, Our Redeemer,” *Ensign*, May 1997, 54). When I turn to Christ, my life doesn’t suddenly become fair. But as I strive to be like Him in my unfair circumstances, He helps me not to become bitter and even to love an unfair world. **NE**

Chad Morris is a member of the West Jordan 44th Ward, West Jordan Utah East Stake.



Danny Cope just keeps on moving—physically and spiritually. He has cerebral palsy, but he finds creative ways to do things, like painting pictures (above and bottom right).

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM COPE

Deacon *in Motion*

BY ARTEL RICKS



Danny Cope maneuvers his motorized wheelchair with the skill of a parking attendant. He can't move his arms or fingers very well, but he prods the control stick mounted on his armrest with his fist.

Danny's wheelchair has seen a lot of action. As a deacon in the Oakridge Ward in the El Dorado California Stake, he uses it to fulfill his Aaronic Priesthood duties.

The wheelchair takes him to collect fast offerings and to quorum and Scout activities. His dad even made a special sacrament tray attachment so Danny can pass the sacrament with the other deacons. Since he isn't able to lift the tray himself, the ward member nearest to the aisle helps him. Cerebral palsy might limit him physically, but mentally and spiritually he keeps moving.

Until last year, Danny had a hard time communicating. Even those close to him had a hard time understanding his speech. But now Danny talks with his eyes—well, with a laser that's attached to his glasses. Using the laser, Danny can activate keys on a small, talking computer. Now that he's able to communicate more easily, collecting fast offerings becomes as easy as pushing a button.

"Hello. I'm from the Church. Do you have any fast offerings today?" When the envelope is returned to him, Danny pushes another button, and the electronic voice says, "Thank you!" He's also used his new voice to give talks and bear his testimony.

You can also see Danny's testimony in his

willingness to serve and in his love for nature and sacred music. Lately, Danny's love for nature has translated itself into the desire to paint. He holds a paintbrush with his teeth to create acrylic or watercolor paintings. The process is slow, detailed, and requires a lot of patience.

"You should see his paintings," says fellow deacon Jacob Ricks. "They are awesome!" Danny gets a lot of support from his deacons quorum.

As much as Danny seems to be enjoying life, his parents worry about him. They wonder if his easy, joyful smile really means he's happy. His mom finally asked him: "Danny, are you having a good life?"

Her heart stopped for a moment when the first word to appear on his computer screen was "No." Then Danny typed the rest of the sentence: "I'm having a great life!" **NE**

Artel Ricks is a member of the Oakridge Ward, El Dorado California Stake.



Danny also finds ways to serve and to fulfill his calling as a deacon. He passes the sacrament and collects fast offerings in his wheelchair (bottom left and above).

Q & A

*My life isn't very exciting, and I'm not a very good writer.
Do I still need to keep a journal?*

Answers are intended for help and perspective, not as pronouncements of Church doctrine.

NEW ERA

Yes, you still need to keep a journal. First of all, your life really is interesting. You are unique, and your experiences are different from anyone else's. You don't have to see miracles or change the world to have something worthy to record in your journal—your thoughts and feelings are exciting enough.

If it feels like you have nothing to say, look a little differently at what you're experiencing. For example, writing how you ate lunch in your favorite place outside the gym under the trees with your best friend is more interesting than simply listing the school lunch menu.

Another reason to keep a journal is for your posterity. But it's not the most important one. The biggest reason to write in your journal is for you. Even if no one else ever lays eyes on your journals, it doesn't matter. In fact, assuming every word you write will be examined by generations to come might scare you into being overly careful about what you write.

The experiences you have are unique. Years from now you will be amazed at how much you have grown.

Be honest about yourself. Your journal is the perfect place to sort out your feelings, set goals, and develop dreams.

Write down experiences as soon as you can. Interesting details can fade quickly.

Moroni didn't think he was a great writer either (see Ether 12:23–25), but we'd be missing a lot without his writings.

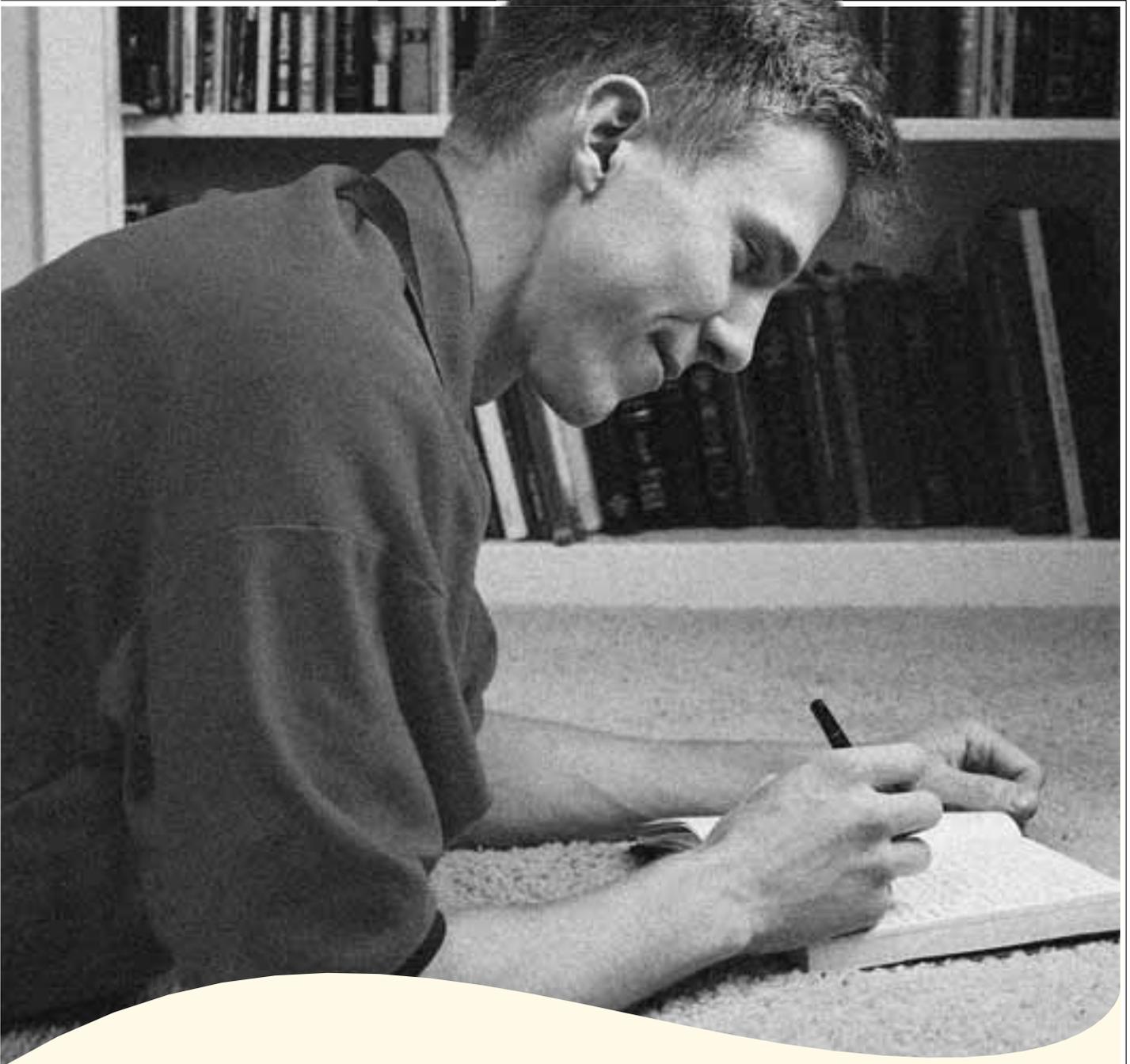
If nothing else, write your testimony. Nephi said, "We . . . write, to persuade our children . . . to believe in Christ" (2 Nephi 25:23).

You may be tempted to write about a Sunday-best version of you with perfect thoughts and habits. Your pages will be a lot more interesting if you write about the real you, even if that person occasionally falls asleep in algebra class, has holey socks, and sings off key. Don't focus too much on the positive or the negative. Just be honest.

Elder L. Edward Brown of the Seventy said, "There is something about journal writing that causes us to meditate, to recommit, and to receive spiritual impressions in the process of such pondering. Frequently, you will have cause to rejoice at how the Lord has been sensitively involved in guiding and watching over you and those you love and care about" (*Ensign*, Dec. 2000, 16).

Journal writing is the perfect place to sort out your feelings, solve problems, set goals, preserve memories, and develop dreams. It's important to write about experiences now while your memories are fresh. Years down the road you will rediscover your words and be amazed at how much you've grown and how much the Lord has blessed you.

You may never be remembered for your



superior writing skills, profound insight, or miraculous experiences as a teenager, but you're the only one who can describe the night you finished the Book of Mormon for the first time, or the flustered feeling you had on your first date, or the smell of fresh roses at your grandpa's funeral, or anything else in your life. If you're the only one who benefits from your efforts, that's enough. **NE**

READERS



Writing journals is all about keeping and savoring memories. I think that you should keep a journal to help record your feelings about certain activities and landmarks in your life. It is these feelings that will help you remember these times.

A journal can also be beneficial for

your children and grandchildren in years to come. I also think that you benefit from journal writing as you can reflect upon and overcome things that can help you grow stronger.

Anthony Ngawaka, 16, Great Barrier Island Branch, Auckland New Zealand Harbour Stake

The main reason for keeping a journal is to write down God's dealings with you. Never assume that you will remember

spiritual experiences, feelings, events, things you are thankful for, people you admire. Make sure you write your testimony. If you can't stand to write, make a habit out of taking a camera wherever you go.

Hillary Elledge, 17, Woodinville Third Ward,
Bothell Washington Stake



It is important for us to keep a journal no matter what. The prophet has asked us to keep one. I find that spiritual events are more meaningful and exciting than anything else that might happen in a day. One day when you have forgotten your past you can read back in your journal and experience that same spirit that you felt when it was taking place.

Bryan Jensen, 18, Bothell Second Ward,
Bothell Washington Stake



I feel that no matter what your writing capability may be and even though your life may not be too exciting, it's important to keep a journal. A journal helps in your spiritual growth and your personal development, and I find that when you read through past journal entries and experiences, you are able to learn from these and become a better person.

Nadia Webster, 18, Dural Ward,
Sydney Australia Greenwich Stake



If our lives are not exciting we should still keep a journal because we have been commanded to keep records. When you're gone it can tell those who are around after you what life was like for you and what the world was like.

David James, 18, Imperial Beach Ward,
Chula Vista California Stake



Get a notebook, my young folks, a journal that will last through all time, and maybe the angels may quote from it for eternity. Begin today and write in it your goings and comings, your deepest thoughts, your achievements and your failures, your associations and your triumphs, your impressions and your testimonies”

(New Era, Oct. 1975, 5).

—President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985)



Your life may not seem interesting now, but all the small things add up to help create who you are. Writing things down can help you analyze your thoughts and actions. Being a horrible writer has nothing to do with it.

If God wants you to keep a journal, He can help you through the Holy Ghost if you will ask.

Adam Lieberman, 14, Buffalo Grove First Ward,
Buffalo Grove Illinois Stake



I had the same problem. Nothing interesting ever seemed to happen to me. Then I was challenged by my Young Women leader to keep a journal. She gave us a jar of questions to answer whenever we couldn't think of anything to write. Slowly I found that my life was interesting. Now I write in my journal constantly. I look back and read my old journals, and I'm fascinated at how much I have grown.

Katie Grover, 18, Chula Vista Third Ward,
Chula Vista California Stake

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Send us your answer to the question below, along with your name, age, and the names of your ward and stake. Please include a snapshot of yourself that is 1 1/2 by 2 inches (4 by 5 cm) or larger.

Q&A, New Era

50 East North Temple

Salt Lake City, Utah 84150

cur-editorial-newera@ldschurch.org

Please respond by 1 November 2003.

QUESTION

After a spiritual experience, the feeling fades so soon I begin to wonder if what I felt was real. How can I be sure that feeling came from the Spirit?



BE A **STRONG LINK**

PRESIDENT GORDON B. HINCKLEY COUNSELS,
“DO NOT BECOME A WEAK LINK IN THE CHAIN OF YOUR
GENERATIONS.” YOUR FAITHFULNESS TO THE GOSPEL
WILL STRENGTHEN YOUR FAMILY.

(See *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 30.)



AN OPEN DOOR

The institute of religion at the College of Eastern Utah is a place where students can make friends and learn of the Savior.

BY CAROLINE H. BENZLEY

Most students wouldn't dream of leaving home without the college-life essentials: favorite pillow, prepaid phone card, pictures of friends and family, packages of macaroni and cheese, and so on. But there is one more college essential you need to pack. Don't worry though, this one will easily fit in your suitcase. Actually, it will even fit in your pocket. It's the address of the LDS institute of religion near your college or university. This address, along with your participation in institute, is your ticket to some great experiences, whether you move hundreds of miles to go to college or just commute down the road.

Let's take a close look at one of these institutes and see what you have waiting for you.

Institute Mystery

At the College of Eastern Utah (CEU), it isn't hard to spot the Price Institute of Religion. You will find it right across the street from the main campus and next door to The Milky Way, a favorite fast-food hangout. You'll have no trouble finding the institute students

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN LUKE, JANET THOMAS, AND ADRIANNE SHORTS

either; their smiling faces are hard to miss.

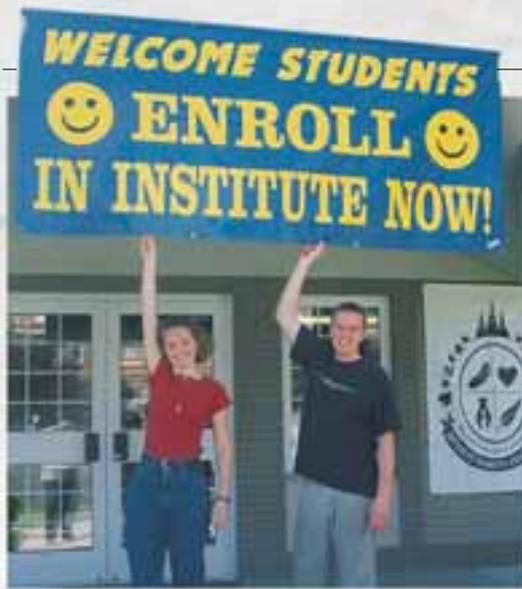
But wait, this is school—college, actually. How can they be so happy? Aren't they stressed by their late-night study sessions, endless reading assignments, and huge projects?

From the looks of these students, those things don't seem to get them down. There must be something about institute that makes them smile, even when the school stressors pile high. Perhaps a visit inside the institute building will shed some light on the mystery of their big smiles.

Instant Friends

The institute is no ordinary classroom building. "You walk in the door, and there is a whole different feeling here," says Daron Nelson. It is a feeling that you are among friends.

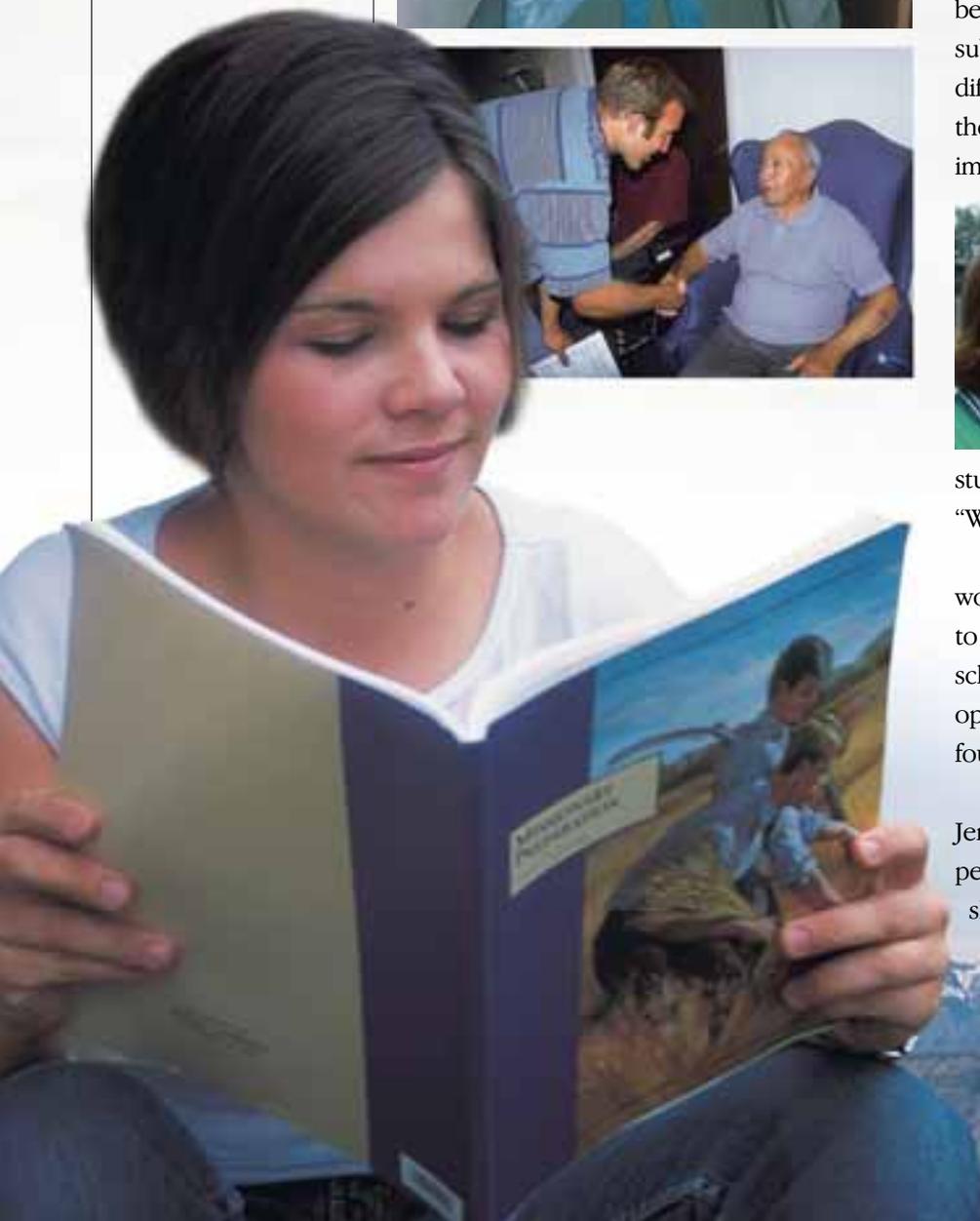
Institute gives you a place to be with people who share your religious beliefs. "It is always nice to have



Enrolling in institute is as easy as opening a door. (Top to bottom) Celeste Sorensen and Brady Black serve as institute officers. Singing in the institute choir is a popular activity. Nick Gordon (left) and Chris White prepare for a student-ward activity: mountain biking and searching for ancient petroglyphs in the hills near Price, Utah.



Classes are offered on a variety of gospel topics. Instructors become advisors and friends as well as teachers. Student wards also offer students a chance to serve.



a friend who understands,” says Mike Wynder. Institute is one of the best places to find those kinds of friends.

As you walk through the CEU institute building you will see many students. Some are on their way to an institute class such as “Book of Mormon,” and others are just visiting with friends while they have a break in their schedules.



Even though you may be majoring in different subjects at school or have different interests and hobbies, you and the other institute students have the most important thing in common—the gospel.



Jennilee Adams from Ogden, Utah, appreciates the common bond with those in institute. When she came to college, she felt nervous and alone because she didn’t know any other students. “Will I find friends?” she wondered. “Will I be okay living so far away from home?”

It didn’t take her long to get over those worries, however, because Jennilee went to the institute building the first week of school to sign up for classes and to attend opening activities. At institute she quickly found friends.

Today, one year later, Jennilee is a different person than she was when she first came to CEU.





Thanks to institute, she is confident in herself and her testimony of the gospel. In fact, Jennilee is the president of an organization associated with institute that functions as an activity and service club for LDS women. The LDS men have a similar organization. These associations give institute students a chance to meet for fun, weekly activities on campus.

“It’s just a chance to get to know a bunch of girls that have your same beliefs, who are experiencing the same things, and are making the same choices,” explains Jennilee. She says that she will always keep in touch with the wonderful friends she has met through institute. Needless to say, Jennilee does not feel alone anymore.



Kirk Cox, a student from nearby Emery County, says that he, like Jennilee, will also stay in touch with friends he met in institute. For Kirk, it isn’t hard to keep in touch with Hailey, his best friend from institute, because last summer Kirk and Hailey were married for eternity.



Not every student has had an institute romance, but all would agree with Kirk that “institute is a place where you are going to meet the right type of person to marry.”

As Megan Thomas explains, the people you meet at institute are “trying to do their best and trying to be good.”



Staying Active

Whether you meet your eternal companion while at college or discover a lifelong circle of friends, there is a good chance that those friendships will begin

at institute. One great way to meet these friends is to attend the institute activities.

The college wards provide LDS students with opportunities to teach and serve in a Church ward structure. With ward and association activities, if a student participates in everything, you could have something to do almost every night of the week—after your studies, of course!



Students enjoy a long list of activities including rodeos, dances, bonfires, barbecues, concerts, choir trips, service projects, pumpkin-carving contests, family home evening activities, horseback-riding trips, Ping-Pong tournaments, and more. And



yes, you’ll find food at many of these activities. In fact, these students guarantee that if you are active in institute you won’t ever have to worry about being bored or going hungry.

It looks like good friends and fun activities may be the first key to the happy institute students at CEU. But wait, don’t stop reading now. There is even more awaiting you behind the institute door.

Having the chance to study the gospel in depth is the highlight of institute for Lori Wellington (far left). Institute students find caring instructors who can guide them in their spiritual studies. The organizations associated with institute help fill the social needs of young people, many of whom have left home for the first time.



Groups such as the IWA (Institute Women's Association) and IMA (Institute Men's Association) act as activity outlets for institute students. Regular participation in sports, such as volleyball, talent shows, barbecues, club activities, and special extras like horseback riding can offer friendship and good times for college students.

A Happy Message

The best part of the institute program is the religion classes. Since these classes are not required, it is up to you to fit them into your schedule. And they are worth it. If you listen to the students at CEU, they will tell you how amazing the classes are.

Just imagine them as Heather Thompson describes classes where the “lessons are very thought provoking,” taught in a place where “everyone is willing to invite the Spirit. It really stirs something inside,” continues Heather. “When I finish a class, I come back [to school] feeling great. It makes my outlook on life a lot better.”

The institute classes teach the gospel of Jesus Christ and, as Celeste Sorensen explains, “The gospel itself is a happy message”—a happy message that cannot be discouraged even by tough school schedules and heavy homework loads.

In fact, Heather goes so far as to say that learning the gospel through institute can help her tackle those seemingly impossible piles of homework. “I do a lot better in classes when I am doing better in institute,” Heather says with a smile.

Probably the most important benefit of institute is that the classes help you increase your testimony of the gospel and develop a lifelong habit of following the commandments.

Megan Thomas will tell you, “Taking institute gives you the strength to do what



you know is right and stay close to the Church and close to the Spirit.”

Chris White, a chemistry major, agrees: “Institute is a way for me to stay close to God and set my priorities straight.” He adds that, during college, “when you are forming your own opinions and your own testimony, institute is very important.”

Chris has learned that, although his chemistry classes may demand a lot of time and energy now, his institute classes are more important. “In ten years, when I have a family, is chemistry really going to matter?” he asks. “Ten years down the road, if I learned how to be kind to my neighbor or to be forgiving, that will be much more important than organic molecules.”

Sharing the Joy

The 500 students who attend institute here try to spread their happiness to every corner of the campus. Ben Bailey from Price, Utah, has experienced this firsthand. “Institute helps me keep that love inside so I can share it with other people,” he says. “It keeps my priorities in line, and then I want to share it because it is so exciting. When you have joy inside, you just want to spread it out. It is something that is not contained well inside.”

With this love and joy in their hearts, the institute students have introduced many of their friends to the gospel. Each day brings opportunities to share the gospel. The best missionary tool they have is their happiness and their ability to have so much fun while still doing the right things.

With all the great things going on at institute, it’s not surprising that so many institute students are smiling. The most exciting part is that you can be one of them. Just walking inside your college institute building will open the door to some of the best experiences of your college life. **NE**

Caroline H. Benzley is on the Church magazines staff.

Institute offers students the security of a place to make friends who share their values. The get-acquainted luau to kick off the year brought together (left to right) Lee Wilson, Rebecca Taylor, Alisha Jarrett, and Shandi Munns. From institute to student wards to organizations for LDS students, students can be guided to what they need by opening the door to institute.



CON AMORE

*In Italian, that means “with love.”
That’s what I needed to learn about
teaching my friend the gospel.*

BY STEFANIA POSTIGLIONE

My friend Roberta and I had always shared everything—until it came to the Church. We met the missionaries in our hometown in Italy and listened to the first few discussions together. But while my testimony grew day by day, Roberta became less and less interested. I found myself struggling to choose baptism, knowing my friend would not be coming into the Church with me.

One evening as I was skimming the Bible, I chanced to read Matthew chapter 10. Verses 34–38 struck deep into my heart:

“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

“For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother. . . .

“And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.”

The Spirit testified that I should follow the path of righteousness, even though my friends and relatives might not understand. So I was baptized.

My friendship with Roberta did not end, but we were not as close. She could not understand my enthusiasm for the gospel, and I could not understand her desire for the worldly things that no longer seemed so important to me.

The dividing “sword” the Savior spoke of



had fallen between us. I suffered because of this, but I also began to judge my friend: How could she reject something as simple and beautiful as the gospel? She must have a hard heart if she could not accept something so obvious.

Sensing my attitude, Roberta grew defensive. Naturally, she didn't like being thought of as hard-hearted. Every time I mentioned religion, she changed the subject. God became someone we argued about.

Two years passed. One day I asked Roberta if she would travel with me to the city of Foggia, where I was to receive my patriarchal blessing. She agreed to go, mostly because she hadn't been on a trip in a while.

While Roberta waited in another room, Brother Vincenzo Conforte gave me a wonderful blessing. Afterward, I was so caught up in the Spirit that I completely forgot about Roberta, who must have been feeling like a fish out of water as she waited for me. But Brother Conforte noticed her. When he learned she was not a member of the Church, he humbly knelt by her chair. Looking into her eyes, he bore a sweet and powerful testimony. God truly lived and loved her, he testified, and she could come to know Him through simple prayer.

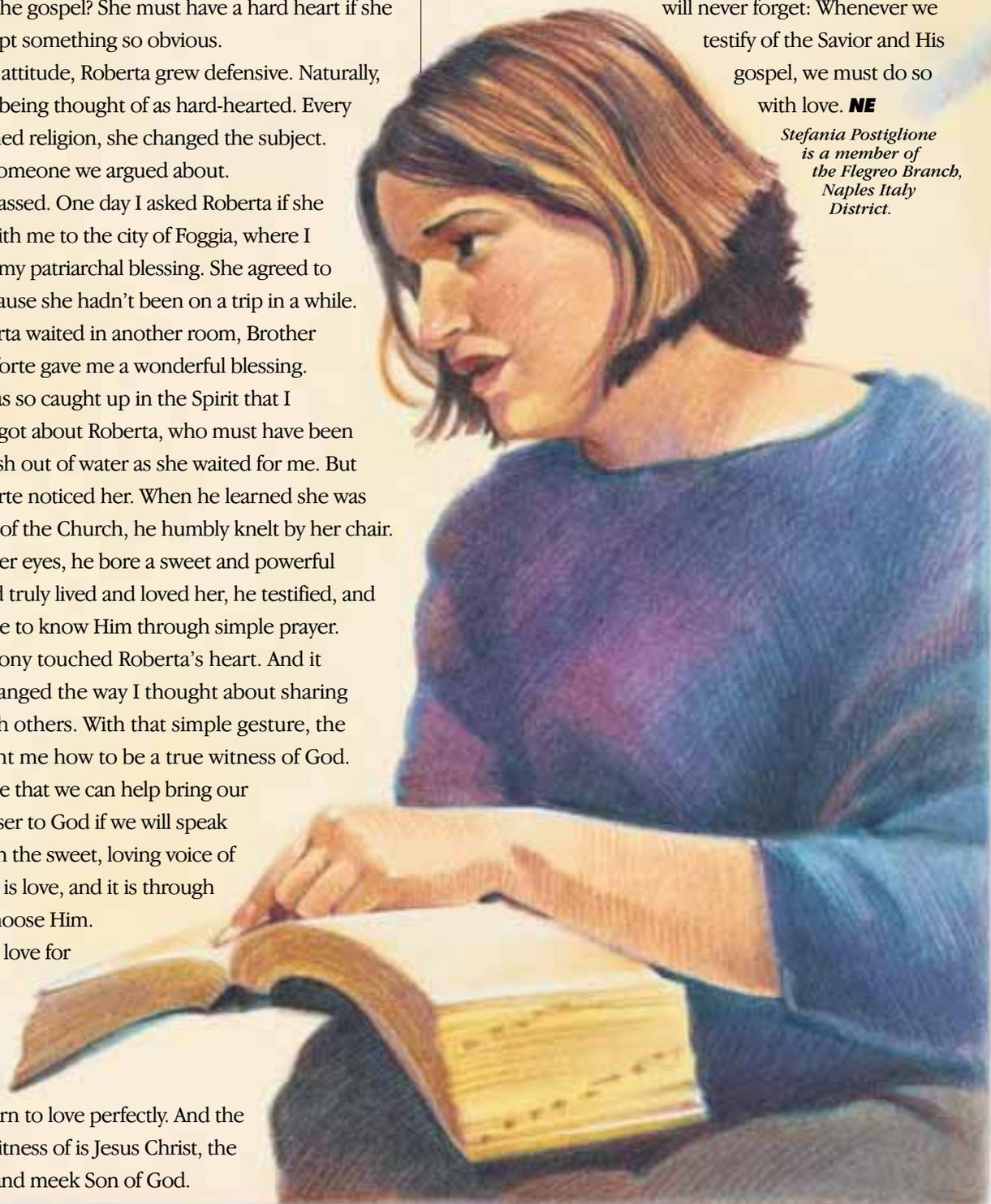
That testimony touched Roberta's heart. And it completely changed the way I thought about sharing the gospel with others. With that simple gesture, the patriarch taught me how to be a true witness of God.

Now I realize that we can help bring our loved ones closer to God if we will speak about Him with the sweet, loving voice of the Spirit. God is love, and it is through love that we choose Him.

Because of His love for us, God called Joseph Smith to restore His Church, so that we can learn to love perfectly. And the one we bear witness of is Jesus Christ, the most humble and meek Son of God.

Since I had this experience, many of my friends have come into the Church. My friend Roberta is even considering studying the gospel. And I have learned something I will never forget: Whenever we testify of the Savior and His gospel, we must do so with love. **NE**

*Stefania Postiglione
is a member of
the Flegreo Branch,
Naples Italy
District.*



MAKING THE MOST OF MUTUAL

Time to plan your next Mutual activity? Mutual can do a lot of good for a lot of people if you know what Mutual is for. Here are some fun activity ideas.

Preparing for the Future

- Learn basic cooking skills to prepare for your future family and for serving a mission. Enlist the help of some good cooks in your ward or branch, and then be sure to taste all the delicious things you make.
- Have a lesson on celestial marriage, and then write a letter in your journal to your future husband or wife. Strive to be all those things you are hoping your future spouse will be.

Serving

- Prepare a list of household chores, and go out and find people who would like help with those jobs. If you identify some families and their needs beforehand, you can be sure your service is making a difference.

Practicing Gospel Principles

- Exercise your artistic abilities by pairing up and drawing portraits of each other. After displaying your masterpieces, have a lesson on how to receive the image of Christ in your countenances (see Alma 5:14–19).



- Have a “dessert lesson.” Choose a gospel topic you want to learn more about, and have one member of your group prepare and present ideas on the topic to the group. Make sure everyone knows the topic beforehand so you can all have things to say and be spiritually fed while having dessert.

Building Unity

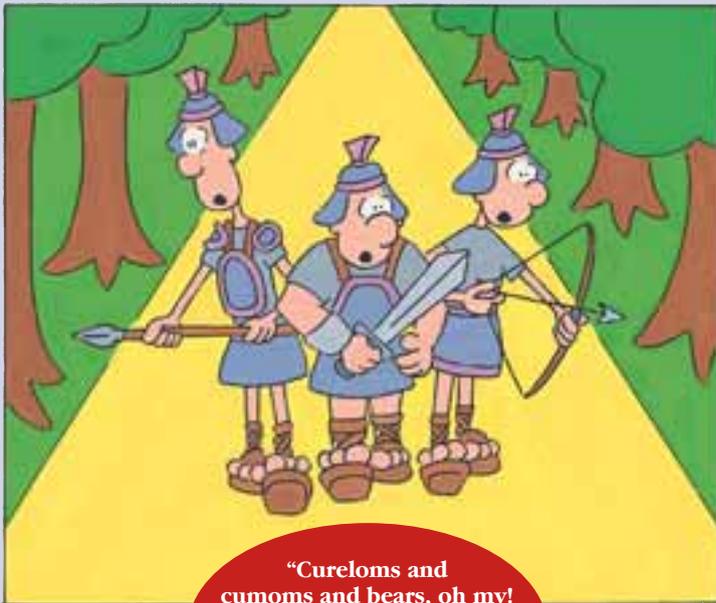
- Even if you’ve known them all your life, there’s still more to learn about the youth in your ward or branch. Play some get-to-know-you games. Or hold a testimony meeting, sharing some of your favorite hymns or scriptures and why they are special to you.
- Everyone has an interest. Let members of your quorum or class present a class or workshop on something they like to do. Find ways to tie their interests to the gospel.

Completing Personal Progress and Duty to God

- Many of the above ideas could fulfill the quorum and class requirements for Personal Progress and Duty to God.

Feeling the Spirit

- With prayerful preparation, each of the above ideas can bring the Spirit. Find ways to give the Holy Ghost every opportunity to be present. **NE**

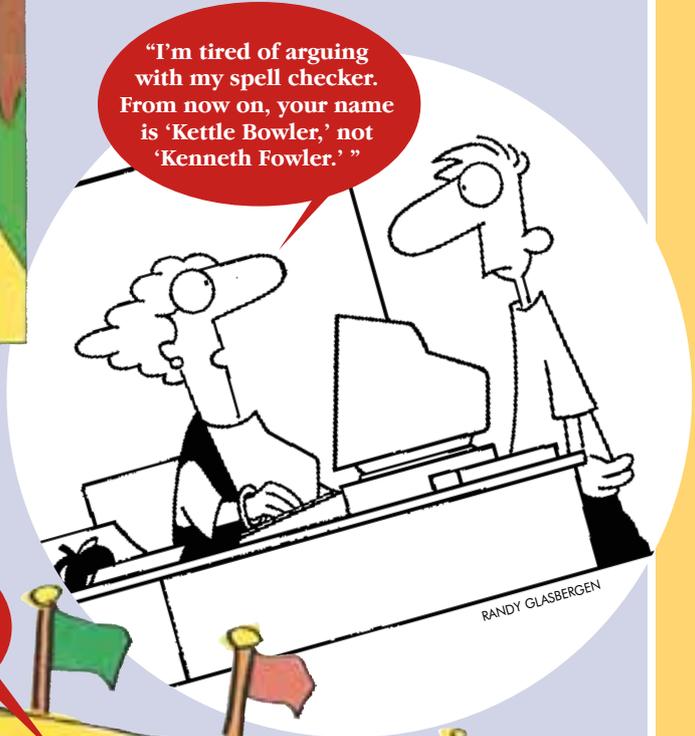


ERIC LEACH

“Cureloms and cumoms and bears, oh my! Cureloms and cumoms and bears, oh my! Cureloms and cumoms and . . .”

When my mother served as our ward's Young Women president, a couple of girls in the Laurel class asked if a friend who wasn't a member could come to camp with them. My mother agreed but told them the only room available was in the cabin with the Beehives. The girls' friend looked startled and replied, "I don't think I had better go. I am extremely allergic to bees."

Melissa Merrill, Lewisville First Ward, Lewisville Texas Stake



RANDY GLASBERGEN

“Last night I dreamed I could speak fluent Spanish, but I couldn't understand a thing I said.”



VAL CHADWICK BAGLEY

NOTE by NOTE by NOTE

Myka Ugto (far right) and the other youth (right) in the London Ward stepped in to help their ward when there was no one else. They learned to play the piano and organ to provide music in their Sunday meetings.

Music makers in Manitoba brought singing back to life in their ward when they started sharing their talents.

BY SHANNA GHAZNAVI

It's a beautiful sound when all the members of the London Ward in Winnipeg, Canada, sing hymns with the organ music in their chapel. Thirteen-year-old Marvin Cardona is the organist. Anywhere there's music in the London Ward, you'll most likely find one of the youth from the ward providing the accompaniment.

It's strange to think that only a few months ago the members in this ward would either sing without accompaniment in their meetings or play the Church-produced tapes of the hymns as they sang.

Everyone prefers having the young people in the ward play the hymns now. Andrew Cardona, 17, says, "Everyone actually sings in time now. Sometimes we were off a few beats [from the tape]. You feel the Spirit more now." Jackie Famini, 13, agrees. "It's nice to have someone play the piano instead of listening to the tapes."

When the London Ward was split from



another ward, there was no one left in the ward boundaries who could play the organ or the piano well enough to accompany the congregation. That's where Elder and Sister Heap entered the scene. They are a missionary couple who realized that once they left the ward, there would be no one who could play the piano. So they decided to teach music lessons to anyone who was interested.

Almost all the youth in the ward signed up. "I heard about all the other people taking lessons, and I was interested because



The youth are not only making a difference in their ward, they also feel a difference within themselves as the spirit of their service and of the hymns touches their hearts and lives.

Right: Jonathan Famini. Far right: Sherri Cardona.



I wanted to play the piano,” says Sherri Cardona, 15. “So I asked Sister Heap, and she said yes.” Sherri now rotates with other girls in the ward to play the keyboard for Young Women opening exercises.

Rheygan Famini, 17, switches off with his brother, Jonathan, 14, to play the piano in priesthood meetings. “I like doing it,” Rheygan says. “I can play when I’m needed. When I go on my mission, I can play. The hymns strengthen my testimony.”

The youth in the ward are grateful to Elder and Sister Heap for all they’ve taught them. They say the Heaps were not only good music teachers but also good friends.

Anything You Can Do

Jonathan had his own motivations when he took lessons from the Heaps. “At first I wasn’t really keen on the idea,” he says. “Ever since I was young, I wanted to play the piano, but Marvin was always a better piano player than me. So when I was younger, I kind of gave up.”

Marvin and Jonathan are best friends, so they have a healthy rivalry in a lot of the things they do. When Marvin saw that Jonathan wasn’t too excited about taking lessons from Elder and Sister Heap, Marvin challenged him to do better. “I said, ‘Let’s see if you can catch up to me. I want to see

how good you can get and how much you can practice.”

Jonathan responded to Marvin’s challenge. “I realized I should just give it a try, and after the first time I tried, everything turned out OK. I got into the habit of playing, and I started to get good at the piano. And now I can sight-read music pretty well.”

Although Marvin’s challenge got him going, Jonathan says the real reason he loves to play has nothing to do with competition. “We feel the Spirit when playing these songs,” he explains. “I want to encourage others to learn how to play the piano, to bring music into everyone’s life, and to make people happy so they can feel joy and comfort in their souls.”

As for Marvin, he has his work cut out for him. His calling is to play the organ in sacrament meeting. He can play the organ using



the foot pedals, and he even knows how to use all the little knobs at the sides of the keyboards to control the organ’s sound. Each week, he and the ward music director pick the hymns for the next Sunday. “I have to practice every day because four songs is a lot,” he says. “And if they’re hard, I have to practice more.”

Marvin loves playing. He agrees with Jonathan that good music, especially the hymns, just makes people happy. And, he adds, “My Sunday School teacher says it makes you live longer because you have less stress when you play the piano.”

Playing Their Part

The youth of the London Ward are making a difference in their ward, and they also feel like their lives are made much better through their service. Sherri says, “I think it’s really good because the youth are more involved, and they are being recognized for their talents and what they’ve learned.”

And they’ve learned a lot more than just how to play the piano. “I’ve learned to organize my time. I’ve learned to practice,” says Myka Ugto, 16. And to those who are learning to play the piano or going through the Church’s Basic Music Course, she encourages, “Be patient. Just take time to practice, and you’ll be fine.” Jonathan says, “You have to put it all together slowly, note by note by note.”

As with any talent, learning to play a musical instrument takes time, effort, and a lot of heart. And sometimes it just takes putting it all together—“note by note by note.” **NE**

Sbanna Ghaznavi is a member of the Church magazines staff.



SING A HYMN

“Inspirational music is an essential part of our church meetings. The hymns invite the Spirit of the Lord, create a feeling of reverence, unify us as members, and provide a way for us to offer praises to the Lord.

“Some of the greatest sermons are preached by the singing of hymns.

Hymns move us to repentance and good works, build testimony and faith, comfort the weary, console the mourning, and inspire us to endure to the end.

“... We encourage all members, whether musically inclined or not, to join with us in singing the hymns.”

The First Presidency, Hymns, ix.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE

FENCE

BY SHANE HAMILTON

opened the gate to the new pasture and tried to get the horses to go there, but most of them chose to stay on the barren hill. Why couldn't they see what I could see?

On my family's ranch in Idaho, we have about 40 horses. We break some of our horses to ride, but most of them we use to raise colts to sell. I learned many things from working with those horses, but I never expected to learn something about the gospel from them.

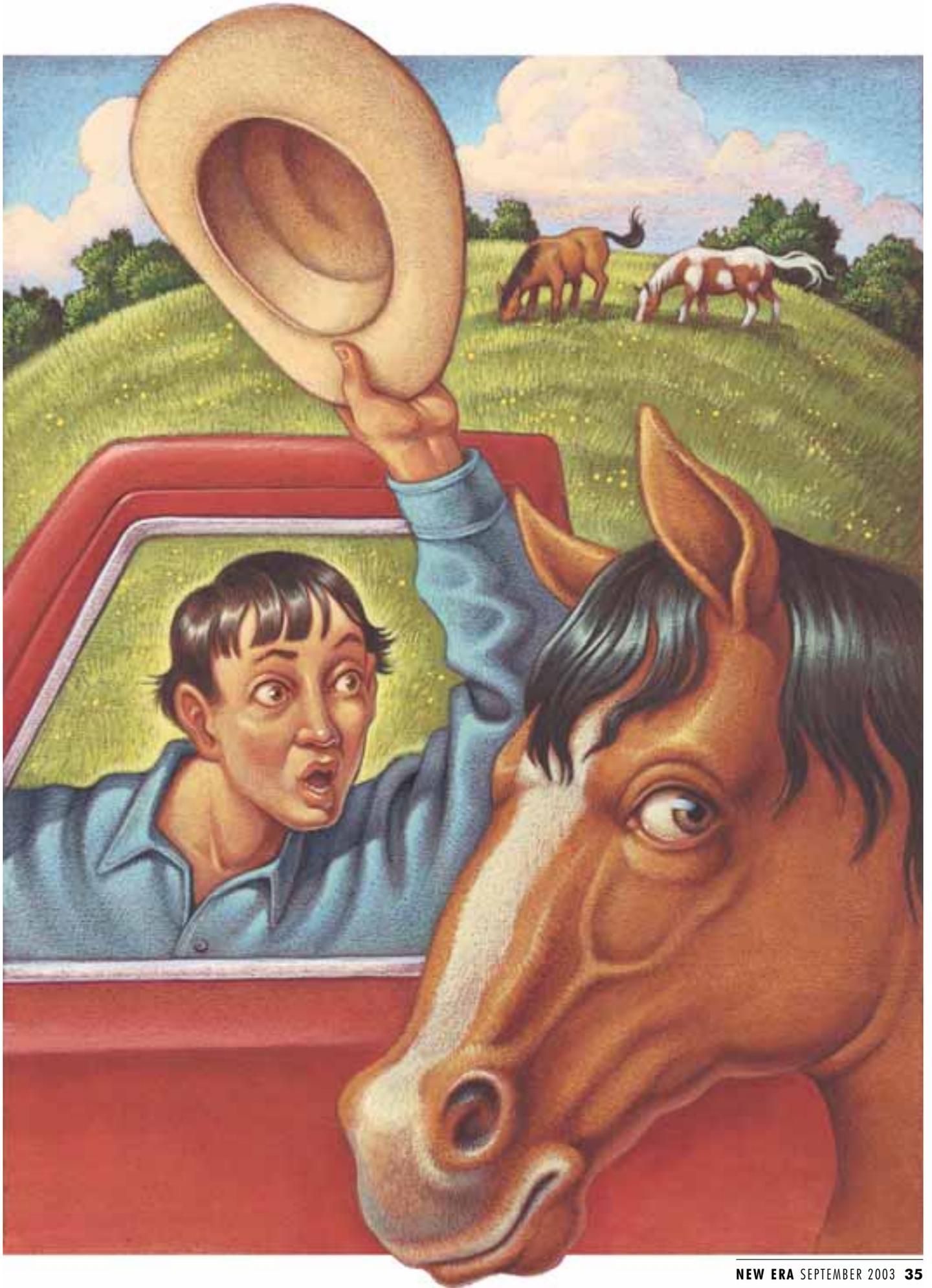
On our ranch is a 60-acre hill that doesn't receive much water. In early summer, we put the horses on this hill to eat the grass that grows after the spring rain. One summer, there was a severe drought in our valley, and our horses had picked the hill clean of all its grass. My dad decided it was time to move the horses down to the meadow, which was covered in lush green grass.

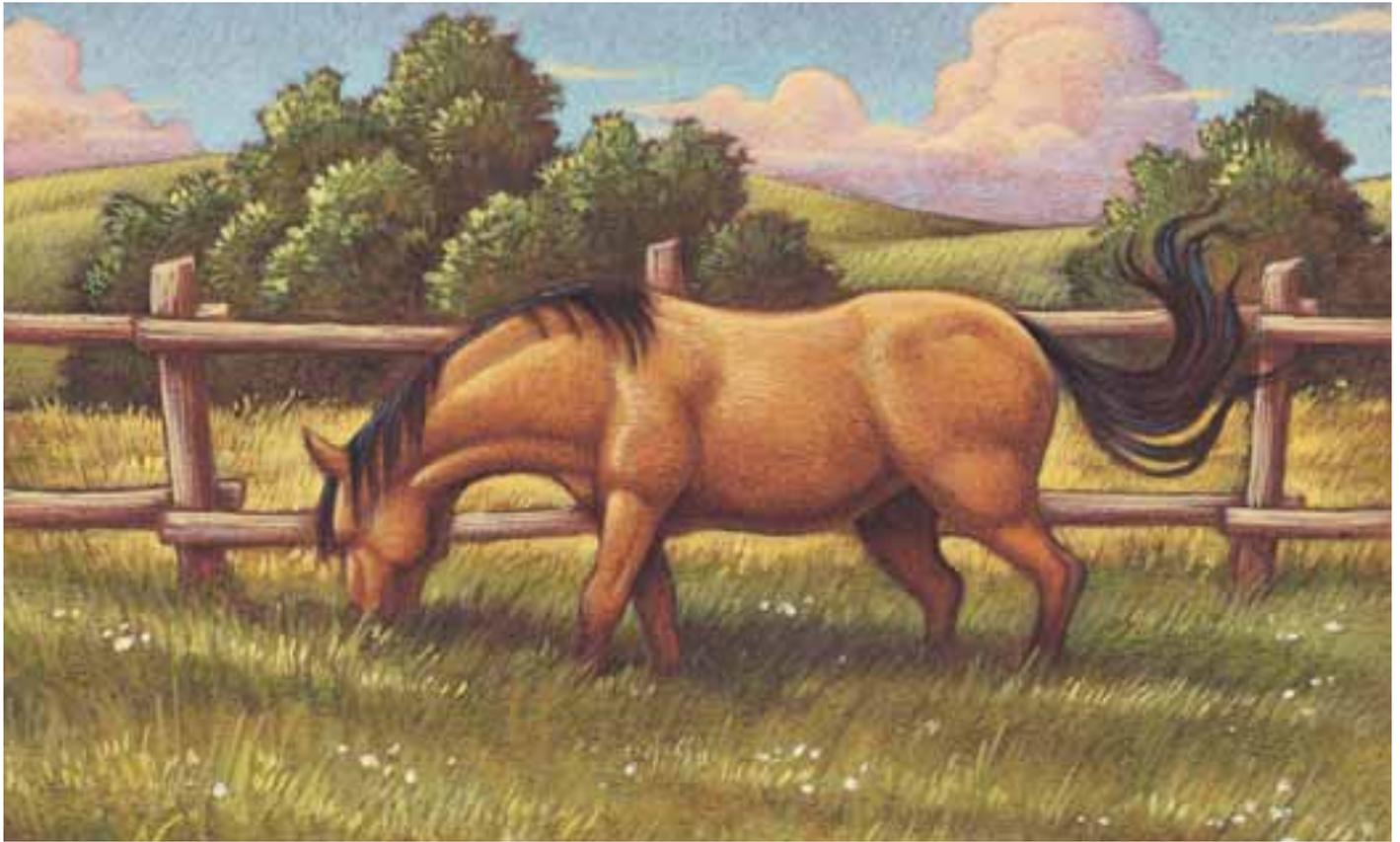
Under the direction of my father, I opened the gate to allow the horses into the new pasture. A few of the horses immediately ran through the gate and began to eat the untouched grass, but the rest of the horses stayed on the barren hill. I tried to herd them through the gate by chasing them, but they wouldn't go. Then I broke a

bail of hay in front of the gate to lure them through, but that didn't work either. The horses seemed content to eat the few blades of grass on the hill instead of coming through the gate.

My dad asked me to drive his truck up the hill and herd the horses through the gate while he did some work on the irrigation ditches. I was excited because my dad didn't give me permission to drive his truck very often. But my excitement turned to disappointment. Whenever I would get the horses headed in the right direction, one old mare would take off in the wrong direction, leading the herd away from the gate.

I drove the truck faster than before, trying to herd those stubborn horses off the hill. With all my yelling, the horn honking, and a cloud of dust rising up from the hill, my dad came over from the ditches to see what was going on. I was hot and frustrated, and explained to him that I couldn't get the horses through the gate. We both tried to herd them through with no success. Finally,





Why don't we go into our "greener pastures"? The Lord has opened the gate, but temptations distract us from the path, just like the old mare that led the horses astray.

we decided to leave them, hoping they'd come through the gate on their own, sooner or later.

As I walked back to the truck, feeling frustrated, I thought, "I bet this is how God feels with us sometimes." As I pondered that, the gospel really came alive to me. I realized that sometimes we become content with the things of this life and we forget that our real destination is a "greener pasture" in God's kingdom. When we're headed in the right direction, Satan, like the old mare, tries to tempt us away from the path. Jesus Christ is our gate to greener pastures. He is the only way we can return to our Heavenly Father and have everlasting life (see Mosiah 3:17).

On my mission, I see a lot of people stuck on a barren hill, seeking for something better. I try to help them find and enter the gate that leads to Heavenly Father's presence.

I know that Heavenly Father loves each of us and wants us to return to Him. He sent His Son Jesus Christ to atone for the sins of the world and open the gate that leads to exaltation. I hope that we can all help each other enter the gate and find the greener pasture. **NE**

Elder Shane Hamilton is serving in the Ohio Columbus Mission.

COME UNTO THE LORD

Jacob taught, "Come unto the Lord, the Holy One. Remember that his paths are righteous. Behold, the way for man is narrow, but it lieth in a straight course before him, and the keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there; and there is none other way save it be by the gate; for he cannot be deceived, for the Lord God is his name" (2 Nephi 9:41).

Why Hurry?

BY MEREDITH OLDHAM

It was silly of me to feel anxious. After all, what was more important—the service we were doing or a football game?

As part of a special activity, the youth in my ward planned to do baptisms for the dead. As the day approached, we discovered that our planned time at the temple fell on the day of our high school homecoming football game. A group of us wanted to attend both, and we figured we could hurry through the baptisms and then go straight to the game.

But after arriving at the temple, we found there was a delay. Those of us who were planning to go to the game began to feel anxious and just wanted to do the baptisms so we could leave.

As I sat there thinking how I wished things would go a little faster, I suddenly became very aware of my surroundings. I began listening to the soft hymns being played and noticed how peaceful everything around me seemed. As I watched the girl ahead of me enter the font, I suddenly thought of those people for whom she was being baptized. They had waited perhaps hundreds of years to receive this blessing. What an amazing, profound, and important thing for them! How fortunate I was to be able to offer them this great gift. How could I want to rush through this for a mere football game?

I began to see how foolish and silly I was to want to hurry. I felt ashamed that I had ever felt that way. I wasn't in a hurry any longer. In fact, I didn't care anymore if I even made it to the game. After all, what really matters in the eternal perspective anyway—a person's salvation or a football game? I knew I would never take this kind of opportunity for granted again.

As it turned out, we made it back for the last half of the game. I think our team lost. I can't really remember. But what I do remember is the happiness and gratitude I felt for the opportunity to be in the Lord's house, doing that great service. **NE**

Meredith Oldham is a member of the BYU 191st Ward, Brigham Young University Ninth Stake.





SAVING THE STORIES

Only one person knew who was buried where in Gary's Creek Cemetery. Now, thanks to Chris Collier, all that information is recorded where anyone can find it and use it for family history.

BY ARIANNE B. COPE

All it took was a call to Gary's Creek Missionary Baptist Church in Tennessee for Chris Collier to find the perfect Eagle Scout project.

Chris, a member of the Memphis First Ward, Memphis North Stake, says, a little nervously, "This is something that's never been done before." Gary's Creek church asked him to document its cemetery—the oldest black cemetery in Shelby County.

Chris first needs to meet everyone involved and decide how much help he will need on the project. He drives to Gary's Creek Cemetery on a road paved over the old stagecoach line. As soon as he steps out of the car, he has to swat at a mosquito. It's the height of Tennessee heat in August, and it's so humid you can practically drink the air. But that isn't going to stop Chris.

Buried Stories

There's a group waiting for him at the gate to the cemetery. Mr. Lacy, who has many ancestors buried here, greets Chris. "This cemetery is a gold mine for genealogists," Mr. Lacy tells Chris as he adjusts his wide-brimmed hat. "Think of all those people's stories buried under the ground." Mr. Lacy has uncovered the story of one of his ancestors buried here—Joseph H. Harris, better known as "Free Joe." He wrote two books about Free Joe's adventures and is turning them into a Hollywood screenplay.

Chris walks through the cemetery with his notebook and camera. The huge trees' heavy branches droop in the heat, and thick emerald grass covers some of the grave markers completely. There are all types of people buried here, from tiny babies to Civil



The cemetery was in bad shape to begin with: overgrown headstones, worn-out markers, and no updated map of the graves.



War veterans. Some of the markers are simple rusty spikes in the ground; others have hand-carved names in aged, chipped stones.

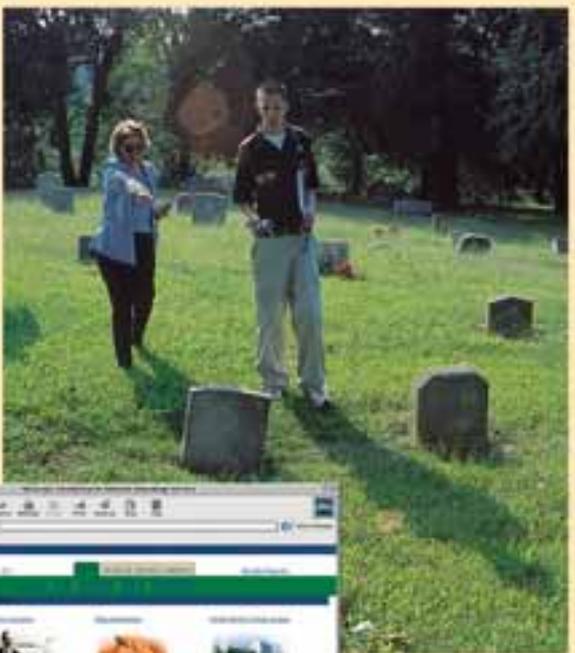
Nobody can tell what they say, except for the caretaker, Mr. Brooks.

Time Is Running Out

Mr. Brooks has been caretaker of Gary's Creek Cemetery since 1939. He moves slowly around the cemetery with the help of his cane and quietly points out different grave markers to Chris. Mr. Brooks is the only one who knows the names on and locations of all the graves. His father was caretaker before him.

"I used to walk around the cemetery with my father while he helped me memorize the graves," Mr. Brooks says. Many of the graves are unmarked, and the only documentation is in Mr. Brooks's memory. If Mr. Brooks dies, the information dies with him. Chris isn't going to let that happen.

Mr. Brooks, the caretaker, was the only one who knew how to identify all the graves. Chris made it his job to make sure Mr. Brooks's memories were recorded. The information he gathered will eventually be available in a searchable database. He and his crew also cleaned up this cemetery—the oldest black cemetery in Shelby County, Tennessee.





More than Family History

Leslie Louthain, the director of the LDS family history center in the area, and her husband are also here to help. She gives Chris tips on how to put all the information in a database. He'll give one copy to the Gary's Creek church and send one to the Church's Family History Library in Salt Lake City.

Sister Louthain thoughtfully examines a grave marker near the woods until she discovers there is more than family history in this cemetery.

"There are snakes in those trees!" she shrieks. Her husband laughs, and she heads for higher ground.

As Chris wraps up his first visit, he sighs. "I'm feeling a little overwhelmed. This one cemetery could be a lot of separate projects," he says. But he isn't afraid to plunge in anyway.

Writing It Down

Chris doesn't feel so overwhelmed when he comes back with a big group of teens to help him. The ladies from Gary's Creek

church provide lunch, and it isn't as hot, because now it's well into autumn.

Chris divides up the teens into groups to document the graves, with the help of Mr. Lacy and Mr. Brooks, of course. You can barely tell who belongs to which church because everyone is mixed together, trying to get all the information recorded.

As Chris wraps it all up, everyone is pleased. The members of Gary's Creek church can rest easy, knowing the information in their vast cemetery has been preserved, and Chris's group can be satisfied knowing they've helped preserve information for future family history work.

The cemetery seems a little more peaceful now, thanks to Chris, because the richness of its history won't be lost. Who knows what stories might later be uncovered?

As Chris takes a reflective look around the cemetery, Mr. Lacy says, "Family history is going to be what brings religions and races together." And in his little corner of Tennessee, Chris helped do just that. **NE**

Arianne B. Cope is on the Church magazines staff.



Chris's efforts not only helped to make the cemetery more beautiful but also preserved its rich history for future generations to enjoy.



President Hinckley can't be there as a friend to every new member. But you can be there for at least one. All it takes is to feel something of what they feel and something of what the Savior feels for them. //

(*Ensign*, May 2002, 26)

— **Elder Henry B. Eyring**
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



TEST YOUR LDS I.Q.

After four years of preparation, Joseph Smith went to the Hill Cumorah one evening in September to retrieve the gold plates. With the gold plates in his possession, Joseph could now begin the important process of translating the Book of Mormon.

How much do you know about the translation and original publication of the Book of Mormon?

1. Joseph Smith first received the gold plates in the month of September. Do you know what day and year?

- 21 September 1822
- 22 September 1823
- 22 September 1827

2. Although Joseph Smith had the gold plates for well over a year, he did not work on the translation of the Book of Mormon every day. About how many days did it take him to translate the Book of Mormon?

- 100
- 60
- 80

3. In the year 1830, the first 5,000 copies of the Book of Mormon were published. Do you know in what month?

- March
- April
- February

4. How much did this original publishing cost?

- \$2,000
- \$2,500
- \$3,000

5. There were a number of people who were scribes for Joseph Smith at different times. Who helped Joseph finish translating the largest section of the Book of Mormon?

- Martin Harris
- Oliver Cowdery
- Emma Smith

Answers: 1. c (see Joseph Smith History, 55); 2. b (see Encyclopedia of Mormonism, 140); 3. a; 4. c (see Encyclopedia of Mormonism, 574); 5. b (see Joseph Smith History, 57).



A SPIRITUAL FEAST

If we would avoid adopting the evils of the world, we must prepare a course which will daily feed our minds with and call them back to the things of the Spirit. I

know of no better way to do this than by reading the Book of Mormon” (*A Witness and a Warning*, 1998, 76).

—President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994)



BOUND IN HEAVEN

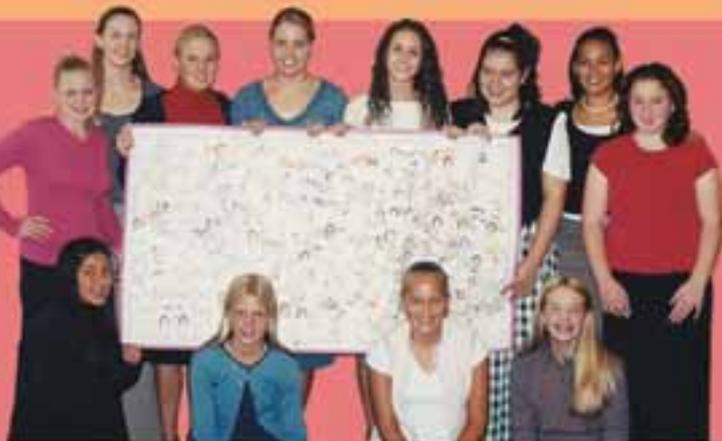
During September 1842 the Prophet Joseph Smith could not openly meet with the Saints because of persecution. But on 1 September 1842, the Prophet addressed the Saints in a letter. This letter is now section 127 of the Doctrine and Covenants, and it contains important directions on baptism for the dead:

“Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you concerning your dead: When any of you are baptized for your dead, let there be a recorder, and let him be eye-witness of your baptisms; let him hear with his ears, that he may testify of a

truth, saith the Lord;

“That in all your recordings it may be recorded in heaven; whatsoever you bind on earth, may be bound in heaven; whatsoever you loose on earth, may be loosed in heaven” (D&C 127:6–7).

The early Saints were excited to be able to be baptized for those in their family who had passed on. These instructions from the Prophet helped them keep accurate records and ensure that every individual was baptized. Recording the names of the people who have been baptized is still an important part of temple work today.



FAMILY HISTORY FACES

The Young Women in the Visalia Fourth Ward, Visalia California Stake, are into family history. They have learned how to find their own family names and to prepare those names for the temple. They are also fortunate to be close to the Fresno Temple, which they can attend once a month and where they can be baptized for their ancestors

and the ancestors of others in their ward.

One year, the girls decided to keep a record of the people they were baptized for, so they made a chart with one face representing every person baptized. Now, with over 400 faces on it, their chart is a good reminder to them of what a difference each one of us can make if we participate in family history and temple work.

LEADERSHIP TIP

General conference is just around the corner, and it is a great time to learn leadership lessons from Church leaders.

Use the month of September to pray and study topics in the gospel that you would like to improve in, areas that will

improve your own leadership skills. Such topics may include patience, charity, faith, and obedience.

When general conference comes, you will be well prepared to listen carefully. You will be able to learn from the examples of our leaders and from their counsel.



FINDING YOUR *Sweetheart*

BY ELDER LYNN G. ROBBINS
Of the Seventy

*Finding an eternal companion is the most important decision of your life.
It's a decision you should make with both your heart and your head.*

There is nothing more powerful than love, nothing so motivating or that touches so many lives. There have been more books written, more movies made, and more songs sung about love than any other topic. Finding your eternal valentine is the ultimate treasure hunt.

“The Lord has ordained that we should marry,” President Gordon B. Hinckley has said, “that we shall live together in love and peace and harmony. . . . The time will come when you will fall in love. It will occupy all of your thoughts and be the stuff of which your dreams are made. . . . You will know no greater happiness than that found in your home. . . . The truest mark of your success in life will be the quality of your marriage. . . . This choice will be the most important of all the choices you make in your life” (*Ensign*, May 1998, 51).

Is love something that you are smitten with, something that strikes you like Cupid's arrow without any say-so? Because we live in a world of agency, wouldn't it make sense



*Here are
some
helps
for when you start
looking for an eternal
sweetheart.*

that the most important decision made in mortality would be our choice and not left in Cupid's hands?

Twitterpated?

For some people, falling in love is a magical encounter, something that seems to happen at first sight, like that scene in the movie *Bambi* where Thumper becomes “twitterpated” at the first sight of a beautiful little bunny rabbit. He is instantly smitten by her lovely charm; his eyes become glazed over and dilate to twice their normal size in a hypnotic, enamored stare; and his little rabbit's foot begins to thump the ground at 90 miles an hour. *Bambi* similarly becomes twitterpated with a beautiful young doe named Faline.

For others, it isn't so much “falling in love” as it is “rising in love.” Their love is a growing attraction toward another. Though the “Thumper/*Bambi*” love-at-first-sight may also rise and bloom like the second, it is often merely physical, a cotton candy kind



*Your success
in marriage
depends more
on being the right
one than finding the
right one.*

of love that has no substance and later dissolves, leaving nothing but decay and one more divorce statistic.

On the other hand, “divine” love, as President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) called it, “is not like that association of the world which is misnamed love, but which is mostly physical attraction. . . . The love of which the Lord speaks is not only physical attraction, but also faith, confidence, understanding, and partnership. It is devotion and companionship, parenthood, common ideals and standards. It is cleanliness of life and sacrifice and unselfishness. This kind of love never tires nor wanes. It lives on through sickness and sorrow, through prosperity and privation, through accomplishment and disappointment, through time and eternity” (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, 1982, 248).

Being the Right One

Your success in marriage will depend largely on your ability to focus on improving yourself, rather than trying to reshape your spouse. It will depend more on *being* the right one than *finding* the right one. There is greater power in giving than in getting. Pure love “seeketh not her own” (1 Corinthians 13:5; Moroni 7:45). The Savior is wise; His wisdom is beyond ours. We should trust Him. He is never wrong.

“In selecting a companion for life and for eternity,” said President Kimball, “certainly the most careful planning and thinking and praying and fasting should be done to be sure that, of all the decisions, this one must not be wrong. In true marriage there must be a union of minds as well as of hearts” (1976 *Devotional*

REAL AND CONVERSATION HEARTS

On Valentine's Day, there are billions of little candy hearts produced—you've seen them—with words on them like "my girl," "kiss me," "she's cute," and, of course, "I love you." What are you looking for in your sweetheart? If you could print your own candy hearts to describe the ideal man or woman, what would you look for?

The Lord said, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (John 13:34). To love as He loved is different from the way the world loves.

Let's look at the Lord's list of behaviors showing how He loved the Church and apply it to the loving relationship that should exist between sweethearts. We find it in 1 Corinthians 13 and Moroni 7.

True love—charity—suffereth long.

- Is patient instead of impatient and tolerant of imperfections instead of intolerant.
- Is helpful instead of being critical of weaknesses. Charity does not criticize, is not cranky, and does not complain.

True love is kind.

- Is happy, thoughtful, helpful, interested in others, a good Samaritan, merciful, and true love gives comfort.

True love envieth not.

- Is content, frugal, and grateful for blessings; is not covetous, resentful, jealous, or greedy; avoids unnecessary debt; and is a full tithe payer. Charity is not selfish or vain, and it lives within its income.

True love is not puffed up.

- Is humble and teachable, does not seek attention, praises others, does not murmur or belittle.

True love doth not behave itself unseemly.

- Is courteous, well-mannered, reverent, respectful, and mindful, as well as clean, neat, and considerate of other's property and feelings; is not crude, indecent, or improper.

True love seeketh not her own.

- Is tenderhearted, caring, sharing, sensitive, compassionate, generous, and united; thinks *we*, not *I*; listens; seeks to please God; is not demanding, controlling, or manipulative; does not blame; and says, "I'm sorry."

True love is not easily provoked.

- Is forgiving, patient, calm, gentle, and respectful; is a peacemaker who does not get angry, irritable, or vengeful; is not abusive in word or deed; does not swear or quarrel.

True love thinketh no evil.

- Is not judgmental but respectful and trusting, pure and obedient; does not think evil of others by gossiping or finding fault; is modest in thought, dress, and speech; is not deceitful, cruel, or dishonest; avoids inappropriate music, pornography, and dirty jokes.

True love rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.

- Has a temple recommend and wants an eternal marriage; stays close to the Spirit through regular scripture study and

prayer; is responsible; is not light-minded.

True love beareth all things

- Is bold and patient with affliction and trials (this does not mean that abuse victims should silently bear cruelty or follow a spouse who is disobedient to God); is grateful; does not insult others; is not defensive, irritable, touchy, or grouchy; is not weary in well-doing.

True love believeth all things.

- Is cheerful; sees the eternal potential of a spouse; makes the least of the worst and the most of the best; shows by actions that there is a firm belief in eternal families; holds fast to the iron rod; has goals, dreams, a vision, and plans for a happy, successful life together.

True love hopeth all things

- Is an optimist who looks for the best; praises, builds up, and expresses affection.

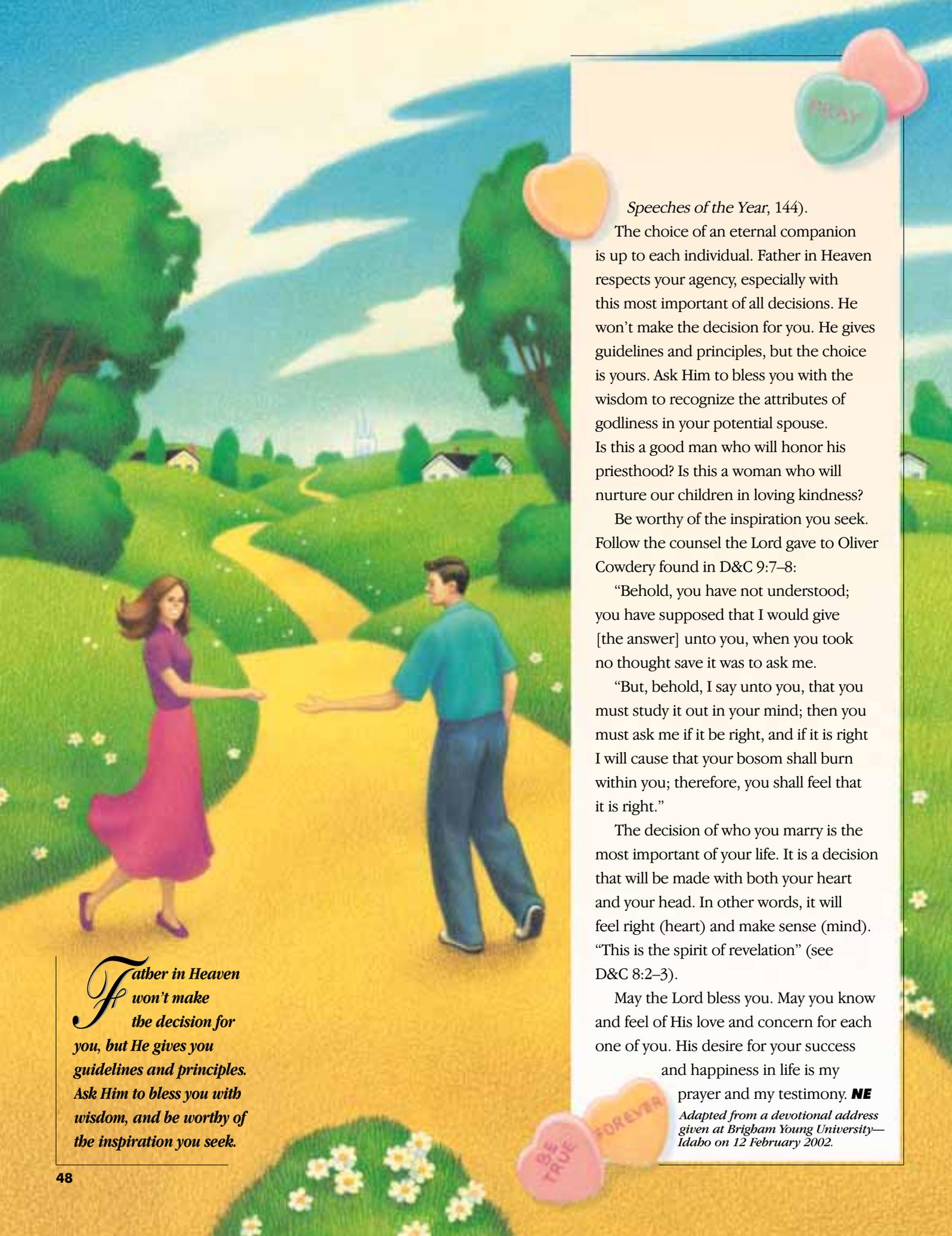
True love endureth all things.

- Doesn't complain or murmur, is steadfast, accepts responsibility, and is industrious while showing initiative.

True love never faileth.

The Lord is describing a love that deals with our behavior. And behavior isn't something you fall into or out of. Behavior is something you control and decide. Agency is involved here.

—Elder Lynn G. Robbins
Of the Seventy



*F*ather in Heaven
won't make
the decision for
you, but He gives you
guidelines and principles.
Ask Him to bless you with
wisdom, and be worthy of
the inspiration you seek.

Speeches of the Year, 144).

The choice of an eternal companion is up to each individual. Father in Heaven respects your agency, especially with this most important of all decisions. He won't make the decision for you. He gives guidelines and principles, but the choice is yours. Ask Him to bless you with the wisdom to recognize the attributes of godliness in your potential spouse. Is this a good man who will honor his priesthood? Is this a woman who will nurture our children in loving kindness?

Be worthy of the inspiration you seek. Follow the counsel the Lord gave to Oliver Cowdery found in D&C 9:7-8:

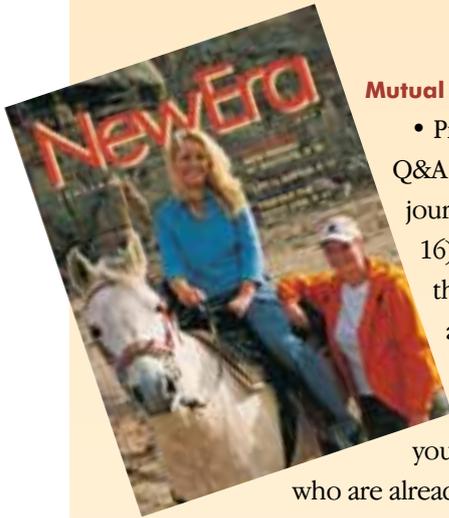
“Behold, you have not understood; you have supposed that I would give [the answer] unto you, when you took no thought save it was to ask me.

“But, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right.”

The decision of who you marry is the most important of your life. It is a decision that will be made with both your heart and your head. In other words, it will feel right (heart) and make sense (mind). “This is the spirit of revelation” (see D&C 8:2-3).

May the Lord bless you. May you know and feel of His love and concern for each one of you. His desire for your success and happiness in life is my prayer and my testimony. **NE**

Adapted from a devotional address given at Brigham Young University—Idaho on 12 February 2002.



Mutual Activities

• Present the Q&A question on journals (page 16) as the theme for an activity. If you have youth in your group who are already good journal keepers, ask them to share an example of their writings to give others the idea of how it's done. Avoid sharing matters that are too personal or private. Have each person write about one experience in his or her week as a starting point.

• Music is an important part of worship—just ask the youth in Winnipeg's London Ward (see page 30). Hold an evening of music instruction. You might want to divide up into smaller groups and learn how to lead music, sing parts, or learn about the history of a few hymns.

• For more Mutual activity ideas, check out the Idea List on page 28.

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Service Project

• Take a page from Chris Collier's experience on page 38. Contact those in charge of some smaller local cemeteries and ask if your group could help preserve the information or upkeep the stones. Make sure everyone comes with paper and pens to copy down information or with cleaning or gardening supplies to help with upkeep of the grounds. Be sure to make copies of your work for your local family history library.

Family Home Evening Ideas

• In "Finding a Fortune" (page 8), Elder D. Rex Gerratt explains how returning a lost \$10 bill has blessed his life. In your family, role-play different situations involving honesty, and discuss how each scenario might be handled.

• In "Coming up Short" on page 10, a young man relies on gospel power to help him overcome a personal disappointment. Summarize the story for your family. Then read the story "Deacon in Motion" on page 14 about Danny Cope and discuss how he feels about his challenges in life.

Sunday Lesson Helps

In addition to the Resource Guides (printed in May and November), Young Women and Aaronic Priesthood teachers may find these additional resources helpful in enhancing lessons 34–37.

Young Women Manual 1

Lesson 34 Worthy Thoughts

Poster, "Clean Up Your Act," *New Era*, Aug. 2003, 19.

Lesson 35 Living Righteously Amid Pressures

Q&A, "List of what I can and can't do," *New Era*, Aug. 2003, 16–19.

Poster, "Be a Strong Link," this issue, 19.

Lesson 36 The Importance of Truth in Living a Virtuous Life

D. Rex Gerratt, "Finding a Fortune," this issue, 8–9.

Sterling W. Sill, "The 10-Cent Solution," *New Era*, Aug. 2003, 42–43.

Lesson 37 Caring for Our Physical Bodies

Juli Housholder, "It's Just Hair," *New Era*, Aug. 2003, 20–23.

Rosalyn Collings, "True Beauty," *New Era*, Mar. 2003, 9.

Nikki Miner, "Dressing Up," *New Era*, May 2003, 44–46.

Aaronic Priesthood Manual 1

Lesson 34 Obedience

Keith B. McMullin, "Are You a Saint?" *New Era*, Feb. 2003, 38–41.

Poster, "Don't try bending the rules," *New Era*, Oct. 2002, 19.

Lesson 35 The Sacrament

Matthew Baker, "Sacrament Service," *New Era*, Oct. 2002, 20.

Lesson 36 Testimony

Amanda M. Ellsworth, "Online Testimony," *New Era*, Mar. 2003, 38–40.

Lynn C. Jaynes, "Me Included," *New Era*, Apr. 2003, 46–48.

Lesson 37 The Priesthood of Aaron

Artel Ricks, "Deacon in Motion," this issue, 14–16.

"Power Restored," *New Era*, May 2003, 10–13.

John H. Groberg, "Connecting with Heaven," *New Era*, May 2003, 38–42.

AN UPLIFT

I want to say thanks. Just home from school one day, I was having a bad day and a tough week. I had two tests coming up, I had just done poorly on a history test, and I had a soccer game in an hour. I looked over on the table, and there was the May 2003 *New Era*. I read it and was taken upwards. I was no longer discouraged. I was happy and feeling good. The articles about missionaries and the priesthood were great. I especially liked the article on leadership.

Joshua Dance, Novelty Hill Ward, Redmond Washington Stake

MY FAVORITE THING

I would like to thank you for putting out this magazine. Every month, I wait for the *New Era*. When I get it, I always look through it and find every scripture and highlight them in my scriptures. Then I go back and read the articles, which I find very interesting and good. I really enjoy reading Q&A and like to read what other people think about the question that month.

But one of my favorite things in the *New Era* is the poster. I think the pictures are great! I also look up the scripture that's on that page. I especially like the picture in May's issue, the one with the frog and the boiling water representing debt. I am so happy to read the *New Era* since there are no bad things in it. Thank you!

Sarah Parker, Mesa 60th Ward, Mesa Arizona East Stake

LESSON FROM THE LOCKET

I just want to say how thankful I am for the article "Locket in the Sand" in the February 2003 issue. I am 15 years old and am the only child still living at home, so I get a bit lonely sometimes. One night I was home alone and was feeling very lonely. I picked up the *New Era*, and it

"That article reminded me that I can pray anywhere, at any time, and for any reason."



opened to that article. As I was reading, I felt such an overwhelming feeling of peace come over me. It reminded me that I can pray anywhere, at any time, and for any reason. At the time, I needed to be comforted. Now

I know that I just have to pray and my Heavenly Father listens to me and lets me know that I am loved.

Joanna Milne, Burpengary Ward, Brisbane Australia North Stake

LOCKER DECORATION

I love reading the *New Era* every month. I like to cut sayings, articles, pictures, etc., out of magazines and stick them in my room, locker, or scriptures. I found myself thinking of the *New Era* and saying to myself, "I wish I could cut out the whole magazine to put in my room, locker, or scriptures so I could remember to be Christlike all the time." Thank you so much!

Heidi Blake, Midland Third Ward, Odessa Texas Stake

STANDING UP TO SWEARING

I kind of know what Preston Taylor, author of "G-Rated Recruit" (Mar. 2003), went through when he was at boot camp where everybody was cussing. When I was at soccer camp, one of my coaches would cuss a lot, and I asked him to stop. And the reaction I got was amazing. He said he was really sorry and that he would try to stop. During the camp he kept apologizing to me. It was kind of cool that he actually listened to me and stopped cussing.

Scott Rollins, Fairfield Ward, Cincinnati Ohio North Stake

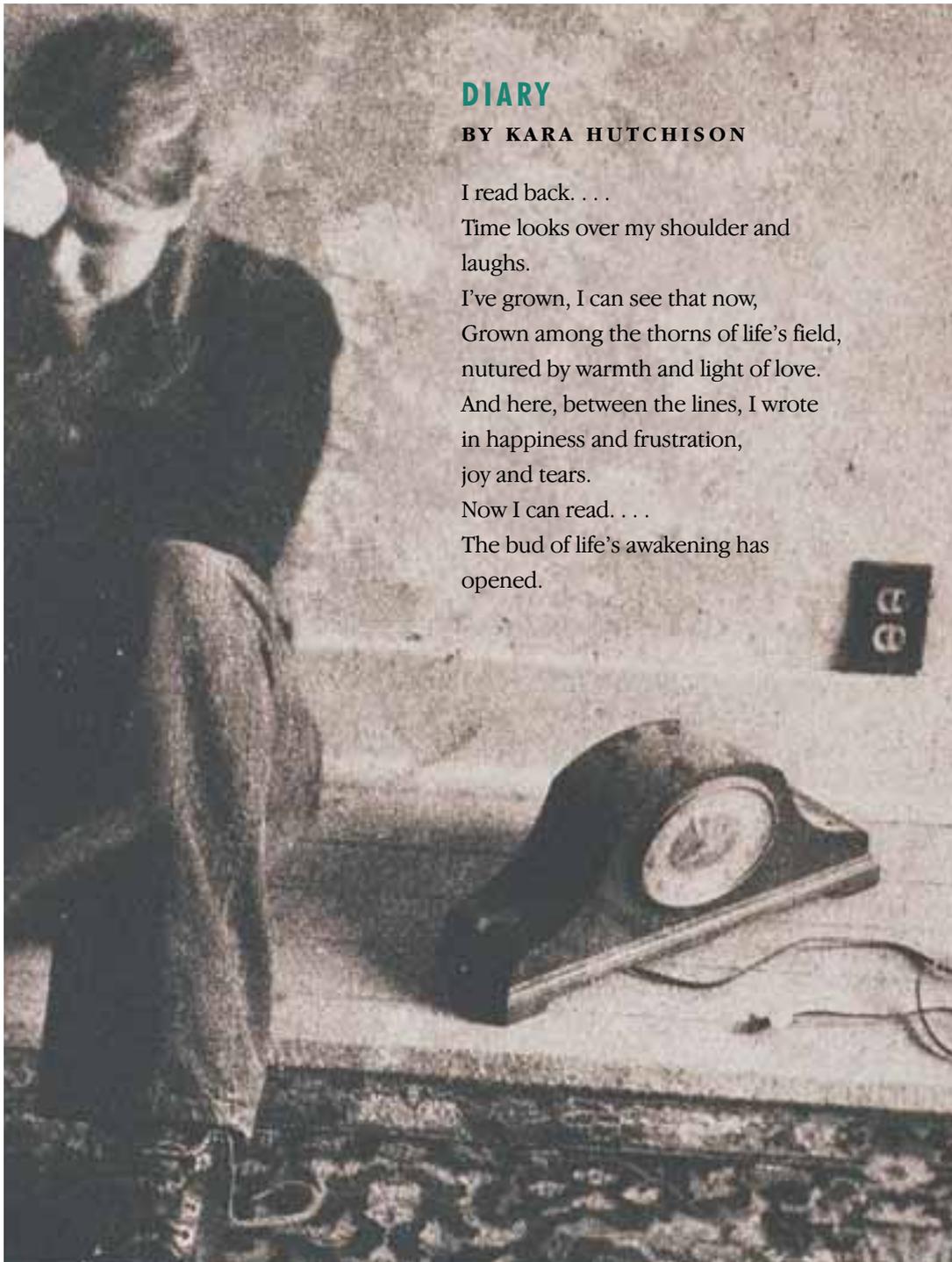
We love hearing from you. Write us at the following address. Please include the name of your ward and stake.

*New Era
We've Got Mail
50 E. North Temple
Salt Lake City, Utah 84150*

Or e-mail us at

cur-editorial-newera@ldschurch.org

Submissions may be edited for length and clarity.



DIARY

BY KARA HUTCHISON

I read back. . . .

Time looks over my shoulder and
laughs.

I've grown, I can see that now,
Grown among the thorns of life's field,
nutured by warmth and light of love.

And here, between the lines, I wrote
in happiness and frustration,
joy and tears.

Now I can read. . . .

The bud of life's awakening has
opened.

BY LANA LEISHMAN



“Even though you may be majoring in different subjects at school or have different interests and hobbies, you and the other institute students have the most important thing in common—the gospel.”

See “An Open Door,” p. 20.