A CALENDAR OF CARING

BY

VAL J. HALAMANDARIS WITH LISA YARKONY
INTRODUCTION

Join me on a year-long journey into caring. It begins near Capitol Hill in the office of Val J. Halamandaris, director of the Caring Institute and longtime president of the National Association for Home Care & Hospice. I spent many hours there during the 12 years I worked for him as a writer and editor at NAHC, where I was struck by the wide range of his interests: everything from ancient history to modern-day health care and the great humanitarians of the world. Most memorable of all were the two years I collaborated on this book with Val and Joe Hinkley, NAHC’s creative director and the most caring, competent colleague you could want. The office where we shared thoughts was full of memories and memorabilia that ranged from the secular to the sacred and showed what guided Val in his lifelong quest to build a kinder world. At the Caring Institute, he held up role models of selfless service for the young, and he set an example for them at NAHC, where he used the powers of love and law to wage “the last great civil rights battle,” as he liked to put it. His goal was to ensure that the aged, disabled, and ill could keep their dignity and freedom by getting needed care in the comfort of their homes.

His sources of inspiration came everywhere from Congress to Calcutta, as you could see when you looked at his office walls. They told the story of his life and many of them feature in this book. His diplomas from George Washington University and Catholic University Law School hung side by side, along with certificates showing his admission to the DC, US District Court Circuit Court of Appeals, and US Supreme Court bars. There were signed photos of Senator Frank Moss and Congressman Claude Pepper, fierce advocates for seniors and his mentors when he served as counsel to House and Senate committees on aging. There were pictures of Senators Max Cleland and Susan Collins, who joined him in his fight to preserve access to high-quality care at home. And there were photos of the Supreme Court, where NAHC brought several triumphant suits on behalf of our country’s weakest members. One whole wall had photos of Val with the US presidents he had known. George W. Bush was there as was his father, along with Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton, and Barack Obama. There was a large photo of Mother Teresa, who ministered to Calcutta’s poor and encouraged Val to found the Caring Institute in 1985.
There were also two statues of her on his desk overlooking Eastern Market, a historic hub of Washington DC. When you walked in, he’d be working there in an elegant three-piece suit befitting a power broker on Capitol Hill. On his feet, you’d always see the cowboy boots that reminded you of his roots in the Old West state of Utah, where his father, John, was a Greek coal miner who urged his son to do great things. John’s photo sat on the desk beside a photo of Val’s wife, Kathleen, a former home care nurse and his partner at the Caring Institute for 23 years. Val’s old stapler from the Senate was there, along with his Ellis Island Medal, which recognizes the contributions that Americans of all backgrounds make to strengthen our nation’s values. There was also a book by Leo Tolstoy that Val consulted each day as a spiritual guide and that served as the spark for this Calendar of Caring.

When most people think of Tolstoy, they think of his novels like Anna Karenina and War and Peace. Yet Tolstoy considered his greatest contribution to be a lesser-known work, A Calendar of Wisdom. The goal of the book, as he explained was to offer us inspiring quotes and “daily thoughts to nourish the soul” as we face life’s highs and lows. In 1885, he outlined his project for the calendar to his assistant, Vladimir Chertkov. “I know that it gives one great inner force, calmness, and happiness to communicate with such great thinkers as Socrates, Epictetus, Arnold, and Parker,” he wrote. “They tell us what is most important for humanity about the meaning of life and about virtue. I would like to create a book in which I could tell a person about his life, and about the good way of life.”

He spent 15 years collecting quotes and adding his own bits of wisdom. While going through the book, you can see that Tolstoy thought a lot about the values of empathy, caring, and service. “There is only one thing in this world,” he wrote early in June, “which is worth dedicating all your life. This is creating more love among people and destroying barriers which exist between them.” Later in the month, he noted that “death spurs people to finish their affairs.” Yet “there is only one type, which is complete, and that is love which seeks no reward.” In August, he urged us “to understand the unity of all living things. Try to serve and suffer with all living beings.” And that happens when you imagine walking in another’s shoes. “Real compassion begins only when you put yourself in the place of those who suffer and you feel real suffering,” he reminded us in October. The key was to think of someone else, as he pointed out the next month. “We do good only when we do not notice what we do, when we forget ourselves and live only in others.”
But you can’t expect recognition and rewards for the sacrifices you make, as Tolstoy also pointed out. “Every great thing is done in a quiet humble way — you cannot do such things when there are thunder and lightning around you. Great things are always simple and humble.” And two of history’s most caring people put the same thought in their own way, showing that great minds do think alike. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, “If I can’t do great things, I can do small things in a great way.” Mother Teresa said, “We can do no great things. But we can do small things with great love.” And these small things included caring for millions of the world’s most unwanted, leading the Church to name her Saint Teresa of Calcutta. She appears in this book, along with several other saints, a number of scientists, and some big Hollywood stars. Our list of people even includes some sinners like Oskar Schindler — con man, swindler, and savior of 1,200 doomed Jews — who changed their ways to do good.

This book is not a chronology, but a celebration of special people born on a particular day (which often meant making some tough choices). Yet taken as a whole, these hundreds of stories do suggest a loose historical process in which caring leads to the widening of human rights. It begins when our hearts ache for those who suffer injustice, hunger, or need. Concern for suffering people outside our community and circle moves us to acknowledge that they are human beings who matter as much as we do. Then we use our heads by looking for ways to right social wrongs. And in time, public policy and legislation extend our moral concern to society as a whole. This pattern has emerged again and again since the French and American Revolutions enshrined the rights of man in law and the UN adopted its Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It’s the backdrop for the emancipation of the slaves, civil rights movement, campaign for gay rights, fight for women’s suffrage, and steps to help the disabled reach their potential. These sweeping movements wouldn’t have taken place without the sacrifices and strivings of individual persons who were set on changing the world. Their stories are the subject of this book.

You’ll read about the powerful and the humble, the wealthy and the poor. Our calendar covers artists and activists, comics and conservationists, pundits and politicians, warriors for women’s and workers’ rights, along with high-tech whizzes and those who practice the healing arts. They range from Moses Maimonides, a 12th-century Jewish physician, to Harvey Milk, a modern-day activist for gay rights, from Confucius, the sage of ancient China, to Rachel Carson, author of *Silent Spring*, a landmark in the environmental
movement. Turn the pages and you’ll come to Bob Dole, a World War II hero and co-chair of the Caring Institute, along with Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, whose outspoken concern for women’s rights has earned her renown as “the notorious RBG.” You’ll also learn that Gene Simmons, the howling “Demon,” of the rock band Kiss, truly deserves a kiss for how he helps the world’s most disadvantaged kids. He and the hundreds of other people in this book have a keen sense of caring that serves as a potent force for change.

Many of them have devoted their lives to the fight for civil rights. Besides Dr. King, known for his audacious dream of racial justice, they include John Lewis who joined the good reverend when he marched on Washington in 1963 and continues his affront to Jim Crow in the US House. You’ll learn about Frederick Douglass, the former slave who counseled Lincoln during the Civil War and urged him to act on our nation’s founding ideal that all men are created equal. You’ll see how Sydney Poitier brought civil rights to the silver screen by refusing to take any roles that would put black men in a negative light. You’ll learn how Arthur Mitchell, a star of the NYC Ballet, became an activist through dance and introduced his art to inner-city children in Harlem.

These freedom fighters ushered in a tempest of change that led Bob Dylan to voice their struggle in songs like “Blowin’ in the Wind.” He’s among the many entertainers who have used their fame as a platform for change. At age 79, George Burns was a sensation in The Sunshine Boys, and he brought sunshine into people’s lives when he raised millions for health care, showing that you’re never too old to make a difference. Charlie Chaplin proved he was no tramp by turning comedy into a critique of fascism in Europe and social injustice in the US. Irving Berlin thanked his “home, sweet home” for taking him in as a poor immigrant boy by signing over the proceeds of “God Bless America” to the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts in 1938. And U2’s Bono uses the drum beat of rock and roll to drive famine and want from poor African nations.

This has also been among the goals of Muhammad Ali, the great champ who was stung by Parkinson’s disease but still found the strength to float like a butterfly in search of justice and world peace. He’s among the many athletes who are advocates for the underserved. Mary Lou Retton vaulted her way to worldwide fame as a gymnast and now raises funds for the Special Olympics to help the disabled reach the greatest heights they can. Andrea Jaeger went from tennis superstar to superhero by starting recreational programs for
disadvantaged or seriously ill kids. Michael Jordan showed he was as great at giving back as he was at shooting hoops by donating $450 million for Katrina reconstruction and assistance. Billie Jean King energized the LGBT community when she became the first woman sports star to come out as gay, though it meant losing all her endorsements. And Dikembe Mutombo, a former NBA star and native of the Congo, has given his homeland the ultimate assist by fighting polio, providing medical supplies, and building a hospital to serve the poor.

Dikembe received a Caring Award, like a number of other figures who feature in this book. They include Vice Admiral William P. Lawrence who used his moral strength to guide his fellow POWs during six years of harsh captivity in Vietnam. Paul Newman showed himself to be both a star of the silver screen and a star of oil and vinegar by founding Newman’s Own, a food company whose motto is “Let’s give it all away to those who need it.” Tom Osborne, one of the most successful college basketball coaches of all time, founded the TeamMates Mentoring Program, which helps thousands of students graduate from high school and go to college. Sara O’Meara gave up a Hollywood career to co-found Childhelp, a national nonprofit that provides love and treatment to kids who are abused or neglected. Carl Hammerschlag is a “healing doc” who tends to both the body and spirit by helping people to see beyond their limits. Father Greg Boyle founded Homeboy Industries to give LA gang members a new lease on life. And Bill Clinton has proved how much he feels people’s pain by easing it as head of a foundation that touches everything from climate change to children’s health.

His sense of empathy is only matched by the world’s great caregivers, many of them nurses who lived up to Val’s great faith in their profession and vital support for their work. They include Florence Nightingale, “the lady with the lamp” who made hospital rounds at night and shined a light on the value of home care. Clara Barton dodged bullets to tend the wounded during the Civil War and came home to found the American Red Cross. Edith Cavell saved the lives of soldiers on both sides during the First World War and rescued 200 Allied soldiers from German-occupied Belgium, a feat that led to her death before a firing squad at age 49. Lillian Wald was a pioneer of public health nursing, a social reformer, and founder of the Visiting Nurse Service of New York. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross wrote On Death and Dying, a groundbreaking book that inspired a hospice movement based on giving patients physical comfort, helping them cope with their fears, and letting them spend
their remaining time with those they love. She compared a peaceful death to a falling star that briefly flares up before vanishing into the night. And many people did have a peaceful death thanks to Cicely Saunders, who founded the first modern hospice, where she worked to let the dying know they still had value as human beings.

When someone passes away, it’s a common practice to release a white dove as a symbol of love, peace, and hope. You’re reminded of the lovely custom when you’re in the office where Val once worked to build support for home care in the halls of power and the hearts of people nationwide. On either side of the room you’ll see stained glass windows that feature a dove surrounded by tree branches covered with vivid green leaves that suggest new life. And these windows hold a comforting message for the many of us who’ve lost a cherished mentor and friend. Though Val’s soul has vanished into the starry night, his mission goes on at the Caring Institute and NAHC. Our book also preserves the spirit with which he took the advice passed on in Tolstoy’s very wise book. Val understood, as the great writer put it, that “the vocation of every man and every woman is to serve other people.” This conviction is the thread running through the diverse stories that we set out in this calendar of caring. We hope that it, too, will give you a few daily thoughts to nourish your soul.
JANUARY
JANUARY 1

Father Ralph Beiting

_I was going to put my hands in the hands of God, and I was going to go wherever He led me._

Father Ralph Beiting was a light in the darkness for thousands of Appalachian folk. Eastern Kentucky was one of the poorest parts of the nation, as Beiting saw when he went there on a mission trip in the mid-1940s. Beiting was still a seminary student when he got a glimpse of the challenges to come. “I saw things that summer,” he recalled, “that I had never realized were possible. I found poverty that I have never seen, even in the Great Depression, and I saw prejudice from one church against another that I had never recognized or seen before.” And he didn’t envision spending his life there helping people get back on their feet and closer to God. But he would after 1950 when his bishop assigned him to a part of Eastern Kentucky with no church, no rectory, and only eight known Catholics.

At first Beiting wanted to go home. But while praying one night, he yielded to God’s will. This decision led him to preach on the streets, build churches, and raise funds. As he came to know the locals, he also understood the need to tend to both their bodies and souls. “You couldn’t just tell some man to pray and have faith when he didn’t have a place to sleep or a bucket of coal to keep his family warm. You had to do more,” Beiting said. And he did.

In the 1950s, he launched an integrated camp for boys. By 1964, his ministry had evolved into the Christian Appalachian Project, an interdenominational nonprofit to serve people in the Kentucky Mountains. Today, CAP provides services to over a million people in all 13 Appalachian states. Whether people need home repairs, disaster relief, or warm clothes, they can count on CAP — the way they could count on Father Beiting.

In the hospital, just days before his death at 88, he was itching to get out so he could meet with some new volunteers to CAP. There was no holding him back from his mission “to be an answer to Appalachia,” as he explained. “We can never let the poor go untended.”
JANUARY 2

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux

*Miss no single opportunity of making some small sacrifice, here by a smiling look, there by a kindly word; always doing the smallest right and doing it all for love.*

Saint Thérèse of Lisieux died at age 24, leaving behind a promise: “I will send a shower of roses from the heavens; I will spend my heaven by doing good on Earth.” These words reached the world after the publication of her autobiography, *Story of a Soul*. Along with her letters and journals, it explained her spiritual path of selfless love. She had followed it since age 13 after recovering from a high fever. On Christmas Eve, 1884, she underwent a profound conversion at her parent’s home in Alençon, France. Suddenly, she lost all interest in pleasing herself and felt a burning desire to pray for the souls of others. This ardent wish led her to join the Carmelite nuns in Lisieux at age 15.

As a cloistered nun, she knew she would never be able to do great deeds. Though she had dreamed of being a missionary and saint, she realized that every lowly flower couldn’t be a rose in “the world of souls, Our Lord’s living garden.” And soon she developed a simple way of showing her love for God by seeing him in every person. Her “little way” was not about heroic things, as she explained. “The only way I can prove my love is by scattering flowers and these flowers are every little sacrifice, every glance and word, and the doing of the least actions for love.” So she took every chance to make sacrifices, no matter how small they were. She smiled at the sisters she didn’t like, ate the worst leftovers, and accepted blame when she wasn’t at fault. These little sacrifices cost her more than the big ones since they went unrecognized by others.

But she did get the recognition she deserved after dying in 1897 from TB. The head of her convent went on to collect her writings and sent 2,000 copies to other convents. Thérèse’s words went on to inspire Mother Teresa who embraced the little way by also doing small things with great love. And the life of the “Little Flower of Jesus” has helped thousands of Catholics to find holiness in their everyday lives.
JANUARY 3

Father Joseph Damien

*My greatest pleasure is to serve the Lord in his poor children rejected by other people.*

“His cassock was worn and faded, his hair tumbled like a school-boy’s, his hands stained and hardened by toil; but the glow of health was in his face, the buoyancy of youth in his manner; while his ringing laugh, his ready sympathy, and his inspiring magnetism told of one who in any sphere might do a noble work, and who in that which he has chosen is doing the noblest of all works. This was Father Damien,” recalled Charles Warren Stoddard in his book *The Lepers of Molokai.*

The Hawaiian island was far from Belgium where Damien grew up and joined the Sacred Hearts Fathers in 1860. Four years later, he was sent to Honolulu, where he spent eight years working in missions on Oahu. While there, he wrote to his father general that many of his parishioners had been sent to the leper colony on Molokai and that he had an “undeniable feeling that soon I shall join them.” He did in 1873 as part of a team of chaplains taking the assignment for three months each. After two days, he volunteered to remain despite the hardships this meant. The lepers lived in primitive shacks. There was little drinkable water, food was scarce, and doctors refused to touch the patients. Molokai was a place to die.

Damien made it a place to live by obtaining government support and transforming the abandoned into the adopted. Soon, the settlement had new houses and a school, an orphanage and a church, where Damien served as priest. Besides tending souls, he dressed ulcers, built a reservoir, made coffins and dug graves, endeavors that put him at risk. “I make myself a leper with the lepers,” he said, “to gain all to Jesus Christ.”

They were prophetic words since Damien died of leprosy in 1889. You can see the ravages of the disease in a monument to him in Statuary Hall in Washington, DC. The square, bronze Damien stands out for more than its abstract style amidst the gleaming white sculptures on the Capitol’s first floor. It’s also the only statue there that honors a saint.
JANUARY 4

Louis Braille

*Live without seeing, but be who you are.*

Louis Braille opened the eyes of the blind even though he couldn’t see. An accident while playing in his father’s leather workshop took his eyesight at age three and left him with no memory of being sighted. He managed to excel in a regular school simply by listening, but there were still limits on what he could learn. Things improved for him at age 10, when he got a scholarship to the Royal Institution for Blind Youth in Paris, but even there most of the teachers just talked to the students. The library had 14 huge books with raised letters that were hard to read, and Braille realized this approach to reading was impractical and slow. He was eager for a better way to learn, as he explained. “If my eyes will not tell me about men and events, ideas and doctrines, I must find another way.”

Braille began to see the light in 1821 when Charles Barbier, a former soldier, visited the school and shared his invention of “night writing,” a code of 12 raised dots that let soldiers share secret information on the battlefield without having to speak. The army wasn’t impressed, but 12-year-old Braille recognized the system’s merits. By the time he was 15, Braille trimmed Barbier’s 12 dots into six and produced a simple code to convey letters, numbers and, later, musical notes.

Soon afterward, Braille began teaching at the institution, but the school didn’t endorse his system because money was short. In 1829, he published his method in a 32-page book, and except for minor refinements, it remains unchanged to this day. Yet at the time, it made no impression on the wider world. Even the institution didn’t adopt the code until 1854, two years after tuberculosis took Braille’s life at age 43.

Today, Braille’s code makes the written world available to millions worldwide and brings light to those who were once held prisoners by darkness. “We do not need pity, nor do we need to be reminded that we are vulnerable,” Braille said. “We must be treated as equals — and communication is the way we can bring this about.”
JANUARY 5

Walter F. Mondale

_We don’t go it alone. We go with everybody._

Hubert Humphrey, Lyndon Johnson’s vice president, once likened his office to “being naked in the middle of a blizzard with no one to even offer you a match to keep you warm.” The vice presidency is sometimes the butt of jokes, but no one made fun of Walter Mondale, an influential figure in the Carter White House. Active for over five decades in public life, he played a leading role in civil rights, consumer protection, environmentalism, and women’s rights.

During his youth in Minnesota, he drew inspiration from key figures known for their compassion. He grew up admiring FDR and while in college, he was impressed by Humphrey, then the young mayor of Minneapolis. He followed in his heroes’ paths by getting involved in politics after law school. In 1959, he became state attorney general, a position in which he showed a strong commitment to the humble folk by initiating a number of anti-trust, civil rights, and consumer protection actions.

By the late 1960s, he was serving in the U.S. Senate where he spoke out for the powerless — especially minorities, the elderly, and the very young. He helped secure passage of an Amended Open Housing Act in 1968 and backed a mortgage subsidy program for low-income citizens. He also served on the Special Senate Committee on Aging and the Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs.

His legislative record brought him to the attention of Jimmy Carter who selected him as his running mate in 1976. When he agreed to join Carter, Mondale made it clear that he would expect to be an “activist” vice president, and once in office he served as the president’s emissary and general advisor. After Carter was defeated for re-election, Mondale found himself out of public office for the first time in 20 years. But he hadn’t lost his commitment to public service, and in 2002, he made another bid for the Senate. “I will fight,” he said, “for minorities of all races and religions and sexual orientation who deserve to share in the fullness of American life.” It was the good fight he had been waging all his life.
**JANUARY 6**

Danny Thomas

*There are two types of people in this world, the Givers and the Takers. The Takers sometimes eat better, but the Givers always sleep better.*

In 1937, a struggling vaudeville comic went to pray in a Detroit church. “Help me find my way in life and I will build you a shrine,” he whispered to a statue of Saint Jude, patron saint of hopeless causes. At the time, his wife was pregnant with their first child and he had $7 to his name. After giving it all to the church, he knelt on the altar and said, “I’ve given you my last seven bucks. I need it back tenfold because I’ve got a kid on the way and I have to pay a hospital bill.” The next day, he received a call to play a singing toothbrush in a radio commercial. They pay was $75, and he had his sign.

Danny Thomas would go on to find global fame as a performer. He did some movies and an early TV variety show before starring in *Make Room for Daddy*, which became *The Danny Thomas Show*. The plot reflected the comic’s life, and the first title came from a phrase used in his home. Whenever he returned from his nightclub travels, his children had to shift bedrooms to “make room for Daddy.”

These words appeared on TV screens nationwide, and by 1957 Thomas knew it was time to fulfill his promise to Saint Jude. He thought the best way to thank the saint of the hopeless was to build a hospital for children with hopeless diseases. No matter how poor the child, he decided, the doors would always be open. And to raise funds, he did countless benefit concerts on his own and with pals like George Burns, Frank Sinatra, Jack Benny, and Bob Hope. It took five years, and St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital opened its doors in 1962.

It became a leading medical center and its founder’s proudest achievement. “Success has nothing to do with what you gain in life or accomplish for yourself. It’s what you do for others,” he said. And what he had done earned him a spot in heaven, Hope remarked after Thomas died. “I have it on good authority, God said, ‘Move over and make room for Danny.’”
JANUARY 7

Saint Bernadette of Lourdes

*I shall spend every moment loving. One who loves does not notice her trials; or perhaps more accurately, she is able to love them.*

There are few places as holy for Christians as a small cave outside a village in southwestern France. It was here at the Grotto of Lourdes that a sickly young girl named Bernadette saw 18 visions of the Virgin Mary, who delivered messages to her. The central message was “Pray and do penance for the conversion of the world.” There was also a personal message for the young girl: “I promise to make you happy not in this world, but in the other.”

Bernadette needed this sense of hope because her family was desperately poor. Her father was a miller; her mother a laundress; and she was the first of nine children, three of whom died. The surviving siblings and their parents lived in a one-room basement, a former prison which the family referred to as “the dungeon.”

When she was 14, Bernadette, her sister, and a friend were gathering firewood at a grotto that served as the town dump. When the other girls crossed the stream in front of the grotto, Bernadette sat down to take her shoes off so she wouldn’t get her stockings wet. Suddenly, she heard the sound of rushing wind, though nothing moved but a wild rose in a niche in a grotto. From a dark alcove above the niche “came a dazzling light and a white figure,” as Bernadette recalled.

When she returned to the grotto the following Sunday, she saw another vision of the Virgin who commanded her to return to the grotto every day for two weeks. In the course of this time, the visions told her about the value of prayer, asked her to drink from the stream, which turned from muddy to clear, and build a chapel on the site.

When she told the townspeople what she had seen, many doubted her story. Yet her words spread, leading sick and injured people to drink and bathe in the spring, which still remains clear. And Bernadette has been canonized as a saint who stressed the power of belief. “One must have faith and pray,” she said. “The water will have no virtue without belief.”
JANUARY 8

Stephen Hawking

*My advice to other disabled people would be, concentrate on things your disability doesn’t prevent you doing well, and don’t regret the things it interferes with. Don’t be disabled in spirit as well as physically.*

British physicist Stephen Hawking has a formula for success. It’s allowed him to probe the stars though he’s paralyzed by ALS. Hawking was 21 and an Oxford student when his family noticed him becoming clumsy and persuaded him to see a doctor, who put him in a hospital for tests. After two weeks of testing, he learned he had the motor neuron disease that leads to loss of control over the body and would likely kill him in two years. He learned something else during that hospital stay as he watched a young boy die of leukemia in a nearby bed. He understood then that there were people who were clearly worse off than him, so whenever he felt inclined to feel sorry for himself, he remembered that boy.

He has gone on to defy his diagnosis by living a full half century more and becoming a giant in the field of science. He has devoted much of his life to exploring the space-time continuum described by general relativity and the singularities where it breaks down. He’s done much of his work confined to a wheelchair and speaking through a computerized voice simulator that he activates by twitching a muscle in his cheek. This allows him to slowly build sentences that the computer transforms into the metallic, otherworldly voice familiar to his legion of fans.

He knows his achievements wouldn’t be possible without a 24-hour team of home care nurses. He also realized that most disabled people don’t share his good fortune. So he has successfully pushed for greater institutional access to wheelchairs, urged universities to provide round-the-clock nurses for disabled students, and advised schools to group disabled children with normal children of the same age. Whenever he travels to give speeches, he asks his hosts to set up a meeting with local disabled kids with whom he shares his formula for success. “Remember to look up at the stars and not down at your feet,” he tells them. “However difficult life may seem there is always something you can do and succeed at. It matters that you just don’t give up.”
JANUARY 9

Carrie Chapman Catt

*Service to a just cause rewards the worker with more real happiness and satisfaction than any other venture of life.*

“Woman suffrage is inevitable,” said Carrie Chapman Catt in 1917. Yet it didn't come without a fight in which Catt played a leading role. As president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), she was a dynamic organizer and speaker. Her campaigning won Woodrow Wilson’s respect and ultimately led to the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment granting women the right to vote. They deserved it, Catt maintained, because “there are whole precincts of voters in this country whose united intelligence does not equal that of one representative American woman.”

Early in life, Cat showed how smart and determined a woman could be. After growing up on a farm, she attended Iowa State College and completed a bachelor’s degree in 1880, the only woman in her graduating class. While there, she established military drills for women and became the first female student to give an oration before a debating society. She also held several jobs — washing dishes, teaching, and serving as a librarian’s assistant — since her father refused to pay for college.

She went on to climb the career ladder as a high school principal and superintendent of schools in Mason City, Iowa. Along the way, she married newspaper editor Leo Chapman, but their marriage was cut short one year later when he died suddenly of typhoid fever. Four years later, she married engineer George Catt, but he, too, died in 1905.

Despite caring for both husbands, she forged a new phase of her life. She became involved in the Iowa Women Suffrage Association and in 1900 began her first term as president of NAWSA, taking over for legendary women’s rights advocate Susan B. Anthony. She proved to be a worthy successor and developed a “Winning Plan” that helped pass the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920.

After this coup, she left NAWSA to help women worldwide get the right to vote. In her later years, she also worked for pacifism, lobbied for Jewish refugee relief efforts, and kept urging women to work for a better world. “To the wrongs that need resistance,” she told them, “to the right that needs assistance, to the future in the distance, give yourselves.”
JANUARY 10

George Washington Carver

*How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving and tolerant of the weak and strong. Because someday in your life you will have been all of these.*

George Washington Carver wanted to improve the lot of “the man farthest down.” He did as a botany and agriculture teacher to the children of ex-slaves like himself, poor one-horse farmers chained to land depleted by cotton. The farmers’ plight inspired him to devise practical farming methods and coax them away from cotton to soil-enhancing crops like soybeans and peanuts. He achieved this through an innovative series of free, simply written brochures that taught farmers about crops, cultivation techniques, and ways to preserve food. In 1906, he devised the Jessup Wagon, a demonstration laboratory on wheels, which he considered his greatest contribution to teaching farmers.

“Education,” he said, “is the key to unlock the golden door of freedom.” His keen desire to learn led him to leave his adopted parents at age 12 because there were no schools for black students near his home in southwest Missouri. His sacrifice paid off when he gained acceptance to Simpson College, where he was the first black student. He went on to earn a Master of Science degree and become a member of the Iowa State College of Agriculture and Mechanics.

In 1897, Booker T. Washington, founder of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute for Negroes, convinced Carter to serve as the school’s director of agriculture. While there, he developed a groundbreaking crop rotation method and numerous industrial applications for agricultural crops. The hundreds of products he invented included plastics, paints, and even a kind of gasoline. During World War I, he found a way to replace the textile dyes formerly imported from Europe and received three patents for this invention alone.

Yet Carver didn’t profit from most of his products. He freely donated his discoveries to mankind. “God gave them to me. How can I sell them to someone else?” he said of his ideas. And what savings he did have he left to establish the Carver Research Foundation at Tuskegee, which still honors his commitment to service. “No individual,” he said, “has any right to come into the world and go out of it without leaving behind him distinct and legitimate reasons for having passed through it.”
JANUARY 11

Alan Paton

To give up the task of reforming society is to give up one’s responsibility as a free man.

Thousands of white South African children have memorized the opening lines of *Cry the Beloved Country*. “There is a lovely road that runs from Ixopo into the hills,” the 1948 novel begins. “These hills are grass-covered and rolling, and they are lovely beyond any measure.” But Kumalo, a Zulu preacher, leaves them to search for his son in Johannesburg, where thousands of poor, young black men have gone seeking work. The son is later executed for murdering a white man whose father lives in rural Natal province, where the novel’s white author was born.

*Cry the Beloved Country*, Alan Paton’s first novel, propelled him at age 45 from a teacher and reform school director to fame as an author, politician, and opponent of apartheid. He was inspired to write it during a trip to Norway, where a friend took him to see the Trondheim Cathedral. “We sat in the pews opposite the rose window,” he recalled, “which is one of the most beautiful in the world. The light was shining behind it, and I was very moved and felt very homesick” — so much so that he returned to his hotel and began drafting the book that brought world attention to racial injustice in his country.

The success of *Cry the Beloved Country* led Paton to resign his teaching position and devote his life to writing. In 1953, he also helped found the Liberal Party, which supported a universal franchise and opposed violence. He remained its president until 1968 when the government made interracial parties illegal.

Paton was undaunted. His active opposition to apartheid led to confiscation of his passport from 1960 to 1970, but it didn’t stop him from testifying at the 1964 trial of anti-apartheid activist Nelson Mandela. And it didn’t stop him from continuing to work for justice through non-violent means, like the central figure of his famous book. In one scene, Kumalo speaks to a farmer who has become too radical and tells him, “I cannot stop you from thinking your thoughts. It is good for a young man to have such deep thoughts. But hate no man, and desire power over no man.”
JANUARY 12

Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi

*Man must search for what is right, and let happiness come on its own.*

Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi wanted to educate children for a better world. This was the point of learning, he claimed at a time when education was by rote and rod. What he proposed, instead, was an education based on activities that bring out a child’s mental, physical, and practical skills. The goal of education “is not perfection in the accomplishments of the school, but fitness for life; not the acquirement of habits of blind obedience and of prescribed diligence, but a preparation for independent action.”

Given these practical words, it’s surprising to learn that Pestalozzi’s own life was full of defeats. He was a poor elementary school student, flopped as a preacher, and failed at the law. At 22, in 1768, he bought a farm, and this venture failed, too. But while his crops died, he took in stray kids and got them interested in learning. There was no memorization and no flogging since Pestalozzi believed love of those we educate is “the sole and everlasting foundation” on which to work. “Without love,” he maintained, “neither the physical nor the intellectual powers will develop naturally.” So kindness ruled at history’s first progressive school until Pestalozzi went broke in 1780 and had to send the children away.

For the next 18 years, he scraped by while dreaming of ways to end the misery he saw around him. And his chance came in 1799, when France invaded Switzerland and hundreds of destitute children roamed the country. With government support, he collected scores of these waifs and started an orphanage at Stans. It closed five months later, when the French army needed the building for a hospital. But Pestalozzi remembered that time as the happiest of his life as he sought to help the children develop.

In the end he succeeded at schools in Burgdorf and Yverdon where he attracted widespread attention. The French diplomat Talleyrand and the American social reformer Robert Owen came to learn from Pestalozzi. The school systems of several European states adopted his methods, and so did Horace Mann. They inspired him to found kindergartens in the U.S. that still reflect Pestalozzi’s commitment to “thinking love” in handling kids.
JANUARY 13

William P. Lawrence

*America is humane and tries to do what is right.*

On June 28, 1967, U.S. Navy Commander William Lawrence’s plane was shot down over North Vietnam. Hostile farmers found him in a rice paddy and tossed him into a pen with a 400-pound hog. After being blindfolded and handcuffed, he was placed in a truck and transported to Hoa Loa Prison, nicknamed the “Hanoi Hilton.” Then he endured the first of many torture sessions. “A professional jailer before the war, old Strap and Bar, also known as Pig Eye, soon went to work on me,” he remembered. “The flesh was literally stripped from my ankles from writhing in the irons. I still carry the cigarette burns on my arms.”

Yet he never gave up the ship during the six years, he was held in Vietnam. Instead, he emerged as one of the most effective POW leaders and became noted for his resistance to his captors. He also held his fellow POWs together by developing a tapping-coughing-sniffing communication system that kept otherwise isolated captives in contact with each other. Fellow POWs, including future Senator John McCain, never forgot how his moral strength guided them through very difficult times. But few of them suffered as much as he did for his high crime of steadfast leadership.

In time, the Vietnamese caught him passing a note to another prisoner and placed him in solitary confinement for 60 days to break his will. During the day, the temperature in the six-foot cell rose to over 100 degrees and heat sores soon covered Lawrence’s body. To get through the ordeal, he composed “Oh Tennessee, My Tennessee,” which later became the state’s official poem.

When he returned home, he received more recognition, including a Caring Award. The Navy promoted him to rear admiral in 1974 and he went on to assume command of the U.S. Third Fleet in Hawaii. In 1980, he became a vice admiral, and in 1986, he retired as deputy chief of naval operations for manpower, personnel, and training. In retirement, he also held a leadership chair at the Naval Academy, where he continued to mentor new leaders and remind them that “morality is the first prerequisite of leadership.”
JANUARY 14

Albert Schweitzer

One thing I know: the only ones who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve.

In September 1915, a philosophical creed sprang to life amid a herd of hippopotamuses. It was the answer to a question Albert Schweitzer asked himself as he steamed up Africa’s Ogooue River. On the third day of his journey he was on the deck wondering whether it was possible to build an elementary and universal principle of ethics. “At that very moment when, at sunset, we were making our way through a herd of hippopotamuses, there flashed into my mind, unforeseen and unsought, the phrase ‘Reverence for Life.’” It was a concept that stressed the interdependence and unity of all life and it would lead people to selflessly serve others, as Schweitzer explained.

He put this principle into practice after becoming a licensed curate, earning a doctorate in philosophy, and writing a classic study of Bach. He was 30 in 1905, when he became aware of Africa’s desperate need for medical care. Despite all he had already achieved, he began to train as a doctor. When he qualified eight years later, he left for Lambarene, Gabon, where he devoted the rest of his long life to caring for the region’s people.

Reverence for life became his guide to action at his medical and missionary station at Lambarene. He had scratched it out from the jungle beginning in 1913; he had designed it; and he had worked as an artisan in constructing many of its buildings. Although the station was beset many times by adversities that would have defeated a less devoted man, it had grown by 1965 to more than 70 buildings, 350 beds, and a leper village of 200.

By then, Schweitzer had also changed. He had come to Africa a powerful, young man with thick, black hair and piercing eyes. The years thinned his hair, shrunk his frame, and softened his eyes. But his determination to live by his ethical creed was just as strong as ever, so he kept working at his medical mission until his death at 90 years of age. He knew “a great secret of success is to go through life as a man who never gets used up.”
JANUARY 15

Martin Luther King Jr.

*Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?’*

In the summer of 1963, millions of Americans sat before their TVs to watch 200,000 protesters march on Washington, DC. The highlight of the event took place when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. appeared on stage and revealed his vision of the future: “I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: ‘We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal.’”

King had been fighting to make this dream come true since bursting on the scene as a civil rights leader in Montgomery, Alabama, after Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus. He was a 28-year-old pastor in 1955 when he made headlines for leading the successful boycott of Montgomery city buses. It was the beginning of the civil rights movement, and before leaving Montgomery for Atlanta he organized the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, a nonsectarian agency that gave advice and support to groups throughout the South in their efforts to bring about racial equality and justice.

He would go on to preach nonviolent resistance nationwide, as dozens of cities exploded in riots. He encouraged black audiences to continue their struggle, conveyed the plight of blacks to white audiences, and kept on speaking despite attempts to still his voice. His home was bombed three times, and he was arrested 14 times during demonstrations. Yet he refused to give up his dream. “If slavery could not stop us,” he explained, “the opposition we now face will surely fail. We will win our freedom because the sacred heritage of our nation and the eternal will of God are embodied in our echoing demands.”

His own relentless demands helped lead to the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and 1965 Voting Rights Act before he was struck down by an assassin’s bullet in 1968. And it was a sacrifice he was willing to make for his dream. “If physical death,” he once said, “is the price that I must pay to free my white brothers and sisters from a death of the spirit, then nothing can be more redemptive.”
JANUARY 16

Susan Sontag

_Literature can train, and exercise, our ability to weep for those who are not us or ours._

“I’m interested in various kinds of passionate engagement,” Susan Sontag once said. “All my work says ‘be serious, be passionate, wake up!’” Her output included 17 books covering topics ranging from illness to photography, literature and film. Her 1964 piece “Notes on Camp” established her as a major new writer and popularized the “so bad it’s good” attitude toward popular culture, applicable to everything from Swan Lake to feather boas. In “Against Interpretation,” she fretted that critical analysis interfered with art’s magical power. These and other insights into politics and culture gained her renown as a rock star among American thinkers, as did her tall, commanding presence. Her eyes were the richest brown. Her thick, black hair was accented by a bolt of white, and her typical expression was a wry smile as if amused by a joke only she knew. But she was a zealot of seriousness and a warrior for human rights.

Unlike many American writers of the time, she was deeply involved in politics and activism. In 1968, she visited Hanoi at the height of the Vietnam War and produced a sympathetic essay on Vietnamese resistance to American power. Two years later, she protested Castro’s incarceration of Cuban poet Herbert Padilla, who spoke out against his regime and denounced the dictator’s punitive policies toward homosexuals. In 1982, she condemned the suppression of Solidarity in Poland and the tyranny communism imposed wherever it triumphed. Ten years later, she called for American intervention in the Balkans to halt the siege of Sarajevo and stop Serbian aggression in Bosnia and Kosovo. Her concern for the citizens of Sarajevo led her to make over a dozen trips to the besieged capital city.

By then she had been diagnosed with terminal breast cancer, leading her to write _Illness as Metaphor_, a seminal work exploring the language of disease. Her ongoing activism as she underwent treatment reflected her commitment to “righteous action,” as she explained. “I believe in altruism,” she said shortly before her death. “I think that once in a while you should do something for other people you’re not related to. Just do something for other human beings out of a sense of solidarity.”
JANUARY 17

Muhammad Ali

*I wish people would love everybody else the way they love me. It would be a better world.*

The champ faced his greatest foe after learning he had Parkinson’s in 1981. The disease turned the great boxer’s cocky gait into a shuffle and made his strong voice sink to a whisper. But he still packed a wallop by fighting injustice, illness, and want. The passion he once brought to the ring remained alive as Parkinson’s froze his face into a mask. It simmered beneath the surface for over a decade, and after years away from public view, he agreed to light the Olympic cauldron at the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta. Suddenly, there he was standing on the platform, his left arm trembling while his right held the torch aloft. It was an unforgettable image of the new Ali, the public face of a disease many victims prefer to keep private.

Afterward, Ali embarked on an extraordinary new journey. The man who once stung like a bee found new strength to float like a butterfly in search of justice and peace. By then it was hard for him to speak or move, but he was determined to live life to the fullest. “There are people counting on me, and I don’t want to let them down,” he said. And he didn’t. Together with his wife, Lonnie, he began travelling the world. Muhammad’s message became clear as the greatest took medical supplies to Cuba, visited Vietnam with American families who were searching for MIA relatives, and negotiated a prisoner exchange between Iran and Iraq.

As he pursued this global mission, he especially focused on the problems of children, who make up the world’s most underserved population. Over the years, he donated millions of meals to hungry kids in Bosnia, the Ivory Coast, and the Philippines through the Global Village, which works with organizations like the Red Cross on behalf of needy worldwide.

The United Nations ultimately recognized Ali’s contributions by naming him a Messenger of Peace, but Ali answered to an even higher referee. “When God judges you, He will look at your good deeds and your bad deeds,” he said. “Service to others is the rent you pay for a room in heaven.”
JANUARY 18

Daniel Webster

*What a man does for others, not what they do for him, gives him immortality.*

In 1955, the Senate established the Special Committee on the Senate Room to complete the decorative plaster panels in the Capitol’s Senate Reception Room. The committee’s mission was to select “five outstanding persons” who have served in the Senate since the founding of the U.S. government so their portraits could be placed in the unfilled spaces in the reception room. The committee was composed of four senior senators and one junior senator, John F. Kennedy, who served as the committee’s chairman. Kennedy was the perfect choice because he had examined the careers of eight stellar senators in his book, *Profiles in Courage*. The Kennedy committee spent two years surveying the nation’s leading historians and political scientists before making a decision. Among their choices was a nineteenth-century senator, Daniel Webster of Massachusetts.

The “Great Orator,” as he was known, showed the kind of courage Kennedy described in the tumultuous years leading up to the Civil War. In 1845, the annexation of Texas and the resulting war with Mexico, both opposed by Webster, forced the country to face the issue of expanding slavery. Webster also opposed such expansion but feared even more the dissolution of the Union over the dispute. In a famous three-hour speech before the Senate, he thundered, “Slavery is wrong.” But to keep the Southern states from seceding, he supported the Compromise of 1850, allowing slavery in new territories of the nation.

Webster did not believe the South had the right to choose which federal laws to obey or to leave the Union. His position won him praise from moderates on both sides. Yet he faced outrage from many Northern abolitionists and lost the support he needed to reach his dream of being president someday. Knowing he was likely to be voted out of office, he accepted President Millard Fillmore’s offer to be secretary of state. In his last speech before the Senate in 1850, he said, “I wish to speak today, not as a Massachusetts man, not as a Northern man, but as an American. I speak for the preservation of the Union.” He had the courage to act on his convictions.
JANUARY 19

Oveta Culp Hobby

A purpose gives meaning to life. It is like the hub in a wheel — with every spoke fitted into it to make a strong and perfect circle.

Oveta Culp Hobby summed up the role of women in World War II. “Women who stepped up were measured as citizens of the nation and not as women. This was a people’s war and everyone was in it.” She set an example as first director of the Women’s Army Corps and a public servant who believed “brotherhood doesn’t come in a package. It is not a commodity to be taken down from the shelf with one hand. It is an accomplishment of soul-searching, prayer, and perseverance.”

Hobby got her sense of purpose from her father, a lawyer and Texas state lawmaker who took her to see the legislature in session. She followed in his footsteps by going to law school, and by age 20, she was so knowledgeable about the workings of the Texas House of Representatives that the speaker of the House asked her to serve as parliamentarian. She went on to become a business executive, editor at the Houston Post, and mayoral candidate in the city. Besides being accomplished, she was feminine, refined, and charismatic — a woman who could inspire other women to join the army. When she addressed the first women’s officer candidate class, she said, “You are the first women to serve. Never forget it. You have a debt and date, a debt to democracy, a date with destiny.”

It was a stirring call that inspired women to serve in over 400 non-combat jobs throughout the world by 1945. The war over, President Eisenhower made her the first secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. In this role, she carried out a myriad of duties: overseeing the introduction of the Salk polio vaccine, expanding the federal hospital and health care infrastructure, administering the Social Security funds that provide benefits to the retired and disabled, and overseeing the nation’s largest black university, Howard. Her duties gave her little time to rest, but she was committed to stepping up by building brotherhood and justice. “Regard each man, each woman as an individual, not as a Catholic, a Protestant or a Jew, not as an Indian, American, or European,” she said. “Dignify man with individuality.”
JANUARY 20

George Burns

As long as you’re working, you stay young. When I’m in front of an audience, all that love and vitality sweeps over me and I forget my age.

George Burns played the straight man to his wife and long-time partner, Gracie Allen. In one of their vaudeville skits, they go to a Charles Boyer film and Gracie falls for the charming French actor. As they leave the theater, she calls her husband Charles to his great chagrin. And on the way home they walk into a store where Gracie buys some magazines about Boyer. When they retire for the night, Gracie tells him, “This article I’m reading now is fascinating: Charles Boyer’s Ten Rules for Being a Successful Lover.” When Burns responds, “Turn out the light,” Gracie says, “That’s the first rule.”

This shtick — the long-suffering husband dealing with the scatterbrained wife — made them one of the most successful comedy acts in modern times. They rose to the heights of the entertainment world in the 1920s and remained there until Gracie’s retirement in 1959. After her death in 1964, Burns continued to perform on TV, in concerts, and at nightclubs. The short, gravel-voiced comic, delivering doses of his dry wit while smoking a cigar, was a beloved figure to generations. As he aged he seemed ageless, and at age 79, he was a hit in Neil Simon’s The Sunshine Boys.

The films he went on to make, including Oh God!, brought sunshine into people’s lives. So did his wise words on aging. “I don’t believe in dying. It’s been done. I’m working on a new exit. Besides, I can’t die now — I’m booked.” And that was no joke. He was still working at 85, and he marked his birthday with “a little party for 1,100 of my friends” — a $250-a-person gala to benefit Ben Gurion Hospital in Israel.

Six years later, he had another birthday to remember when Cedars-Sinai Hospital honored him for helping them raise $90 million. “When I’m 100, maybe they’ll let me raise $100 million,” he joked. “I’ll be around when I’m 100.” And he was because he knew the first rule for staying young was thinking of someone else. “When you stop giving and offering something to the rest of the world,” he said, “it’s time to turn out the lights.”
JANUARY 21

Robert Butler

*Human beings need the freedom to live with change, to invent and reinvent themselves a number of times through their lives.*

In 1975, Dr. Robert Butler asked “Why Survive?” in a groundbreaking book on aging in America. “We have shaped a society which is extremely harsh to live in when one is old,” he wrote. “The tragedy of old age is not the fact that each of us must grow old and die, but that the process of doing so has been made unnecessarily and at times excruciatingly painful, humiliating, debilitating, and isolating through insensitivity, ignorance and poverty.” He set out to fight “ageism,” a term he coined, as a Pulitzer Prize-winning author who helped illuminate the “quiet despair, deprivation, desolation, and muted rage” that darkened the act of growing old in our nation. His work challenged lawmakers, scientists, and medical students to forge a system in which the aged could live healthy, meaningful lives.

His mission emerged in childhood while he was raised by his grandparents on a chicken farm in New Jersey. He came to revere his grandfather, but the old man died when Robert was seven. He found comfort with a physician who inspired his choice of field. From his grandmother, he learned about the strength of the aged as she got them through the Depression. “Experiencing at first hand an older person’s struggle to survive,” he recalled, “I was myself helped to survive as well.”

In fact, he thrived as a pioneer in the field of aging. Over a career of more than 50 years, he founded the National Institute of Aging at the NIH and helped found the American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry, as well as the Alzheimer’s Disease Association. He also wrote 11 books on longevity and aging, including the bestseller, *Sex after Sixty*.

In this persuasive body of work, he passed on a prescription for living a long, productive life. His recommendations included learning new things, exercising, and building close relationships with people of all ages. He also proposed a national service corps that would enlist the elderly as community volunteers. “I would like to encourage older people to play a greater social role, contributing to society in general,” he said. A sense of purpose, as he knew, gives us reasons to survive.
JANUARY 22

Beatrice Webb

Renunciation — that is the great fact we all, individuals and classes, have to learn. In trying to avoid it we bring misery to ourselves and others.

“If I had been a man, self-respect, family pressure and the public opinion of my class would have pushed me into a money-making profession,” said Beatrice Webb. “As a mere woman, I could carve out a career of disinterested research.” It led her to make a mark as a social reformer and economist who coined the term collective bargaining. Together with her husband, Sydney Webb, she founded the London School of Economics, published *The History of Trade Unionism*, and travelled England trying to end the Poor Laws. Her goal was to achieve change by shifting the focus of social policy from the relief of poverty to its prevention. Government had a duty “to secure a national minimum of civilized life,” she argued, “open to all alike, of both sexes and all classes, by which we meant sufficient nourishment and training when young, a living wage when able-bodied, treatment when sick, and modest but secure livelihood when disabled or aged.”

Her commitment to the poor went back to her youth in a family of radical dissenters. Her father encouraged her interest in social questions, and in 1883, she joined a Christian charity organization that provided help to those in need. While working with the poor, she realized that charity wouldn’t solve their problems. Instead the answer was to tackle poverty’s roots: poor education, minimal health care, and lack of decent wages. This conviction led her to join that Fabian Society, which was committed to advancing socialism through gradual reform, not revolution. Its members, who included noted playwright George Bernard Shaw, wanted to reconstruct “society in accordance with the highest moral principles.”

In 1905, Webb brought this conviction to her work as a member of a royal commission on the Poor Laws. Together with her husband, she called for the end of the Poor Laws, the creation of a nationwide employment bureau, and better health care and education. Her recommendations fell on deaf ears at the time, but they are now the foundation of the modern welfare state based on redistribution of wealth. “Self-sacrifice for the community,” as she pointed out, “is the greatest of all human characteristics.”
Ernst Abbe

Be good, be true, be just, and remain true to yourself.

German optics giant Carl Zeiss makes cutting-edge lenses for microscopes, eyeglasses, and cameras. Its co-founder, Ernst Abbe, was also on the cutting edge of social reform for his time. In the 19th century, workers typically had long shifts, low wages, and no rights whatsoever. But conditions were different at Zeiss, where Abbe recognized his employees’ contributions. In 1896, he defined the legal rights of workers in a Foundation Statute that was a groundbreaking document in German labor history. It guaranteed employees increased protection against being fired, paid vacation, sick time, profit sharing, a company-sponsored pension plan, worker representation and, after 1900, the eight-hour working day. These reforms were meant to ensure good employees stayed with the company, good performance was rewarded, and a bond between managers and workers fostered long-term progress.

Abbe’s unusual take on corporate profit stemmed from his youth in Eisenach, a small town in central Germany near Weimar. His father worked in a spinning factory and, as a boy, Abbe used to bring his father lunch: soup which he poured into a trough from which his father drank as he sat at his spinning machine. His father, who had been a strong man in his youth, aged quickly as a result of working 14-hour days.

Abbe was more fortunate because a scholarship allowed him to study science and mathematics. In 1863, he was awarded a doctorate in Jena where he later taught as a physics professor. Besides his academic post, he also worked in the optical workshop of Carl Zeiss and became a silent partner. His theory of optical imaging of the microscope established him as the founder of scientific optics. This theory — combined with new optical glass materials from Otto Schott — gave Zeiss a competitive edge.

Scientists and doctors praised their scientific innovations. And after Carl Zeiss died in 1888, Abbe adopted a company model that was also unique. The benefits he gave employees didn’t become part of German labor law until decades later, but Abbe felt he was just fulfilling his duty as a responsible employer. “This is not about doing good deeds,” he explained. “It’s about granting more rights.”
JANUARY 24

Mary Lou Retton

*Optimism is a happiness magnet. If you stay positive, good things and good people will be drawn to you.*

Mary Lou Retton was smiling when she vaulted to fame in the 1984 Olympics. As millions sat riveted to their TV sets, the petite teen became the first American ever to win a gold medal in women’s gymnastics. She also won silver medals for team and vault, and bronze medals for uneven bars and floor exercise. Her five medals were the most won by any athlete at the ’84 Olympics. Yet two months before competing she had two large pieces of cartilage removed from her right knee. And the way she bounced back showed her physical and mental resilience. The day after surgery she was walking. And the day after that she was back at work on the uneven parallel bars. She drove herself with the dedication of a tiger as she put mind over mat.

The experience strengthened her belief that “you have to work hard and sacrifice in life to achieve your dreams and goals.” She did achieve her own dreams and now she helps others achieve theirs as a motivational speaker, charity supporter, and “Fitness Ambassador” who travels the world promoting the benefits of proper nutrition and regular exercise. She also serves on the board of the Children’s Miracle Network and helps raise funds for the Special Olympics. “I began working with the Special Olympics in 1982,” she says, “because I believe in their mission to provide people with intellectual opportunities to try new things, challenge themselves, and build self-esteem. As a former Olympic athlete, that message really resonates with me. And as a mother, I know the sacrifices all moms make so their children can have every opportunity they deserve.”

She also knows ways we can all have more fulfilled lives that give us joy. She shares them in her book, *Mary Lou Retton’s Gateways to Happiness: 7 Ways to a More Peaceful, More Prosperous, More Satisfying Life.* The gateways include discipline, family, faith in God, and a commitment to making the most of the talents we’ve been given. “Each of us has a fire in our heart for something,” she says. “It’s our goal in life to find it and keep it.”
JANUARY 25

William Colgate

Be a good man. Give your heart to Christ. Give God all that belongs to Him.

William Colgate didn’t invent the toothpaste that bears his name, but reading about his life is enough to make you smile. He came to America from England with his family when he was 15 and settled in Baltimore where he worked as an apprentice to a soap boiler. After relocating to New York City, he worked as a candle maker and in 1806 went into business for himself, selling soap, candles, and starch. At first his business failed, but he heeded the advice of a friend who urged him to study the scriptures and make an honest soap. He resolved to give God first place in his life and promised a tenth of his profits to those in need. This was a dazzling amount because William Colgate & Company became the leading soap maker in New York.

As Colgate prospered, he kept his word to God. He saw in his business the fulfillment of the Bible’s promise to tithe payers that God will “throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have enough room for it.” Once he was solvent, he devoted 10 percent of his earnings to charity. In time, he instructed his accountants to increase that amount to 20 and then 30 percent. It seemed the more he gave the richer he became.

And the world is richer for his success. Colgate took an active interest in the Bible, especially its translation, publication, and distribution. In 1816, he helped organize the American Bible Society, and later assisted in forming the American and Foreign Bible Society. Besides these spiritual endeavors, he supported missions, temperance, and Christian education. He also served on the board of the American Tract Society and donated large sums to several educational institutions, including Madison College, which was named Colgate University after his death.

The soap king met the King of Kings in 1857. Until 1928, the company stayed a family business that maintained its founder’s giving spirit. His sons, Samuel and James, were both benefactors of the school that bears his name and fervent Christians who followed his advice: “Have faith in yourself and God.”
JANUARY 26

Paul Newman

What could be better than to hold your hand out to people who are less fortunate than you are?

Paul Newman was both a movie star and a “star of oil and vinegar,” as it notes on each bottle of his scrumptious salad dressing. His onscreen performances in dozens of films earned him legions of fans over the decades. At one time, his smoldering, blue eyes and muscled chest adorned posters in the rooms of teenage girls everywhere, but the picture of his face on “Newman’s Own” line of foods has reached even more homes. Some of the products are so good that they “ought to be outlawed,” Newman joked. But it’s a good thing they haven’t since the profits they make have helped thousands.

Newman came up with his plan for “shameless exploitation in the common good” in 1982, after friends encouraged him to put his homemade salad dressing on supermarket shelves. “When I realized I was going to have to be a whore,” he said, “to put my face on the label, I decided that the only way I could do it was to give away all the money we make. Over the years, that ethical stance has given us a 30 percent boost.”

“From salad dressings, all blessings flow,” Newman once quipped with good reason. The company he founded as a lark expanded over time to include pasta sauces, popcorn, lemonade, steak sauce, ice cream, and salsa, leading to millions in profits. But Newman never saw a cent of it because he decided to “give it all away to them what needs it.” To date, the company has donated over $450 million to support a wide range of causes, including disaster and hunger relief, environmental protection, and charities for seniors and children, including camps for seriously ill kids.

Newman’s concern for future generations also inspired him to share his recipe for how to be a social entrepreneur. He spearheaded Business Leaders for Sensible Priorities, which works to get more government funding for education, and he spoke to classes at major U.S. business schools where he dished out tips on charitable giving “To whom much is given, much is expected,” he told future moguls. “You have to take time to give back.”
JANUARY 27

Samuel Gompers

*My inspiration comes in opening opportunities that all alike may be free to live life to the fullest.*

Samuel Gompers wanted to help working men and women, so he founded the American Federation of Labor. His office was a tiny eight-by-ten room in a shed, his son was his office boy, and the treasury had less than two hundred dollars. It doesn’t sound like a good start, but Gompers made it work. Four years later, the A.F.L. represented 250,000 workers, and by 1892, over one million, many of them immigrants, like Gompers himself.

Gompers was born in England in 1850 to poor Dutch Jewish parents. His first job — at age ten — was as an apprentice to a shoemaker. He didn’t like it, so he became a cigar maker instead. When his family came to America during the Civil War, Gompers rolled cigars with his father in their apartment in New York City. He joined the cigar makers’ local union, and in a few years, the other cigar makers elected him president of the union. Then he was elected vice-president of the international union.

After founding the A.F.L., Gompers served as its president for over 35 years. He especially wanted to help child laborers, who worked long hours in dangerous jobs. He wanted the government to pass compulsory education laws that would give all children the chance to attend school. He spoke for working people everywhere when he demanded “more schoolhouses and less jails; more books and less arsenals; more learning and less vice; more leisure and less greed; more justice and less revenge; in fact, more of the opportunities to cultivate our better natures.”

With the help of the A.F.L., Americans workers did get better working conditions and Gompers went on to address international labor issues. In 1918, he attended the Versailles Treaty Negotiations, where he helped create the International Labor Organization and in 1924 went to a conference of labor organizers in Mexico City. He was close to death at the time but remained committed to his cause. “There is not a right too long denied to which we do not aspire,” he explained. “There is not a wrong too long endured that we are not determined to abolish.”
JANUARY 28

Saint Thomas Aquinas

*Love takes up where knowledge leaves off.*

Thomas Aquinas was the foremost spokesman of the Catholic tradition of reason and divine revelation. His great work *Summa Theologica* may be the pinnacle of Catholic scholasticism, the theological school that flourished between 1100 and 1500. In it, he attempted to reconcile faith with reason and Aristotle's thoughts on logic with the scriptures.

Thomas began studying the Lord’s word at age five when his wealthy parents gave him to a Benedictine monastery in Monte Cassino, hoping he would one day become a Benedictine abbot. In 1239, he went to complete his studies in Naples, where he was first attracted to Aristotle, whose writings embodied the ongoing conflict between religion and reason. By 1243, Thomas abandoned his family’s plans for him and joined the mendicant order of the Dominicans, much to his mother’s dismay. On her order, Thomas was captured and kept at home for over a year.

Once free, he went to Paris and then to Cologne, where he finished his studies with Albert the Great, a renowned Dominican friar. He held two professorships at Paris, lived at the court of Pope Urban IV, directed the Dominican schools at Rome and Viterbo, combated adversaries of the mendicants, and argued with some Franciscans about Aristotle.

His greatest contribution to the Catholic Church is his writings. They express his belief in the unity, harmony, and continuity of faith and reason, of revealed and natural human knowledge. The *Summa Theologica*, his last and, unfortunately uncompleted, work, deals with the whole of Catholic theology. When asked why he stopped writing, he said, “All that I have written seems to me like so much straw compared to what I have seen and what has been revealed to me.” By then he had come to believe that “man does not need a new light in order to know the truth in all things, but only in some that surpasses his natural knowledge.” And one truth that was beyond dispute was the importance of caring for one another. “We should love others truly for their own sakes, rather than our own,” he wrote. “No man truly has joy unless he lives in love.”
JANUARY 29

Oprah Winfrey

*If you want to feel good, you have to go out and do some good.*

Oprah Winfrey is America’s beloved best friend and the first self-made female billionaire. She has done all she can to practice her motto, “Live your best life,” as a talk show host, film actress, TV producer, and philanthropist. Despite her success, she had a bumpy start. Born to an unwed teenage mother, she grew up in a small farming community where she was sexually abused and neglected. What helped her survive was the loving support of her grandmother and a church community that cherished her as a gifted child. After going to live with her father, she learned that life held much more than the hardships she had endured.

With discipline and hope, she lifted herself from the past and looked to the future. After winning a college scholarship, she became a TV news anchor in Baltimore where she impressed viewers with her intelligence and empathy. She went on to become co-host of *People are Talking* and anchor of *AM Chicago*. But people really began talking about her when she acted in Steven Spielberg’s *The Color Purple*. In 1986, she was given her own talk show, *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, which became the nation’s number-one talk show and later part of the Oprah Winfrey Network. When Winfrey founded OWN, she made history as the first woman and the first African American to own and produce a talk show and entertainment production company.

Her success reflected her emphasis on spiritual values, healthy living and self-help — values she embraces in her philanthropic work. Oprah’s Angel Network raised more than $51,000,000 for charitable programs, including relief to victims of Hurricane Katrina. She is an activist for children’s rights, and in 1994, President Clinton signed into law a bill Winfrey had proposed to Congress creating a Nationwide Database of Convicted Child Abusers. She has also established the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy to give educational opportunities to impoverished South African girls. Inspired by her own humble beginnings, she urges the girls to know they can change the world. “It doesn’t matter who you are, where you come from,” she tells them. “The ability to triumph begins with you.”
JANUARY 30

Franklin D. Roosevelt

*The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.*

Franklin D. Roosevelt believed that “the only thing we have to fear is fear itself.” The country needed these words of hope when FDR became the nation’s president in 1933. With the U.S. sunk in the depths of the Great Depression, FDR sprang into action to restore the people’s morale, proclaiming a bank holiday and taking to the radio in a series of “fireside chats.” The only president to be elected four times, Roosevelt led the nation through the Depression and World War II. Along the way, he was guided by the “conviction that there is a better life, a better world beyond the horizon.”

Roosevelt’s confidence and optimism came together in a series of sweeping programs known as the New Deal. In the famous “First Hundred Days” of his presidency, FDR pushed through financial reforms based on his observation that “we have always known that heedless self-interest was bad morals; we now know that it is bad economics.” To meet the crisis of starvation and the dire needs of the unemployed, he provided jobs programs and cash relief for the poor. Then in 1935, he took the New Deal in a more far-reaching direction by overseeing the enactment of historic laws. The Wagner Act allowed labor unions to organize and bargain collectively, and the Social Security Act established a social welfare net for the aged, poor, and unemployed.

These New Deal programs gave Americans confidence in their darkest hours and marked a turning point in the nation’s life. So did Roosevelt’s foreign policies, which established U.S. leadership on the world stage. He extended massive amounts of aid to Great Britain as it held out against the Nazis and worked with America’s allies in the Pacific to contain Japan. After Pearl Harbor, when America officially entered the war, FDR forged an alliance of free nations that turned the tide against the Axis powers. FDR died before the German surrender, but he never lost his sense of hope. “The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today,” he wrote. “Let us move forward with a strong and active faith.”
JANUARY 31

Thomas Merton

*Power always protects the good of some at the expense of all the others. Only love can attain and preserve the good of all.*

Thomas Merton was a monk who lived in isolation, yet his thoughts reached many millions. In 61 books and hundreds of articles and poems, he explored topics ranging from monastic spirituality to civil rights, nonviolence, interfaith understanding, and the nuclear arms race. Among his most enduring works is his 1948 autobiography, *The Seven Storey Mountain*, which sent scores of World War II veterans, students, and even teenagers flocking to monasteries across the U.S. Readers were moved by the intriguing story of his undisciplined youth, conversion to Catholicism, and entry into the Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani, a community of Trappist monks in Kentucky.

Merton loved the solitude imposed by his ascetic order but also wanted fellowship with the people outside the monastery walls. This conflict made him anxious, but he believed “the theology of love must seek to deal realistically with evil and injustice in the world and not merely to compromise with them.” This conviction drove him into the political arena where he became a conscience to the counterculture and a prophet for the civil rights movement, which he called “the greatest example of Christian faith in action in the social history of the United States.” At the height of the Vietnam War, he welcomed a Buddhist monk to speak at the abbey, met with peace activist Joan Baez, corresponded with Catholic priest Daniel Berrigan, and planned a retreat for Martin Luther King, Jr. that was halted by King’s assassination.

For his social activism, Merton endured severe criticism from Catholics and non-Catholics alike, who assailed his political writings as unbecoming of a monk. And he provoked them further in his last years when he became deeply interested in Asian religions and promoting East-West dialogue. In 1968, he went to the Far East where he met the Dalai Lama, who praised his tremendous understanding of Buddhism. It was during this trip to a conference on East-West monastic dialogue that Merton died — the victim of an electric shock from a faulty fan. He remained prolific even in death as hundreds of his works were published and continued to electrify the world.
FEBRUARY
FEBRUARY 1

Jack McConnell

_When you do something for someone, every now and then you get this feeling that’s impossible to define._

Jack McConnell deserved a rest after leading the development of the tuberculosis tine test, Tylenol tablets, and the MRI. But the renowned physician and researcher proved to be a terrible retiree. After moving to Hilton Head Island to play golf, he noticed that many of the resort island’s low-income residents had no health care. The contrast between the island’s poor and the wealth around them disturbed him, so he decided to start Volunteers in Medicine, a free clinic to bridge the gap. “No town,” he pointed out, “can become a community as long as we leave behind a segment in need of the basics of life.”

For two years, he worked relentlessly to ensure that everyone on the island had access to compassionate, quality care. To reach his goal, he convinced the South Carolina legislature to waive licensing procedures, obtained blanket malpractice coverage for a fraction of the normal rate, and even coaxed local contractors to donate their construction services. He also lured recently retired doctors and nurses off the golf course and back to work. “We offer them the chance to practice medicine,” he says, “the way they were taught” — an unhurried, personal way that predates the era of managed care.

This approach has guided VIM since it opened its doors in 1994 with 54 physicians, 57 nurses, 4 dentists, and 150 lay volunteers. Today its staff of over 600 provides more than 30,000 patient visits each year. And VIM Hilton Head Island serves as the flagship model for 96 free medical clinics around the country. “Volunteers,” the first word in the name of the Hilton Head clinic, as McConnell points out, is what has created one of the most spectacular advances in free medical care for those who never had it or couldn’t afford it.

“Every community in this country has all the resources it needs to operate a clinic like ours,” McConnell says. “But someone has to step up and take the risk.” He took it because of something his father used to say as their family sat down to dinner: “And what have you done today?” Volunteers in Medicine is McConnell’s response.
FEBRUARY 2

Solomon R. Guggenheim

*I do not want to leave to my city just another museum.*

Solomon R. Guggenheim was the guiding spirit behind one of New York’s living legends. The museum he founded on Manhattan’s Upper East Side is the permanent home to a renowned collection of Impressionist, Post-Impressionist, and contemporary art. It also features special exhibits throughout the year in its very unique setting. Designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, the museum resembles a ziggurat, a type of ancient Mesopotamian temple that narrows as it rises. One difference is the museum widens as it rises, perhaps in keeping with Guggenheim’s goal to broaden American tastes. In 1937, he created the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation for the “promotion and encouragement of art and education in art and the enlightenment of the public.”

Guggenheim acquired his own love of art from his wife, Irene Rothschild, and he got the funds to pay for it from the family mining business. He began collecting Old Masters then moved on to modern art in 1926 when he met the young German artist, Hilla Rebay. As his collection grew, he enlisted Rebay to organize exhibits of it in Charleston and Philadelphia. He continued sending collections on tour after launching his foundation to promote broader acceptance of a new kind of art. The foundation also provided scholarships and financial aid to needy artists during the Great Depression and assisted many refugee European artists during World War II. One of them was Marc Chagall, whose work features in the museum that Guggenheim would create.

In 1943, Guggenheim and Rebay began planning a permanent structure to house the collection. They hired Wright and he went on to produce 700 sketches for the building before the famous design was agreed on and construction began. Guggenheim didn’t live to see the completed building, which opened to the public in 1959, 10 years after his death. Sixteen thousand people visited the awe-inspiring structure on opening day. Since then the museum has mounted many splendid shows that fulfill his mandate to Wright: “I want a temple of spirit, a monument!” And the foundation has gone on to build museums around the world that bring great art to millions more.
FEBRUARY 3

Norman Rockwell

_The view of life I communicate in my pictures excludes the sordid and ugly. I paint life as I would like it to be._

Norman Rockwell dreamed of an America that never was. In his many paintings and illustrations, he portrayed a homespun version of American life steeped in we-the-people ideals of America’s roots. The people he painted are related less by blood than by their engagement in civic rituals from voting on Election Day to sipping a soda at a drugstore counter. Over 47 years, he painted 322 covers for the _Saturday Evening Post_, including a famous depiction of Charles Lindbergh’s crossing of the Atlantic in 1927. He also worked for other magazines, including _Look_, which featured a Rockwell cover in 1969 showing the imprint of Neil Armstrong’s left foot on the surface of the moon.

Together, these images told our national story, as Rockwell explained. “Without thinking too much about it in specific terms,” he said, “I was showing the America I knew and observed to others who might not have noticed. My fundamental purpose is to interpret the typical American. I am a storyteller.” But the sunny story he told belied his own problems and fears. On most days, Rockwell felt loveless and alone. His relationships with his parents, wives, and three sons were uneasy. He wouldn’t go to church and eschewed organized activity in groups.

Yet he painted images that brought Americans together, especially during World War II. Inspired by FDR, he painted the Four Freedoms: Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Worship, Freedom from Want, and Freedom from Fear. After appearing on the cover of the _Saturday Evening Post_, the paintings toured the country and raised more than $130 million for the war. Afterward, Rockwell went on to focus on social issues facing the country, and in the last decades of his life, much of his work centered on themes concerning poverty, race, and the Vietnam War. Yet he never stopped trying to show our country in the best possible light. “Maybe as I grew up,” he once said, “and found the world wasn’t the perfect place I had thought it to be, I unconsciously decided that if it wasn’t an ideal world it should be, and so painted only the ideal aspects of it.”
FEBRUARY 4

Betty Friedan

*A good woman is one who loves passionately, has guts, seriousness and passionate convictions, takes responsibility, and shapes society.*

Betty Friedan wrote a book that seized the moment. In 1963, *The Feminine Mystique* ignited the contemporary women’s movement by exploring the notion of women fulfilling themselves in both the workplace and the home. The book transformed American culture and its author went on to become one of the most powerful figures in the women’s movement. From 1966 to 1970, she served as the first president of the National Organization for Women; she conceived the highly effective Women’s Strike for Equality; and she helped found the National Women’s Caucus. By the time of her death in 2006, more than three million copies of *The Feminine Mystique* had been sold.

Friedan touched a chord in housewives everywhere as she wondered, “Is this all?” Friedan had expected much out of life after graduating summa cum laude from Smith and receiving graduate training in psychology. Yet she never pursued a career in the field. When she wrote *The Feminine Mystique*, she was a suburban housewife and mother who supplemented her husband’s income by writing freelance articles for women’s magazines. As she grew more restless, she realized that something was wrong with the way she was living her life. Many women felt the same way, Friedan realized as she conducted interviews across the country. The results of her research formed the basis of the famous book that urged women to seek new horizons for themselves. In it she proposed that “the only way for a woman, as for a man, to find herself, to know herself as a person, is through creative work.” And she became a force for change as she gave women the chance to complete themselves.

In 1970, Friedan called for a great march to mark 50 years of women’s suffrage and remind the nation how determined women were to change their lives. In New York City, the marchers were denied a parade permit for Fifth Avenue and told to keep to the sidewalks. Friedan, at the head of the pack, again took the lead. “I waved my hands over my head,” she recalled, “and yelled ‘Take to the streets!’ What a moment that was.”
FEBRUARY 5

Adlai Stevenson

The journey of a thousand leagues begins with a single step. So we must never neglect any work of peace within our reach, however small.

Adlai Stevenson was known for his wit, well-crafted speeches, and strong political convictions. For many Americans in the mid-twentieth century, he stood for conscience in politics. He ran in the presidential campaigns of 1952 and 1956, where his eloquence won him the admiration of millions. In more than four years as the nation's chief spokesman at the United Nations, he also gained acclaim among world leaders for his keen mind and patience in dealing with the grave issues the world organization faced.

He was well prepared because he began his career in public service during one of the world’s greatest crises. In the late 1930s, he became the major Midwestern spokesman for the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, and when World War II began he became top aide to the secretary of the Navy. His decision to seek election as governor of Illinois coincided with the start of the Cold War and McCarthyism, a political stance that Stevenson strongly opposed. “The whole notion of loyalty inquisitions is a natural characteristic of the police state, not of democracy,” he once said.

He pronounced these words in a rich, rolling voice that thrilled both the public and members of the Democratic Party, which nominated him for president in 1952. The Republican candidate, Dwight D. Eisenhower, defeated him and repeated this triumph in 1956. Yet Stevenson continued making his mark on the world because he was in the thick of historic debates and negotiations during the Bay of Pigs and Cuban Missile crises, the war in Vietnam, and the revolt in Santo Domingo. He was also a member of the U.S. delegation that travelled to Moscow in 1963 to sign the treaty banning all but underground testing of nuclear devices. He looked on this as a step in getting all people to step back from the nuclear cliff and realize what they shared. “You and I are fellow passengers on the spaceship we call earth,” he explained. “We are dependent on the same finite quantities of air, earth, water, and yes, I will say, the love that we can give one another.”
Ronald Reagan

_We can’t help everyone, but everyone can help someone._

Ronald Reagan believed there’s “always a better tomorrow.” His optimism was just what the nation needed in 1980 when he became president of the United States. As the economy floundered and voters fretted about the future, Reagan promised better days ahead. He won the White House by asking people from all corners of the country to join his “community of shared values.” Though he ran as a Republican, he made an open appeal to Democrats on the campaign trail and at the GOP convention. “I will not stand by and watch this great country destroy itself under mediocre leadership that drifts from one crisis to the next, eroding our national will and purpose,” he said. “The time is now, my fellow Americans to recapture our destiny, to take it into our own hands.”

With these words, Reagan announced an innovative program that came to be known as the Reagan Revolution. Dealing skillfully with Congress, he obtained legislation to stimulate economic growth, boost employment, cut taxes, and strengthen national defense. At the end of his two terms in office, Reagan believed he had fulfilled his first campaign pledge to restore “the great confident roar of American progress and growth and optimism.” As the country regained its morale, Reagan also took steps to improve relations with the Soviet Union. Through five dramatic summit meetings, he and Mikhail Gorbachev agreed on a treaty banning intermediate-range nuclear missiles and other joint steps to end American-Soviet hostility. By 1989, when Reagan ended his political career, the Soviet Union had begun to come apart, the Berlin Wall had fallen, and Eastern Europe was freed from communist oppression.

Thanks to his personal diplomacy with Gorbachev, the Cold War came to an end. Having changed the course of history, Reagan faded from public view. In 1994, he penned a letter to the public announcing that he had been diagnosed with Alzheimer’s, but he had not lost his sense of vision and hope. “I now begin the journey that will lead me into the sunset of my life,” he wrote. “I know that for America there will always be a bright dawn ahead.”
Charles Dickens

No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another.

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times,” Charles Dickens wrote as he surveyed his world. Nineteenth-century England faced serious challenges as it shifted from an agrarian to an industrialized nation. The new economy led to an increase in urban population and social inequality, factors that Dickens experienced first hand as a young boy. He was forced into a life of poverty and hardship after his father was imprisoned for debt. He spent three years working in a factory before he could return to school, and the experience was one he didn’t forget. He fictionalized it in some of his best-known novels, *David Copperfield*, *Great Expectations*, and *Oliver Twist*.

Dickens realized he might have ended up living on the streets like many of the children in his books. “I know that but for the mercy of God,” he wrote, “I might easily have been a little robber or vagabond.” Instead he became one of Britain’s greatest authors and a philanthropist who believed “a day wasted on others is not wasted on one’s self.” Besides his tremendous literary output, he engaged in many efforts to bring about reform: prison visits, charity drives, and support of the “Ragged Schools” for the poor. He also lectured against slavery in the United States and made a “sledge hammer” blow for the poor in 1843 when he published *A Christmas Carol* at his own expense.

A decade later he hit upon the idea of doing charity readings of the *Carol*, and for 15 years he brought his one-man show to England and the U.S. Newspapers teemed with descriptions of how moving his performances were, and Dickens wrote that each time he read the line, “and to Tiny Tim who did not die,” the hall erupted in “a most prodigious shout and roll of thunder.” There was a particular “storm of cheering” when he gave his last reading three months before his death. By then he was ill and weak, but he reached many listeners as he said, “I will honor Christmas in my heart and try to keep it all the year.”
FEBRUARY 8

Martin Buber

When two people relate to each other authentically and humanly, God is the electricity that surges between them

Martin Buber gave us a philosophy of dialogue to face the unknown. “The world is not comprehensible,” he admitted, “but it is embraceable through the embracing of one of its beings.” Close relationships with our fellow men, he proposed, would allow us to have a close relationship with God, so he urged us to interact with respect and trust. Through his emphasis on dialogue, Buber came to be known as a bridge builder between Christianity and the Jewish tradition in which he grew up.

After being born in Vienna in 1878, he spent much of his childhood with his grandfather, a renowned Hebrew scholar. At 17, he went to study in Germany and soon entered the Zionist movement, more for cultural than for political reasons. He was the editor of a Jewish magazine and lectured on philosophy at the University of Frankfurt, where he collaborated on a translation of the Old Testament into German. He also wrote prolifically and is best known for his 1923 book, I and Thou.

In this seminal work, he viewed human existence in terms of I-It and I-Thou relations. An I-It relation is the normal relation of human beings toward the things surrounding them, but a person can also consider a fellow human being as an It to be manipulated and used. Meanwhile, human beings enter into an I-Thou relation through a heartfelt dialogue that engages both of them and reflects their future meeting with God. “What a man does here and now with holy intent,” Buber concluded, “is no less important, no less a true link with the divine being, than the life in the world to come.”

The next world would receive many of Buber’s fellow Jews after Hitler’s rise to power. In 1938, Buber was forced to emigrate and from then on, he lectured, interrupted by many journeys, at the Hebrew University in Israel. While there, he sought to apply his principles to the problems of the world. Many Jews criticized the way he encouraged a dialogue between Arabs and Israelis, but he contended that “the love of God is unreal unless it is crowned with love for one’s fellow men.”
FEBRUARY 9

Alice Walker

*I think that all people who feel that there is injustice in the world anywhere should learn as much about it as they can bear. That is our duty.*

Alice Walker thinks it’s important how writers live. “I’m not sure a bad person can write a good book. If art doesn’t make us better, then what on earth is it for?” They’re words she has acted on as an activist and author. The eighth child of Georgia sharecroppers, she grew up under Jim Crow laws but they didn’t break her spirit because she was born a fighter. In the early 60s, she walked down the streets of her small, segregated town with a white boyfriend. She wrote her first collection of poems, *Once*, in a rush after having an illegal abortion. She went on to marry a white, Jewish lawyer and move with him to Mississippi, where she became involved with voter registration drives, children’s programs, and campaigns for welfare rights.

These experiences would shape her work as a writer whose work conveys the struggles of black people, especially women. Her first novel, *The Third Life of Grange Copeland*, came out just after her daughter’s birth in 1970 and introduced her major themes: rape, violence, isolation, multi-generational perspectives, sexism, and racism. She would go on to publish a set of short stories, *In Love and Trouble*; a poetry collection, *Revolutionary Petunias*; a children’s book, *Langston Hughes: American Poet*; and many more acclaimed books. Along the way, she emerged as a leading voice in the black feminist movement, and her career took flight in 1982 with the publication of *The Color Purple*.

Set in the early 1900s, her novel explores the experience of black women through the struggles of its narrator, Celie, who suffers terrible abuse at the hands of both her father and her husband. Walker’s story won the Pulitzer Prize, and Stephen Spielberg brought it to the big screen in 1985. Millions have been touched by Celie’s ordeals and moved by the way she finally takes control of her life. She’s learned that “if you want to have a life that is worth living, a life that expresses your deepest feelings and emotions and cares and dreams, you have to fight for it.” That’s Alice Walker’s message to us all.
FEBRUARY 10

Georges Henri Pire

*What matters is not the difference between believers and unbelievers but between those who care and those who do not care.*

Georges Henri Pire had a heart open to the world. The Dominican friar and activist devoted his life to fostering peace, ending poverty in emerging nations, and helping refugees after World War II. The refugee work, for which he won a Nobel Peace Prize in 1958, may well have stirred memories of his childhood during World War I. When he was four, he and his family fled from Belgium before advancing German troops, spending four years in France and returning to find their home in ruins.

Many children suffered a similar fate in the Second World War, and Pire strived to improve their lot by providing them with aid services and camps. During and after the war, he fed thousands of French and Belgian children who were in tremendous need. He also was a chaplain to the resistance movement, an agent for the intelligence service, and a participant in the underground escape system that returned downed Allied flyers to their own forces.

The war was over in 1945, but Pire’s mission was not complete. In 1949, he set up a sponsorship program for people still living in camps and founded Aid to Displaced Persons, a charity that gave practical help to refugees and built a series of villages to house them in Germany, Austria, and Belgium. The funds for this effort came from Europe of the Heart, a campaign aimed at the hearts of all men regardless of race, religion, or creed.

He broadened his crusade after receiving the Nobel Prize and founded Heart Open to the World. As part of his worldwide efforts, he set up a Peace University to instruct young people in the principles and practice of peace. He also established “Islands of Peace” a program dedicated to the long-term development of third-world nations and another step in his goal to unite the hearts of all men. “There is no surer road to peace,” he said when he accepted the Nobel Prize, “than the one that starts from little islands and oases of genuine kindness, islands and oases constantly growing in number and being continually joined together until eventually they ring the world.”
FEBRUARY 11

Leo Szilard

Let your acts be directed toward a worthy goal, but do not ask if they will reach it; they are to be models and examples, not means to an end.

“A great power imposes the obligation of exercising restraint,” warned Hungarian physicist Leo Szilard. During World War II, he was the first scientist to conceive of how an atomic bomb might work, and he urged the U.S. to develop one before the Nazis did. Yet he opposed the nuclear arms race in the post-war era. He had seen the force of the bomb when he and his colleagues in the Manhattan Project achieved the first self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction. “We turned the switch,” Szilard recalled, “saw the flashes, watched for 10 minutes, then switched everything off and went home. That night I knew the world was headed for sorrow.”

He showed he was correct in 1945 as the war drew to a close. By then, Germany had surrendered and Szilard had begun to question the need to use the bomb. When it became clear that the U.S. was planning to unleash it on Japan, Szilard tried to convince the Truman Administration to forge an international agreement on the control of atomic weapons before shocking other nations by their use. His pleas in vain, he circulated a petition among other scientists opposing use of the bomb on “moral grounds.”

His efforts increased when the bomb destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. After the war, he organized successful opposition to a bill that placed atomic energy under military control and testified before the Senate on the implications of nuclear energy. In 1946, he joined the Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists, an international group that wanted to prevent further military use of atomic energy, and in 1947, he published a “Letter to Stalin” proposing ways to reduce tensions between America and the USSR. As the Cold War went on, he kept campaigning for peace, and in 1962, he started the Council for a Livable World dedicated to reducing the threat posed by nuclear weapons. The challenges of reaching that goal should not deter us, as Szilard pointed out: “It is not necessary to succeed in order to persevere. As long as there is a margin of hope — however narrow — we have no choice but to base all our actions on that margin.”
FEBRUARY 12

Abraham Lincoln

*Live a good life. In the end it is not the years in a life, but the life in the years.*

Abraham Lincoln believed you should “stand with anybody that stands right” and “part with him when he goes wrong.” This conviction guided him as the 16th president of our nation and a staunch enemy of slavery. When he was elected president in 1860, seven slave states left the Union to form the Confederate States and four more joined when hostilities began between the North and the South. A civil war then engulfed the nation as Lincoln vowed to enforce the laws of the United States, and end the secession. The war lasted over four years with a staggering loss of more than 600,000 lives.

Lincoln mourned for the many young men who died, but he was a man of strong ideals who had overcome many obstacles in his life. As the son of a Kentucky frontiersman, he had to struggle for learning while working on a farm and splitting rails for fences. He was a captain in the Black Hawk War, spent eight years in the Illinois legislature, and rode the circuit of courts for many years. In 1858, he ran against Stephen A. Douglas for senator and lost the election but gained a national reputation that won him the Republican nomination in 1860.

As president, he built the Republican Party into a strong national organization and rallied most of the northern Democrats to the Union cause. On January 1, 1863, he issued the Emancipation Proclamation that freed the slaves, and he never let the world forget that the Civil War involved an even larger issue. He was resolved that “these dead shall not have died in vain” and “that the government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

The nation did survive and Lincoln won re-election in 1864 as Union military triumphs heralded an end to the war. Tragically, Lincoln perished a year later when an assassin shot him in a bid to revive the Confederate cause. The spirit that filled him to the end was summed up in these words: “When I do good, I feel good. When I do bad, I feel bad. That’s my religion.”
FEBRUARY 13

Mike Krzyzewski

*Having a positive influence on people, helping others: that’s winning.*

Mike Krzyzewski believes in leading with the heart. This conviction has made him a success in both life and sports. As coach of the Duke University basketball team, he has made his program the most admired in the nation, with four national championships, along with 10 Final Four appearances since 1986. In his 26-year career at Duke, he has been named Coach of the Year 12 times, but there’s more to the man known as “Coach K” than his winning records and national titles. He’s also committed to philanthropy and helping his players to reach their potential. Many of them say he was like a parent to them and still stay in touch.

Krzyzewski’s sense of faith has played a large role in how he handles his team. “I was really fortunate,” he has recalled, “to have had parents and an extended family that believed in God and were able to impart that belief to me and the other youngsters in my family.” This personal sense of faith plays a role in how he coaches since he thinks character matters for members of a team. “There is a core set of values and principles that you try to teach, like honesty and acceptance of responsibility and just being a good person,” he maintains. “Faith is about living the good life and helping others.”

Coach K has showed what this means through his community service. He and his wife, Carol, founded the Emily Krzyzewski Center, a nonprofit in Durham named in honor of Krzyzewski’s mother. The coach’s goal at the center is to inspire economically disadvantaged students to dream big, act with character and purpose, and reach their potential as community leaders. The Krzyzewskis have also been active for years in fundraising for the Duke Children’s Hospital, and they created the Krzyzewski Family Scholarship Endowment for students from the Carolinas — all endeavors that have earned the coach points. But he knows giving back to others is a no brainer. “I think it would be very selfish,” he says, “for somebody where everything has gone well for them not to share it.”
FEBRUARY 14

Frederick Douglass

*I would unite with anybody to do right and with nobody to do wrong.*

Frederick Douglass inspired America to act on its founding ideal that all men are created equal. He learned the reality of inequality after being born in 1818 to a slave woman in Talbot County, Maryland. As a boy, he also realized the value of education, especially after his master forbade the reading lessons that a kindly mistress had begun to give him. He later obtained a copy of *The Columbian Orator* and secretly taught himself to read and write.

The books he read made him dare to imagine a better life in 1836, when he was hired out as a caulker to a Baltimore shipbuilder. In 1838, he fled Baltimore to escape slavery and settled in Bedford, Massachusetts, where he wrote his memoirs, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*, and became an acclaimed anti-slavery lecturer.

His activities drew the attention of slave hunters, leading Douglass to flee again. This time, it was to England, where British friends purchased his freedom for about $711 in 1846, letting Douglass go home to Massachusetts as a well-known public figure. In 1847, he moved to Rochester, New York, and began publishing an abolitionist weekly and nine years later he published his second autobiographical work, *My Bondage and My Freedom*.

The quest for justice brought him to Washington, DC, six years after the Civil War. By then he had earned renown for advising Lincoln and recruiting black soldiers for the Union Army. Though the war ended slavery, it didn’t end oppression, so Douglass continued promoting the progress of blacks. In 1882, he published his last autobiographical book, *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*, and in 1889, he marked the 26th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation by making a fiery speech. Soon afterward, he reached out to blacks overseas after being appointed minister-resident and consul-general to Haiti. He resigned this post in 1891 and four years later died at his home in Anacostia. It’s now a national historic site that honors the man who urged our country to live up to its convictions. “The life of the nation is secure only while the nation is honest, truthful, and virtuous,” he said.
Susan B. Anthony

Trust me that as I ignore all law to help the slave, so will I ignore it all to protect an enslaved woman.

Susan B. Anthony made one of history’s greatest speeches, according to Time magazine. But at one point, she wasn’t allowed to make her voice heard. In 1851, she was at a temperance meeting in Albany, New York, where she asked to speak. Her request was denied with the remark, “The sisters were not invited there to speak but to listen and learn.” She left and formed the Women’s State Temperance Society of New York, the first of its kind — and the first step in her fight to get women the equality they deserved.

Her battle cry was “Men their rights, and nothing more, women their rights and nothing less” as she waged her campaign. Together with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, she formed the New York State Women’s Rights Committee in 1852 and spread petitions for women to have the right to own property and vote. After serving the abolitionist cause in the Civil War, she again joined Stanton in forming the American Equal Rights Association, calling for the same rights to be granted to all, regardless of race or sex. Two years later, the two women launched the Revolution, a publication that lobbied for women’s rights, and in 1869, they founded the National Women Suffrage Association. Anthony also promoted her cause in constant speeches and even took matters into her own hands in 1872 when she voted illegally in the presidential election. She was arrested, tried in court and fined $100, which she never paid.

Perhaps this gave her some satisfaction in 1906 as she died, grieving that “I have had more than 60 years of hard struggle for a little liberty, and then to die without it seems so cruel.” It wouldn’t be until 1920 that the Nineteenth Amendment enfranchised women and America acted on the words of Anthony’s famous speech. “It was we the people; not we the white male citizens who formed the Union,” she declared. “And we formed it not to give the blessings of liberty, but to secure them; not to the half of ourselves and the half of our posterity, but to the whole people — women as well as men.”
FEBRUARY 16

LeVar Burton

*I think reading is part of the birthright of the human being.*

“There are a lot of devices we used on *Star Trek* that came out of the imagination of the writers,” LeVar Burton says, “that are actually in the world today.” Burton is using one of them to get kids to read. The former *Star Trek* chief engineer and long-time host of *Reading Rainbow* has raised over $5 million to make a *Reading Rainbow* app available on the web, Android, game consoles, smartphones, and other streaming devices. There’s also a classroom version of the children’s TV classic with the subscription fee waived for disadvantaged classrooms. His campaign to “Bring *Reading Rainbow* Back for Every Child Everywhere” made the case that technology can foster a love of books. “We can really revolutionize the way we educate our children with tablet computers and I’m committed to doing whatever I can and speaking to whomever I can to send this signal, to pound this message home.”

His message appealed to the many who had watched *Reading Rainbow* in its nearly two decades on the air. The beloved PBS show earned accolades from teachers and over 200 broadcast awards. Yet it lost federal funding in 2006 as priorities shifted from getting kids to love reading to teaching them basic phonics and spelling. “The day after the show was cancelled,” Burton recalls, “we tried to come up with a new way to appeal to children. Their parents grew up with the show, but these days everyone is on the Internet and watching videos on YouTube. There is definitely a generational shift in the way media is accessed, and the decision to launch an iPad app made the most sense.”

It also made sense to the over 75,000 people, many of them young, who donated to bring *Reading Rainbow* back. “It’s extraordinary that Millennials have made this their campaign,” Burton says, and their support has already allowed him to provide *Reading Rainbow* to 10,000 classrooms in need. “Giving it away is really important,” he explains, “because those who can should naturally want to provide for those who can’t. That’s how it’s designed to work. I truly believe we’re here to take care of one another.”
Michael Jordan

*There is no ‘i’ in team but there is in win.*

For years, Michael Jordan made us “wanna be like Mike.” In a long-running Gatorade commercial, children dreamed they could fly like the man many call the greatest pro basketball player ever. Air Jordan won six championships with the Chicago Bulls, during which time he won all MVP awards. He won 10 scoring titles and was league MVP five times. He was named to the All-Defensive First Team nine times, to go along with his being named to the All-NBA First Team 10 times. They’re all good reasons to wanna be like Mike and there’s one more: besides being great at shooting hoops, Jordan is great at giving back.

Jordan is a humanitarian who has proved that not all stars waste fame. He has been involved with numerous charities, including the Boys and Girls Clubs of America, UNCF/College Fund, Special Olympics, and Make-A-Wish, where he granted the wishes of over 200 seriously ill kids. He supports a wide range of charitable organizations for children and families, besides making generous donations to struggling schools and children’s hospitals. He also hosts the yearly Michael Jordan Charity International Golf Tournament, is a key contributor to the Ronald McDonald House, and donated via “Hoops for Homes” $450 million dollars for Katrina reconstruction and assistance.

He has also started new organizations to better community life. In Chicago, the James R. Jordan Boys and Girls Club and Family Life Center, named after Jordan’s father, provides over 1,000 people a week with a safe place to play pool, shoot hoops, relax, or study for school. There’s also a lot of studying going on at the Jordan Institute at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. Addressing family issues across the life span, the institute brings together experts to develop practices that make communities stronger. And one of the most winning ways to do this is to give back, as Jordan understands. “Once you get to your highest level,” he says, “you have to be unselfish. Stay reachable. Stay in touch. Don’t isolate” — a message that shows us the best reason to wanna be like Mike.
FEBRUARY 18

George Peabody

I can only do to those that come under my care as I could have wished circumstances had permitted others to have done by me.

George Peabody set a standard for philanthropists, including Bill Gates, John D. Rockefeller, and Andrew Carnegie. Like Carnegie, he grew up poor in a Massachusetts working-class family that could only afford to give him four years of schooling. At age 11, he was sent to apprentice at a general store, and in 1811, his father died, forcing the sale of the family home and many of its possessions. George and his brothers had to feed, house, and clothe their mother and sisters. “I have never forgotten,” Peabody once reflected, “and can never forget the great privations of my early years.”

He never did escape the marks of his boyhood poverty even after he became a partner in a dry-goods warehouse in Baltimore and then moved to London, where he established one of the most important nineteenth-century banks. He routinely worked 10-hour days, seldom took any time off, and was absurdly frugal. One day his banking partner, Junius Morgan, found him standing in a drenching London rain. Morgan realized Peabody had left the office 20 minutes earlier and said, “Mr. Peabody, I thought you were going home.” Peabody replied, “I am, Morgan, but there’s only a two penny bus come along as yet and I am waiting for a penny one.” At the time Peabody already had nearly two million dollars.

He would ultimately be worth $16 million, and starting in the 1850s, he gave much of it away. He created the Peabody Donation Fund in London to build affordable housing for needy workers and founded the Peabody Institute of Baltimore, which includes a music conservatory, art gallery, lecture hall, and library. Then he built other Peabody Institute Libraries in Massachusetts, Vermont, and Washington, DC, along with museums at Harvard and Yale. Shocked by the impact of the Civil War on the American South, he created the Peabody Education Fund to restore primary and secondary education in West Virginia and the former Confederate States. These endeavors were the fulfillment of his words, “Education: a debt due from present to future generations.” And they were a concrete lesson on how to use money wisely rather than waste it.
FEBRUARY 19

Bethine Church

Health care and food for the newborn and growing child — this, to me, would be true compassion.

Women had few opportunities in politics when Bethine Church came to Washington, DC. It was 1957 and her husband, Frank, had been elected to serve Idaho in the Senate. Everyone expected her to play the role of the invisible Washington wife, but she refused. She had been born to politics as the niece of a U.S. senator and the daughter of an Idaho governor and later federal judge who impressed on her the “need for citizens to give as much as possible to public service,” as she once recalled. This advice led her to earn the nickname “Idaho’s third senator,” as she actively shared her husband’s passion for education, home health care, and the environment.

She also travelled the world with Frank, campaigning with him four times for senator and once for president in 1976. Along the way she met every president from Franklin Roosevelt to Bill Clinton and entertained many famous people. On one evening she never forgot, she was cooking dinner while Marlon Brando played pool with her husband and son, Chase, in the other room. It’s among the experiences she described in her book, A Lifelong Affair: My Passion for People and Politics.

She kept this sense of passion even after her husband died of cancer in 1989. Rather than opting to be a Washington widow, she moved back to Idaho, where she founded and chaired the Frank Church Institute at Boise University and founded the Sawtooth Society to preserve Idaho’s rivers and landscapes. She also served on the governing board of the National Wilderness Society and helped establish the Anne Frank Memorial in Boise.

These contributions led Boise State University to award her an honorary doctorate when she was 86. When she accepted the award, she urged the students to seize the chances she never had as a girl growing up in a different age. “Now we see women achieve in every walk of life,” she said. “So grab all the opportunities that come your way and let them take you on a lifelong journey of learning and adventure. And remember never fear to take a chance on life or love.”
FEBRUARY 20

Sidney Poitier

A good deed here, a good deed there, a good thought here, a good comment there, all added up to my career in one way or another.

“They call me Mr. Tibbs!” is a line that brought civil rights to the silver screen. The man who spoke it is a legend whose life is a series of firsts. In 1958, he was the first black actor nominated for an Oscar as Best Actor for his role as an escaped convict chained to Tony Curtis in *The Defiant Ones*. In 1965, he became the first man to kiss a white woman in a movie, *A Patch of Blue*. And when he won the Best Actor Oscar for *Lilies of the Field* in 1964, he was not only the first black actor to do so; he remained the only one until 2002. Yet his career choices have not been based on being first. “I did not go into the film business to be symbolized as someone else’s vision of me,” Poitier has explained. “I had chosen to use my work as a reflection of my values.”

He learned them from his father, a tomato farmer in the Bahamas where Poitier grew up. After a delinquency-filled youth and short stint in the U.S. Army, Poitier moved to New York where he lived with a brother and worked menial jobs before finding his life’s passion. His chance came when the American Negro Theater agreed to give him free acting lessons if he labored there as an unpaid janitor. He went on to work as a stage actor and then began finding roles in Hollywood, making his breakthrough with *The Blackboard Jungle* in 1955. The following year he lit up the screen in *Porgy and Bess* and his turn in 1961’s *Raisin in the Sun* made him a star.

Throughout his dazzling career he has always insisted on portraying men who were upright, well-educated, and often of stronger character than the whites around them. He has also strived to break stereotypes by supporting social justice movements in South Africa, America, and the Bahamas as part of his goal to “wake up every morning a better person than when I went to bed.” His success in reaching this goal is reason to also call him a good man.
FEBRUARY 21

John Lewis

You cannot be afraid to speak up and speak out for what you believe. You have to have courage, raw courage.

John Lewis was 23 when he stood before thousands at the March on Washington in 1963. In a fiery speech, he demanded jobs and freedom for his people. “In good conscience,” he said, “we cannot support wholeheartedly the administration’s civil rights bill, for it is too little and too late. There’s not one thing in the bill that will protect our people from police brutality.” Nor would the voting section of the bill help thousands of black citizens who wanted to vote. “It will not help the citizens of Mississippi, of Alabama and Georgia who are qualified to vote but lack a sixth-grade education. One man, one vote is the African cry. It is ours. It must be ours,” he said with the passion that would one day earn him fame as the conscience of Congress.

Lewis now serves the 5th district of Georgia in the U.S. House, though he began life as a sharecropper’s son. He met Martin Luther King, Jr. when he was 18, and at 19, he helped organize the first lunch counter sit-in. He was on the first of the Freedom Rides, challenging segregation at interstate bus terminals in the South. His affront to Jim Crow led angry mobs to beat him, and when he led the Selma-to-Montgomery march for voting rights, he was assailed by policemen who fractured his skull. Despite over 40 arrests, physical attacks, and serious injuries, he has remained an advocate of nonviolence.

He has also kept his sense of passion. In Congress he’s a leading force in the movement to push racial equality. Two bills he authored, both enacted in 2008, provided funding for the cold-case probe of slain civil rights leaders and called for the minting of coins commemorating the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

This landmark law improved many lives. Yet the fight for change is not through, as he reminds kids in the talks he gives at schools. “I tell them you can grow up to be whatever you want,” he says. “So never give up. Never give in. Never become bitter or hostile. Keep the faith and whatever you do, do it with passion.”
FEBRUARY 22

George Washington

Observe good faith and justice toward all nations. Cultivate peace and harmony with all.

On April 30, 1789, George Washington, stood on the balcony of Federal Hall on Wall Street in New York and took his oath of office as the first president of the United States. “As of the first of every thing in our situation will serve to establish a precedent,” he wrote James Madison, “it is devoutly wished on my part that these precedents may be fixed on true principles.” The principles he would go on to promote included a faith in civil not military rule and a focus on the will of the people above all things.

The Father of Our Country was a Virginia planter who was known for his love of the land and dislike for war. Yet he fought for freedom as commander in chief of the colonial armies in the American Revolution. Though his troops were ill-trained, he led several decisive battles during a war that lasted six grueling years. In 1781, he helped formulate the plan that led to the defeat of the British army at Yorktown, Virginia, and the British surrender. Washington longed to retire to his plantation but soon realized the nation was not functioning well under its Articles of Confederation, so he became a prime mover in the steps leading to the Constitutional Convention in 1787. When the new Constitution was ratified, he was inaugurated as America’s first president after refusing to be crowned its king.

As president, he didn’t infringe upon the policy-making powers that he felt the Constitution gave Congress. Yet he took the lead in determining foreign policy as a firm proponent of neutrality. This approach led to conflict during the French Revolution as the French and British waged war and opposing U.S factions urged Washington to take a side.

He remained steadfast in his course until 1797 when he set an example for America’s future leaders by voluntarily giving up power after his second term. As he prepared to finally return home, he made a speech urging his countrymen to forswear geographical distinctions, long-term foreign alliances, and party spirit. “To the efficacy and permanency of your union,” he said, “a government for the whole is indispensable.”
FEBRUARY 23

Tom Osborne

As a college coach, I felt you could make a difference in a player’s life. There was an educational aspect I thought was important.

Tom Osborne has won everyone over as Nebraska’s football coach and a legendary leader. During 25 seasons, his Cornhuskers never won fewer than nine games a year, and in 1997, his squad won a share of the national, their third in four seasons. They gained something more because Osborne is a thoughtful man with a doctorate in educational psychology who has used football to teach young men ethics, teamwork, and the toughness to know that “adversity is not your enemy if you look at it the right way.” He was committed to giving them life lessons because he realized that many kids don’t get the guidance they need at home. “You find that coaches and teachers are assuming roles that at one time parents were responsible for,” he has explained. “Coaches have a tremendous impact on our culture.”

Osborne has continued to make an impact since 1997 when he retired from football. His most visible post-coaching foray came in the political arena as he served three terms in the U.S. House of Representatives from 2000 to 2006. He also made a bid for governor before turning to academia, where he taught leadership and ethics at the University of Nebraska College of Business. In addition, he has worked as a consultant for local college athletic departments and poured time into building a unique mentoring program within the state.

Along with his wife, Nancy, Osborne founded the TeamMates Mentoring Program, which provides support and encouragement to 7,500 youth in Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, and Wyoming. The goal of the program is to help students graduate from high school and pursue post-secondary education by having them meet one hour per week with a caring adult who serves as a mentor. By investing their time, mentors can change the future, as Osborne understands. “Our young people face different challenges today that affect them personally. If we are going to make a difference, we have to get involved with them one on one as mentors,” he says. “We know that one student at a time, we can make a difference, not only for this generation, but for generations to come.”
FEBRUARY 24

Steve Jobs

_The people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do._

“Being the richest man in the cemetery doesn’t matter to me,” Steve Jobs said. “Going to bed saying we’ve done something wonderful, that’s what matters to me.” And his achievements as Apple’s CEO also mattered to millions because they changed the world. “What’s important,” he said, “is that you have faith in people, that they’re basically good and smart, and if you give them the tools, they’ll do wonderful things with them.”

The tools he developed gave people better lives. Without Jobs, we’d still be waiting for a cell phone on which we could read e-mail and surf the web. His iPhone helps the blind read text and identify currency. It helps physicians improve their performance and charities raise money. Equally groundbreaking, the iPad ushered in an era of electronic reading that promises to save trees, along with the energy used to truck them around. It’s also being used to help doctors improve health care, to lessen the symptoms of autism, and to boost creativity in kids.

Jobs’ own sense of creativity also made a far-reaching impact by improving society through business. Apple created 34,000 full-time jobs within the company, along with manufacturing jobs for those who would otherwise live in poverty. It made fortunes for investors and Apple employees who gave to charities of their choosing.

Jobs, too, donated millions, though he was often rebuked for not giving enough to charity. It wasn’t until he died that reports came out that he had contributed $52 million of his own money to hospitals in California and given invaluable support to the fight against AIDS. His intensely private character set him apart from other multi-billionaires who don’t mind discussing their civic involvements. But “the man in the machine,” as he’s been called, showed he had a heart when he talked about his fortune. “It’s a large responsibility to have more than you can spend in your lifetime, and I feel I have to spend it,” he explained. “The challenges are to figure out how to live with it and to reinvest it in the world, which means either giving it away or using it to express your concerns and values.”
FEBRUARY 25

Millicent Fenwick

Whenever injustice occurs, we all need to be concerned.

One afternoon, Millicent Fenwick made a speech before the New Jersey General Assembly proposing equal rights for women. “After I finished,” she recalled, “one colleague rose and with real anguish in his voice said, ‘I just don’t like this amendment. I’ve always thought of women as kissable, cuddly, and smelling good.’ I replied to him, ‘That’s the way I feel about men, too. I only hope for your sake that you haven’t been disappointed as often as I have.’” The quick comeback is one of the top rhetorical tools and Fenwick was a champ. She was also a champion of liberal causes as a Republican member of the U.S. House. She won the respect of her peers for her advocacy on a wide range of issues, including civil rights, peace in Vietnam, abortion rights, prison reform, legal aid, gun control, and consumer protection for the poor.

Her views often placed her at odds with her party’s leaders and seemed curious given Fenwick’s pedigreed past. Born in 1910 to a well-connected family, Fenwick grew up in a 50-room mansion. “I remember my mother in a white duster coat with big mother of pearl buttons on it, waiting to go motoring,” she said. “It was lovely then.” But that memory was shattered in 1915 when her mother was lost aboard the Lusitania while on a mission to Paris to create a hospital for war victims. Following a childhood at boarding school and a failed marriage, Fenwick began a 14-year career at Vogue.

In the 1960s, Fenwick became involved in the civil rights movement and took part in New Jersey politics. When this glamorous, outspoken figure went to Washington at age 64, her victory was hailed as a “geriatric triumph.” But Fenwick put her younger colleagues to shame. In eight years in the House, she followed a grueling work schedule that began each morning at seven when she marched to her office to fight for human and civil rights. “Everyone asks me whether I’m a liberal, a maverick, a neoconservative or whatever,” she told a reporter who tried to typecast her. “I simply try to stick to what I believe in.”
Victor Hugo

To love another person is to see the face of God.

Victor Hugo was a leading light for liberty and justice. To understand his fame, begin with his death in May 1885. His funeral attracted more than two million people, one of the largest mass gatherings ever seen in Paris and more than the city’s total population at the time. It was a festival of the oppressed as workers, the poor, and the exploited converged to honor a man who had given voice to the voiceless. In his many books, poems, and plays, he chronicled the evils of police power and spoke out against capital punishment. He denounced taxes and tyrants. He opposed war and expressed faith in the ability of free people to make progress. Nowhere was his moral sense more apparent than in his most popular work, *Les Misérables.* His story of Jean Valjean, a man jailed for 19 years for stealing a loaf of bread, celebrates revolution.

Despite his passion for the oppressed, Hugo committed himself to the cause of liberty late in life. As a youth, he had supported the French monarchy, and later he admired Napoleon Bonaparte for supposedly upholding the principles of liberty and equality. Then age 49 and famous, Hugo publicly denounced Louis Napoleon for seizing power in 1851. As a result, Hugo lost his home, antiques collection, and library of books when he went into exile on the channel island of Guernsey where he wrote his famous book. “The misérable’s name is man,” he explained. “He is agonizing in all climes, and he is groaning in all languages.”

You can read *Les Misérables* in 22 of them, ranging from Czech to Korean. His epic tale has also reached millions more in the form of a musical staged in 42 countries and a blockbuster film. His depiction of lower-class life speaks to people worldwide because “social problems overstep frontiers,” as Hugo explained. “Whenever man is ignorant and despairs, wherever woman is sold for bread, wherever the child suffers for lack of a book to instruct him and a hearth at which to warm him, the book, *Les Misérables* knocks at the door and says: ‘Open to me, I come for you.’”
FEBRUARY 27

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

*If we could read the secret history of our enemies we should find in each man’s life sorrow and suffering enough to disarm all hostility.*

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow published his best-known poem, “Paul Revere’s Ride,” the day South Carolina seceded from the Union. It begins at a trot: “Listen my children and you shall hear of the midnight ride of Paul Revere.” Then it builds to a gallop as Revere rides through Medford, Lexington, and Concord to warn them the British are coming. At last it comes to a dramatic stop: “Through the night went his cry of alarm, a cry of defiance and not of fear, a voice in the darkness, a knock at the door, and a word that shall echo forevermore!”

Longfellow’s own words have also resounded through time. They have been loved by both the lowly and the learned, though Longfellow fudged nearly every detail of what happened in 1775. He didn’t care because the poem is less about the Revolutionary War than the impending Civil War and the conflict over slavery that caused it. Longfellow, who liked using poetry to teach values, warns of a coming “hour of darkness and peril and need.” As he called on Northerners to act, he suggested that the “people will waken and listen to hear” the midnight message again.

The poem made Revere a legend, and Longfellow’s eloquence earned him lasting fame. Yet he went beyond words because he knew “the life of a man consists not in seeing visions and in dreaming dreams, but in active charity and in willing service.” Besides writing his poignant *Poems on Slavery*, which drew attention to the plight of blacks, he secretly spent profits from his work to buy slaves their freedom. His diary is full of references to sectionalism and slavery. His account books have dozens of entries in which he noted sums given to black newspapers, black schools, black churches, and especially to fugitive slaves.

Their ancestors have not forgotten him in their ongoing fight to make people waken and hear their words. In 1967, Martin Luther King, Jr. evoked Revere’s message at the Southern Leadership Conference in Atlanta. “We still need some Paul Revere of conscience,” King said, “to alert every hamlet and village of America that revolution is still at hand.”
FEBRUARY 28

Linus Pauling

*Do unto others twenty-five percent better than you expect them to do unto you.*

In 1962, President John F. Kennedy held a dinner for winners of the Nobel Prize. At the time, Linus Pauling, a chemist and one of the guests, was marching for a ban on nuclear testing. “On the day before, in fact on the day of the dinner, my wife and I had demonstrated outside the White House against the bomb tests,” Pauling recalled. “When we came through the reception line, Mrs. Kennedy said, ‘Do you think it is right, Dr. Pauling, to march back and forth with your sign outside the White House so that Caroline says to me, ‘Mummy, what has Daddy done wrong now?’ Then she introduced me to President Kennedy who said, ‘Dr. Pauling, I hope that you will continue to express your opinions.’ That was about the time he became aware that atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons was the wrong thing to do and began applying pressure on the Senate to approve the test ban treaty.”

In 1963, Kennedy signed the Limited Test Ban Treaty, and validated Pauling’s campaign for peace. His fight dated back to the 1940s, when few Americans knew about the long-term effects of nuclear radiation. Their government wasn’t telling them, but Pauling projected that the explosion of a 60-megaton bomb would cause millions to suffer from birth defects and disease. In 1958, he presented a petition signed by 9,235 scientists opposed to nuclear testing and wrote *No More War!*

“We must not have a nuclear war,” he pleaded. “We must begin to solve international disputes by the application of man’s power of reason in a way that is worthy of the dignity of man.” He was right, but many disagreed. For his efforts, he was labeled a communist and endured decades of FBI investigation. Yet he won Nobel prizes for chemistry and peace.

Then at the height of his fame in the ‘70s, he launched a crusade to prove vitamin C would cure the common cold. It earned him infamy as a quack, but he never abandoned this claim. And toward the end of his life, a national medical conference acknowledged, “Pauling was right all along.” It wasn’t the first time.
Patriarch Bartholomew

It is a qualitative element of our faith that we believe in and accept a Creator who fashioned the world out of love.

On May 25, 2014, a historic encounter took place between east and west. When Pope Francis talked with Patriarch Bartholomew in Jerusalem, it had been 50 years since a Catholic pope had met with the leader of the Orthodox Church. Their two churches had not been united since 1054, and the meeting in the Holy Land set the stage for future relations. When Francis came to Istanbul later that year, he embraced Bartholomew and asked for his blessing. Despite differences in doctrine, the two men joined in a display of Christian brotherhood as they denounced the persecution of religious minorities in Syria and Iraq. “The terrible situation of Christians and all those who are suffering in the Middle East calls not only for our constant prayer, but also for an appropriate response on the part of the international community,” they wrote in a joint declaration.

Like Francis, Bartholomew plays a role on the global stage and works to reconcile Christian churches through personal dialogues with their leaders. Closely involved with the World Council of Churches, he has served on its executive and central committees and its Faith and Order Commission. He has also set up meetings with Muslim and Jewish leaders to promote religious tolerance worldwide and organized environmental awareness conferences that explore the link between climate change and social injustice. “The willingness to exploit the environment is revealed in the willingness to permit avoidable human suffering,” he explains. “So the survival of the natural environment is also the survival of ourselves. When will we understand that a crime against nature is a crime against ourselves and sin against God?”

Our failure to address climate change, he points out, is part of a larger problem: our reluctance to acknowledge the ties that bind us together. So he reminds us to make this “connection,” as he does whenever he prays. “In prayer, our concerns should always be the concerns of others, of the world, and especially of the most vulnerable who are unable to protect themselves,” he says. “The victory of the resurrection must be experienced as a victory of life, of brotherhood, of the future, of hope.”
MARCH 1

Harry Belafonte

*Artists are the gatekeepers of truth. We are civilization’s anchor. We are the compass for humanity’s conscience.*

Harry Belafonte has been called the “King of Calypso” for his Caribbean music style. In 1959, the famed singer and actor became the first African American to win an Emmy, and since then, he has picked up four Grammys, along with a Tony and Lifetime Achievement Academy Award. He’s also an activist who served the cause of another king. When Belafonte met Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1953, he was already fired up by the treatment of blacks after they fought for freedom in World War II. “I chose to be a civil rights warrior,” Belafonte recalls, after meeting the dynamic young preacher. “We talked for four hours, and it was a life-changing moment. From then on, I was in his service and in his world of planning, strategy, and thinking. Belafonte went on to finance the 1961 Freedom Rides and orchestrate the March on Washington in 1963.

The entertainer identified with King because his Jamaican mother taught him to fight for justice when he was a boy growing up in Harlem. One time she came home from a day hunting for work and had no food to put on the table. After gazing silently at the wall, he recalls, she turned to look at her children and said, “Never go to bed at night knowing there was something that you could do to end injustice and did not take advantage of that moment.”

Belafonte has followed her advice for over five decades. Besides working with civil rights leaders, he’s served as a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador and campaigned for children worldwide. As chairman of the International Symposium of Artists and Intellectuals for African Children in Senegal, he broadcast the message that vaccines could prevent millions of young deaths every year. He has spoken about the need for primary health care in Mozambique, inadequate care for South-African children with HIV/AIDS, and the plight of abandoned children in Rwanda. He also talks about his days with King at U.S. schools, where he inspires kids to fulfill their dreams. “Each and every one of you,” he tells them, “has the power, will, and capacity to make a difference in the world.”
MARCH 2

Mikhail Gorbachev

*Peace is not unity in similarity but unity in diversity, in the comparison and conciliation of differences.*

“There was a warmth in his face and style, not the coldness bordering on hatred I’d seen in most Soviet officials,” Ronald Reagan said in 1983 after meeting Mikhail Gorbachev, the last leader of the Soviet Union. In turn, Gorbachev called Reagan “a great American and a great leader.” By 1987, the warm relationship they developed led them to sign the INF Treaty, the first pact to reduce the number of nuclear weapons. A year later, Reagan stood in Red Square and declared that the Soviet Union was no longer an “evil empire.”

The end of the Cold War made the world rejoice and earned Gorbachev a Nobel Peace Prize. When he accepted the award in 1991, he stood before the crowd and defined peace for the nuclear age. “Peace is movement toward globality,” he said. “It is a condition for the survival of the human race”—words he acted on in the Soviet Union by launching policies of openness and reform. The West responded by embracing him as a visionary. But he got the cold shoulder at home, where his reforms unleashed a democratic flood that led Gorbachev to dissolve the Soviet Union and resign from office.

Everyone expected him to go quietly into the night but he was not through showing society the light. He went on to found the International Green Cross, a comprehensive global environment group, and the Gorbachev Foundation to assert moral principles and democratic values. The foundation sponsors a wide range of conferences based on Gorbachev’s belief that “the human being should be foremost.” This ideal also underlies the foundation’s charitable efforts, including projects to improve children’s health and fight leukemia, the disease that killed Gorbachev’s wife in 1999.

Gorbachev was devastated, and he would see death again in 2004. When Reagan passed away Gorbachev flew in from Moscow to pay his respects. After passing through the throngs he embraced Nancy Reagan, patted the coffin of the dead leader, and reminisced about their first “wonderful encounter.” In 2004, as in 1987, Gorbachev left a deep impression on the U.S. and showed the warmth that helped end the Cold War.
MARCH 3

Alexander Graham Bell

*Great discoveries and improvements invariably involve the cooperation of many minds.*

Alexander Graham Bell was born in Edinburgh to a family with a passion for communication. His grandfather and father were experts on the mechanics of voice and elocution. His mother, who was nearly deaf, became an accomplished pianist and urged him to excel. These influences inspired him to invent the telephone and strive to change the world. “The inventor,” he believed, “looks upon the world and is not contented with things as they are. He wants to improve whatever he sees, he wants to benefit the world; he is haunted by an idea.”

In Bell’s case, this consuming idea led him to conduct experiments with sound. At the age of 16, he began researching the mechanics of speech. In 1870, when he was 23, he immigrated with his family to Canada and the following year he moved to the United States to teach. Soon he pioneered a system called visible speech to teach deaf-mute children and in 1872 he founded a school in Boston to train teachers of the deaf. The school became part of Boston University, where Bell was appointed a professor of vocal physiology in 1873.

During his days in Boston, Bell’s longstanding ideas about transmitting speech came into sharper focus and by 1875 he had come up with a simple receiver that could turn electricity into sound. The following year, Bell was granted a patent for the telephone and it developed quickly. Within a year, the first telephone exchange was built in Connecticut, and the Bell Telephone Company was created in 1877, making Bell a wealthy man.

Despite his success, Bell did not enjoy running a business and soon turned the daily working of his company over to others so he could pursue a wide range of pursuits. In 1880, he founded the Volta Laboratory in Washington, where he continued experiments in communication, medical research, and teaching speech to the deaf. He also worked on inventions in flight and shared his love of science with others by founding *National Geographic* magazine. When he died in 1922, the entire telephone system was shut down for one minute in tribute to his life.
MARCH 4

Jane Goodall

Only if we understand, will we care. Only if we care, will we help. Only if we help shall all be saved.

Jane Goodall loved animals even as a child. When she was just over a year old, her father gave her a toy chimpanzee, which she named Jubilee and carried with her wherever she went. But most chimps aren’t treated so kindly, so Goodall has defended them as a famed chimpanzee researcher, conservationist, and activist for animal rights who believes “the least I can do is speak out for those who cannot speak for themselves.”

Granted chimpanzees can’t speak like us. Yet they do have emotions, distinct personalities, and complex social structures, as Goodall discovered at 26 when she travelled from England to Gombe National Park in Tanzania and bravely entered the little-known world of wild chimpanzees. Equipped with nothing but a notebook and a pair of binoculars, she patiently won the chimpanzees’ acceptance and trust. Her groundbreaking book In the Shadow of Man opened a window into their lives and forever changed our understanding of the profound connection between humans and chimpanzees. “If we do not do something to help these creatures, we make a mockery of the whole concept of justice,” she later warned the world as she watched mining and slash-and-burn agriculture denude the habitat needed by her chimpanzees.

People have listened as she inspires them to take action on behalf of endangered species, especially chimpanzees, and do their part to make the world a better place for people, animals, and the environment we all share. The Jane Goodall Institute works to protect the Gombe chimps but recognizes that this can’t be accomplished without a comprehensive approach that addresses the needs of local people who are critical to chimpanzee survival. Its community-centered conservation programs in Africa include sustainable development projects that engage local people as partners, and Roots & Shoots, its global youth program, helps young people learn about problems in their communities and find ways to solve them. “You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you,” as Goodall points out. “What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.”
MARCH 5

Elisha Harris

The principles we most revere in moral, social, and public duties require of all good workers the largest degree of fraternity and cooperation in plans for improving and protecting the health and welfare of our fellow beings.

Early nineteenth-century New York provided a perfect breeding ground for disease. Six persons often lived per room in the city’s crowded immigrant slums; the sidewalks were filled with rotting garbage; and hogs ran wild in the streets. There was also little clean water, leading to several outbreaks of cholera between 1832 and 1866. While the city’s wealthier classes generally blamed these epidemics on the supposed moral failings of the poor, physician reformers like Dr. Elisha Harris knew better. He called for landlords to erect healthy tenements with better ventilation and more space in a campaign to improve hygiene and better humanity’s lot.

His active connection with the sanitary work of New York City and State began in 1855 when he became superintendent and physician-in-chief of the quarantine hospital on Staten Island. Interrupted in this work by the Civil War, he devoted himself to army sanitation, and organized the United States Sanitary Commission. The war over, he served as a member of the city’s board of health and was appointed its sanitary superintendent in 1868. While holding this office, he made a systematic inspection of tenement houses and vigorously enforced the law providing for their ventilation and lighting. Among other reforms, he succeeded in getting landlords to put in nearly 40,000 windows and about 2,000 roof ventilators in 1869. Shortly thereafter he also organized the first free public vaccination service and system of house-to-house visitation.

These successes led to more positions of responsibility. In 1880, when the New York State Board of Health was created, he was appointed one of its members and then its secretary, a position he held until his death. He was also a delegate in 1876 to the International Medical Congress of the American Public Health Association, and was elected its president in 1878. This vast experience had taught him that we all have a responsibility for the public health, as he said in a speech to his colleagues in 1941. “The permanent value and success of any methods or system of sanitary government,” he pointed out, “will depend upon the degree to which people are enlightened, concerned, and made responsible for their sanitary duties.”
MARCH 6

Michelangelo

*I saw the angel in the marble and carved until I set him free.*

Michelangelo was a titan according to most standards. Measured by his own standards, he was simply a seeker after beauty and truth who believed “the true work of art is but a shadow of the divine perfection.” His search for that perfection led him to create some of the world’s greatest works of art, including the David and Pietà statues and the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel. Millions of tourists have gaped at his soaring “Last Judgment” since he unveiled it in 1541. Yet Michelangelo had reservations when he agreed to paint the frescoes because he thought God had chosen him to be a sculptor.

The son of a magistrate, Michelangelo spent time with a family of stonecutters when he was a small child. “With my wet-nurse’s milk, I sucked in the hammer and chisels I use for my statues,” he recalled. At 13, he also learned to wield a brush after his father apprenticed him to Domenico Ghirlandaio, a fashionable Florentine painter. He then lived in the household of Lorenzo de’ Medici, the leading patron of the arts in Florence. His years with the Medici allowed him to study under the respected sculptor Bertoldo di Giovanni and exposed him to prominent poets and scholars. After the Medici family was expelled from Florence, Michelangelo travelled to Rome where he produced the Pietà. It had made him famous by the time he returned to Florence and began sculpting his David in 1501.

Several commissions followed, including a project for the tomb of Pope Julius II, but Julius changed his mind and asked Michelangelo to work instead on the Sistine Chapel. The project came to fuel Michelangelo’s imagination so much that he fired his assistants and completed the 65-foot ceiling alone. The result was a masterpiece of Renaissance art, especially its “Creation of Adam.” Michelangelo’s iconic image portrays God touching the finger of man, an apt metaphor for an artist who kept trying to grasp the divine through his work. “The greatest danger for most of us,” he once said, “lies not in setting our aim too high and falling short, but in setting our aim too low and achieving our mark.”
MARCH 7

Henri Landwirth

My whole life was a miracle. I feel it is my duty to give back.

Henri Landwirth knows what it’s like to lose your childhood, so he helps young people get the most from their own. Between the ages of 13 and 18, he faced death in Nazi concentration camps before a stroke of luck allowed him to escape just before the end of World War II. “It’s only a miracle that I am alive today,” he says as he recalls his youth and journey to the U.S. after the war. He arrived with 20 dollars and little knowledge of English. What he did have was a capacity for work that let him become a successful businessman and benefactor to kids.

He started out as a bellman in a New York City hotel, where he learned every job in the industry that would become his lifelong career. These skills served him well as manager of the Starlite Hotel in Cocoa Beach, Florida, at the dawn of the space program in nearby Cape Canaveral. Landwirth served as host and friend to the Mercury Seven astronauts and journalists who followed in their wake. Among them was Walter Cronkite, who dubbed Landwirth the eighth astronaut for the friendship and advice he gave to John Glenn, Alan Shepard, and the rest of their space-going crew.

Landwirth was also shooting up in the world, first as owner of a Holiday Inn next to Walt Disney World in Orlando, and then as partner in a central Florida hotel company. During his time in the hotel business he learned that two sick children had died before rooms were available for them to visit Orlando. Vowing that this wouldn’t happen again, he founded Give Kids the World to let terminally ill children and their families enjoy a week’s vacation amid the attractions of Disney World, Universal Studios, and SeaWorld. He also provides new clothes to needy children through his organization Dignity U Wear. And he wears his feelings on his sleeve when asked why he does so much. “I love life,” he explains. “I shouldn’t be here. By all rights I should have died. I believe to create Give Kids the World is the reason I was spared so long ago.”
MARCH 8

Michael Hart

*Break down the bars of ignorance and illiteracy.*

The Internet was in its infancy when Michael Hart invented the eBook in 1971. His mission was to give books to every one in the world, and he embarked on it by chance. While a student at the University of Illinois, he received access to a network-connected mainframe computer. Estimating that the computer time in his possession was worth $100,000, he was looking for a way to repay the school. Then one evening after July 4 fireworks, he stopped at the grocery and the store stuffed a copy of the Declaration of Independence in his bag. “If I put this up online, it will last a long time,” he thought. So he typed in the text and posted the document so that the 100 people on the network could read it. That single volume turned into an online library, named Project Gutenberg after the 15th-century inventor of the printing press.

Over the next decade, he made books available to computer users at no cost “to help break down the bars of ignorance and illiteracy.” Working alone, he typed the Bill of Rights, Constitution, *King James Bible*, and *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* into a database. Few paid attention as he ushered in a revolution that would lead to hand-held electronic devices and a vast array of Internet archives. Those who did notice called him a Don Quixote, tilting at windmills while scraping by as an adjunct professor so he could pursue his dream.

His years of living off canned beans paid off and Cervantes’ classic tale of the man of La Mancha is one of the over 45,000 eBooks available on Project Gutenberg. Though Hart had created only 313 eBooks by 1997, the pace picked up when he and Mark Zinzow, a programmer at the University of Illinois, recruited volunteers through the school’s PC User Group. Today the project adds hundred of books each month thanks to the thousands who scan and proofread without pay. They devote their time because they share Hart’s belief that free eBooks can change the world. “Learning is its own reward,” he pointed out. “Nothing I can say is better than that.”
Pete Gray

If I could prove to any boy who has been physically handicapped that he, too, can compete with the best — well then, I’ve done my little bit.

Pete Gray was the “one-armed wonder” of baseball during World War II. When America went to fight in the war, many players left the field to serve their country overseas. Commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis considered shutting down Major League baseball during the war, but FDR said baseball must go on to give Americans some relief from wartime stress. So baseball continued with the players who were left. Enter Pete Gray, who gave the crowds more than diversion. He inspired them to believe you could fulfill your dreams even if you were disabled.

Gray lost his right arm at age six when he fell off a farmer’s wagon. His arm was caught in the spokes and had to be amputated above the elbow. Yet he grew up determined to play ball at Yankee Stadium in New York. Since he was a natural right hander, he taught himself to throw with his left hand and swing the bat one handed. When the ball was hit to him in the outfield, Gray would field the ball and instantly flip it in the air as he dropped his glove and seized the ball in his left hand. He’d then fire the ball like a gun shot wherever the play dictated, a technique that let him rise in the minor leagues and earn recognition as Most Valuable Player of the Southern Association.

His performance caught the attention of the St. Louis Browns, who acquired him from the Memphis Chicks. Gray appeared in 77 games for the Browns during the 1945 season, hitting .218. He never slugged a homer, but he notched eight extra-base hits, including two triples. He also managed to throw out three runners at home plate and achieve his dream when the Browns met the Yankees in New York.

His on-field exploits became an inspiration to the many servicemen who returned home with missing limbs. When he visited them in army hospitals and rehab centers, he assured them they could live productive lives and admired the sacrifices they’d made. “Boys, I can’t fight, and so there is no courage about me. Courage belongs on the battlefield, not on the baseball diamond,” he said.
MARCH 10

Lillian D. Wald

_Nursing is love in action, and there is no finer manifestation of it than the care of the poor and disabled in their own homes._

Lillian Wald went where few middle class women had gone before so she could bring care to the people. After being born into wealth, she studied nursing in New York, where she witnessed first hand the hardships endured by immigrants on the Lower East Side. She was there teaching local women a class on home nursing one morning in 1893, when a little girl burst into the room in tears. After explaining her mother was sick, she led Wald through filthy, foul-smelling streets to a rear tenement where a family of seven shared their two rooms with boarders. Once there, she found the little girl’s mother lying on a “wretched unclean bed soiled with a hemorrhage two days old,” as she grimly recalled.

The experience was a “baptism by fire” that caused Wald to pioneer public health nursing. “Ever since,” she explained, “I have felt consecrated to the saving of human life.” In 1893, that sense of commitment led her to move to a house on the Lower East Side and offer health care to people in their homes. Wald went on to enroll nurses, activists, lawyers, and reformers who shared her passion for helping communities thrive. In time, her Henry Street Settlement offered a wide array of services — kindergartens, job training, cooking classes, and scholarships — that reflected Wald’s belief in social reform. By 1912, more than 28,000 people took advantage of these programs. And the numbers Wald nursed were also great. By 1917, her nurses were providing home care to over 32,000 people in New York City.

Wald’s reach expanded beyond the city as she pioneered models of public health and social service programs. She was the first president of the National Organization of Public Health Nurses, a group she helped establish, and improved working conditions for women by helping to found the Women’s Trade Union League. She also worked to abolish child labor and helped found the Federal Children’s Bureau. It still exists, as does the home health service she started on Henry Street. It’s now called the Visiting Nurse Service of New York, and it continues her mission to bring care to people where they live.
MARCH 11

Robert L. Carter

*Brown v. Board sits at the center of my career and of what has been a lifelong struggle against racial inequities and injustice.*

Robert L. Carter believed in shaking things up. As a 16-year-old in New Jersey, he attended a high school that allowed black students to only use its pool on Fridays when classes were over. After he learned that the state supreme court had banned such restrictions, he entered the pool with white students and stood up to a teacher who threatened to have him expelled from school. It was his first taste of activism. He would go on to attend law school and write a master’s thesis that he would use in preparing for school desegregation cases in the 1950s.

By then he had again defied prejudice by becoming a black officer in the army before going to work at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund. In 1948, he became chief deputy to Thurgood Marshall, the organization’s top counsel. Often toiling behind the scenes, Carter had a significant hand in many legal challenges, but none shook things up more than *Brown v. Board of Education*. In 1954, the case ended in the Supreme Court’s decision to abolish segregation in public schools.

Carter’s argument that school segregation was unconstitutional on its face became the Supreme Court’s own conclusion. Carter and his underpaid, overworked colleagues at the NAACP showed the court that the South’s schools rarely offered equal opportunities to black children, but that was beside the point. “We have one fundamental contention,” he said. “No state has any authority under the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment to use race as a factor in affording educational opportunities among its citizens.”

This convincing argument was just one of many that Carter made at the NAACP. He went on to win 21 out of 22 cases before the Supreme Court before Richard Nixon nominated him to the federal bench. But this recognition didn’t put out his fire. When he was 87, he lamented that “black children aren’t getting equal education in the cities.” Yet he admitted to having hope. “In the United States, we make progress in two or three steps; then we step back. And blacks are more militant now and will not accept second-class citizenship as before.”
MARCH 12

Bill Milliken

*Once you start caring, you find that you get your life by giving it away, and you keep finding it in other people, in community.*

“It’s relationships, not programs, that change children,” Bill Milliken says. “A great program simply creates the environment for healthy relationships to form between adults and children. Young people thrive when adults care about them on a one-to-one level, and when they have a sense of belonging to a caring community.” And that’s just what Communities in Schools has done since Milliken founded it in 1976. Today, it’s the nation’s largest and most effective organization dedicated to keeping kids in school and helping them succeed. CIS partners with local businesses, social service agencies, health care providers, and volunteers to give at-risk students what they need, whether it is food, school supplies, health care, academic assistance or a positive role model.

Without these must-haves, thousands of kids drop out of school each year. Milliken became one of them after struggling with an undiagnosed learning disability at 17. Yet he turned his life around with help from people who believed in him. In 1960, he joined Young Life, a Christian youth organization in Harlem, and helped launch “street academies” for kids who had dropped out of school. His experiences with them led him to look for a comprehensive way to help the young. In 1977, this search for answers led him to develop Communities in Schools, which he led as president until 2004.

Over time, he has earned renown as a pioneer in education and served three presidents of the United States. During the Carter administration, he was White House advisor on youth issues. In 1989, he advised President Bush for the Education Summit with the nation’s governors, and under President Clinton, he was involved in planning the President’s Summit for America’s Future.

His organization also helps forge the future in sites nationwide. CIS now serves more than 1.5 million students each year in more than 2,700 schools in 28 states and Washington, DC. And thanks to its network of 38,000 volunteers, 98 percent of the students stay in school. The key, Milliken explains, is building relationships that give young people hope. “When we’re a community of people giving away love,” he says, “that what transforms lives and that’s what transforms cities.”
MARCH 13

Walter Annenberg

You will not be satisfied unless you are contributing something to or for the benefit of others.

“I started out with an awful lot handed to me,” Walter Annenberg once said. By the time of his birth, his immigrant father, Moses, had developed a profitable newspaper distribution business in Milwaukee, and Annenberg multiplied his heritage several times over. As chief executive of Triangle Publications, which he inherited on his father’s death in 1942, he built a communications empire, with newspapers, radio and TV stations, national magazines, and racing sheets. He also honored his father’s life by becoming one of the country’s biggest philanthropists. Hard-nosed as he was in business, Moses felt compassion for the poor. While handing money to street people, he would tell his son, “There but for the grace of God go you and I.” This egalitarian message led Annenberg to sell Triangle in 1988 and devote the rest of his life to giving away more than $2 billion in cash.

In the field of philanthropy, Annenberg was to education what Andrew Carnegie was to libraries. In 1990, he gave $50 million to the United Negro College Fund because he thought black colleges and universities were the doorways to opportunity. Three years after the UNCF donation, he gave $365 million in a single day to four schools: the Universities of Pennsylvania and Southern California for communications programs; Harvard, in memory of his late son, Roger; and the Peddie School, the prep school he had attended in New Jersey. Months later, President Clinton announced Annenberg’s $500 million matching funds program to initiate reform in some of the nation’s most troubled schools.

“Few things are as essential as education,” Annenberg said. But one of the other things he did value was giving the public access to art. In 1989, he gave $15 million for acquisitions to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and $5 million to the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. When he did, he made it clear he didn’t expect anything in return. “Having reached the age of four-score years,” he said, “I am trying to be a constructive citizen. I have heard it said that no good deed goes unpunished, but I don’t intend to let that discourage me.”
Albert Einstein

Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile.

On a visit to California in 1931, Albert Einstein asked to meet Charlie Chaplin, the actor and advocate for the common man. Chaplin invited the German physicist, who proved the existence of the atom, to the premiere of his film, City Lights. As they posed for the cameras, Chaplin said, “They cheer for me because they all understand me and they cheer for you because nobody understands you.” Many people still envision Einstein as the media portrayed him: the tousle-haired genius off in his own abstract world. Even Einstein acknowledged the distance that stood between him and other people. “My passionate interest in social justice and social responsibility has always stood in curious contrast to a marked lack of desire for direct association with men and women.” Yet from his days as a young academic in Europe to his death in the U.S. at 76, he pushed for human dignity and world peace.

His first political activities took place in Germany when he got involved with several organizations that opposed World War I. After the war, he visited the U.S. to promote democratic ideals and oppose U.S. isolationism. This effort ended with the failure of the 1932 Geneva Disarmament Conference, which led him to concede that “militant pacifism” was no match for fascist advances in Europe.

When Hitler became German chancellor, Einstein was a target for Nazi hatred as a radical and Jew. Fearing for his life, he took a position at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. He was a U.S. citizen by 1939, when he wrote FDR, warning about German nuclear research and urging a U.S. response. He played no other role in the Manhattan Project that developed the A-bomb and was horrified when the bomb destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Afterward, he again wrote to FDR, warning about the threat posed by the new weapons and spoke widely about how nuclear weapons should impel nations to cooperate — or perish. Devising the political means to keep the atom from destroying us was harder than proving its existence, as Einstein learned. Yet he didn’t give up because he realized “politics is more difficult than physics.”
MARCH 15

Ruth Bader Ginsburg

*Sometimes people say unkind or thoughtless things, and when they do, it is best to be a little hard of hearing — to tune out and not snap back in anger or impatience.*

“My mother told me two things constantly,” recalled Ruth Bader Ginsburg. “One was to be a lady and the other was to be independent.” This advice helped her break countless legal and professional barriers to become the second woman ever appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court. Raised in a working class neighborhood in New York, she graduated first in her class from Cornell in 1954. After starting a family with her childhood sweetheart, Martin Ginsburg, she enrolled in Harvard Law School, where she was one of only nine women in her class. She became one of the first women elected to the *Harvard Law Review*, a feat she repeated at Columbia Law School, where she transferred for her final year.

Although Ginsburg graduated first in her class, she was turned away by most law firms who refused to hire a woman. At the time this was disturbing, but looking back she realizes that “so often in life the things you regard as impediments turn out to be great good fortune.” It was true in this case because she went on to teach law at Rutgers, where she was one of only 20 or so women teaching law in the country at that time. She went on to teach at Columbia Law School, where she became the school’s first female tenured professor.

While blazing new professional paths for women, she was turning her attention to their unequal treatment under the law. As a volunteer lawyer at the ACLU, she noticed the growing number of sex discrimination cases and they inspired her to teach on women and the law, as well as co-found the *Women’s Rights Law Reporter*. She later co-founded the Women’s Rights Project at the ACLU and as its chief litigator successfully argued several landmark cases before the U.S. Supreme Court. Her victories ended gender discrimination in many areas of law and led President Clinton to appoint her to the Supreme Court, where she has continued to speak out strongly for gender equality as an intrinsic part of civil rights. “It is not women’s liberation,” she has explained. “It is women’s and men’s liberation.”
MARCH 16

James Madison

*Justice is the end of Government. It is the end of civil society. It ever has been, and ever will be pursued, until it be obtained, or until liberty be lost in the pursuit.*

James Madison is often remembered as a reserved scholar who was ill suited to the rough-and-tumble world of politics. Yet he did more than anyone to establish the nation we know. He understood the nitty-gritty of democratic government and knew how to push through legislation. He was a major architect of the Constitution, a staunch proponent of the rights of conscience and religious liberty, and co-author of *The Federalist Papers*, perhaps America’s most significant work of political theory.

Madison was in his fifties when America elected him president, but he had been making an impact on his country for decades before. He was in his twenties when he participated in the framing of the Virginia Constitution, served in the Continental Congress, and was a leader in the Virginia Assembly. When delegates to the Constitutional Convention assembled at Philadelphia in 1787, Madison provided the model for a federal government based on separation of powers and a system of checks and balances.

Madison went on in 1789 to become a dominant member of the House of Representatives. He helped President George Washington organize the executive branch and was the person most responsible for producing the first 10 amendments to the Constitution, which became the Bill of Rights. Unfortunately, one problem he couldn’t deal with was slavery. Although he believed it was “the most oppressive dominion ever exercised by man over man,” he realized the political opposition to abolition was too great, and he hoped against hope that time would solve the problem.

He faced additional problems as Thomas Jefferson’s secretary of state and then as president in 1809. These included the seizure of U.S. ships by Britain, leading Congress to declare war. Though the American forces were outgunned, they managed to achieve impressive victories so Madison emerged from the war more celebrated than ever. In 1817 he retired to his Montpelier estate, but the welfare of his country always remained on his mind. After his death in 1834, he left Americans a parting message that “the advice nearest to my heart and deepest in my convictions is that the Union of States be cherished and perpetuated.”
MARCH 17

Dana Reeve

When you least feel like it, do something for someone else. It gives you a purpose, as opposed to being sorrowful and lonely.

Dana Reeve was brave to the end. A working actress, she put her career on hold after her husband, Christopher Reeve, had a horseback riding accident that left him a paraplegic. Much of the burden she bore was there for the world to see during the decade of her husband’s rehabilitation. But much in her life remained private, including her 71-year-old mother’s death from ovarian cancer just four months after Chris’s and the stroke her 72-year-old father suffered on Thanksgiving night at her house. By then, Dana had been diagnosed with lung cancer, a rare disease among nonsmokers. But the even rarer thing about her was the way she surmounted her personal ordeals to think of other people.

She stood by the husband’s side as the former Superman became an activist for people with spinal chord injuries and established the Christopher Reeve Foundation. After his death in 2004, she was determined to preserve the legacy of hope that became his life’s mission so she became chairman of the foundation, where she established the Quality of Life grants program and the Christopher & Dana Reeve Paralysis Resource Center. She also attended President George W. Bush’s State of the Union Address to show support for embryonic stem cell research, led a Capitol Hill rally urging stepped-up funding to find a cure for paralysis, and launched a children’s book inspired by Chris.

By June 2005, the future began to look bright and she even took a stab at returning to her show-biz life, doing a critically acclaimed two-night cabaret gig at a nightclub in Manhattan. For the first time in 10 years, she felt she was going to be able to travel and go on location. Then a persistent cough led to a startling diagnosis, but she fought the cancer aggressively and kept friends abreast of her condition with humorous e-mails. What sustained her through all her ordeals was her belief in finding joy inside of hardship. “You have to celebrate the gifts because life is so hard,” she said, “and I think once you realize life’s gonna be hard, the good stuff comes forward.”
MARCH 18

Andy Granatelli

It feels good to give; the more you give, the better you feel.

Andy Granatelli devoted his life to racing cars, revving businesses, and caring. “Life’s greatest lesson for me,” he said, “is that taking care of people, caring about people, loving people is the greatest gift you can give yourself.” And the importance of this lesson became clear to him while growing up in Chicago as the son of a poor Sicilian grocer whose business failed during the Great Depression. “People helped me and I never forgot that,” he said as he recalled his rise from auto mechanic to entrepreneur who turned STP oil treatment into a national institution and built race cars that won the Indianapolis 500 in 1969 and 1973. After his first win in 1969, Granatelli said of himself, “People say he’s flamboyant, he’s this, he’s that. That’s just me. I was born supercharged.”

Two things revved up his engine. One was racing hotrods, and the other was helping others because he never forgot his roots. While owner of a national corporation, TuneUp Masters, he developed the innovative Youth At Risk program which provided thousands of disadvantaged young people with job training, mentoring, and support to live meaningful and productive lives. Over a period of nine years, Granatelli personally interviewed and selected thousands of young people to participate in his program, leading to remarkable results. He also provided educational and motivational video presentations to young people in all 278 TuneUp Masters stores.

His engine didn’t slow down after he retired from business and proceeded to support more than 168 organizations. He was chairman of the Institute of Cancer and Blood Research and was on the advisory board of the Boys and Girls Clubs of America. He was involved with the National Kidney Foundation, volunteered for the Child Welfare League, and supported Childhelp USA. But his passion for helping others didn’t make him any less of a hot rod as he showed at age 62 when he drove a car 241.731 miles per hour over the Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah. “I wanted the world to know,” he explained, “that you are never too old to do something you want to do.”
The success of any legal system is measured by its fidelity to the universal ideal of justice.

“Everything I did in my life that was worthwhile, I caught hell for,” Earl Warren once recalled. Perhaps it was because the former chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court had the courage to depart from longstanding decisions. From 1953 to 1969, he led a unanimous court that in turn led the nation in reversing a century of judicial and social history. By affirming that separate is not equal, he and his court acted on the words carved in stone at the entrance to the Supreme Court: “Equal Justice for All.” Warren knew how important that was because he was the son of poor, immigrant parents and had seen the lives and struggles of working people first hand.

He managed to rise in the world by working his way through college at the University of California, Berkeley, where he earned his law degree in 1914. He became deputy city attorney for Oakland, then Alameda County deputy assistant district attorney, and finally district attorney, a role that earned him a reputation for hard work, honesty, and ethics. He would go on to be elected as California attorney general and California governor for an unprecedented three terms. He failed in his bid for vice president, but when President Eisenhower nominated him for the position of chief justice, he quickly won legislative approval.

He went on to spearhead landmark decisions that led him to be known as a liberal, activist judge. Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka declared racial segregation in schools unconstitutional, and Hernandez v. Texas gave Mexicans the right to serve on juries. The court’s “one man, one vote” decisions, including Reynolds v. Sims, caused nearly every state to redraw its electoral boundaries. Miranda v. Arizona accorded rights to suspects in custody and counted among the other decisions of the Warren court that triggered a conservative backlash. Faced by calls for judicial restraint — which are still heard today — Warren countered that every public official had a duty to preserve the civil liberties that are the soul of our democratic system. “It is the spirit and not the form of law that keeps justice alive.”
Fred Rogers

Knowing that we can be loved exactly as we are gives us all the best opportunity for growing into the healthiest of people.

For over 30 years, Fred Rogers invited millions of children to be his neighbor as host of the public television show Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood. Rogers, an ordained minister, began each episode in a set that looked like a cozy living room and sang “It’s a beautiful day in the neighborhood” as he donned a cardigan and sneakers. On each show he would take his audience on a trolley ride into the Neighborhood of Make-Believe where puppets would interact with each other and adults. Rogers did much of the puppet and voice work himself and wrote all the scripts and songs with a message of love in mind. “I think everybody longs to be loved and longs to know that he or she is lovable,” he explained. “Consequently, the greatest thing we can do is to help someone know they’re loved and capable of loving.”

It was also important, he knew, to help children cope with the challenges of life. So he taught them how to share, how to deal with anger, and even how not to fear the bathtub by assuring them they’ll never go down the drain. Thinking back to his own childhood, he realized how unkind the world can seem to a kid. “When I was a boy,” he recalled, “and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, ‘Look for the helpers, you will always find people who are helping.’”

Rogers was one of them and his commitment to children went beyond TV. He served as chairman of a White House Forum on Child Development and Mass Media, spent time in prisons talking to inmates’ children, and convinced a Senate subcommittee to increase government funding for children’s TV. Even the most hard-nosed senators had goose bumps when Rogers talked about his show: “I give an expression of care every day to each child to help him realize that he is unique. I end each program by saying ‘You’ve made this day a special day just by being you. There’s no person in the whole world like you. And I like you just the way you are.’”
MARCH 21

Henry Ossian Flipper

*It is ungenerous to attribute what can result from man’s better nature only to such base causes as fear or cowardice.*

On February 19, 1999, President Bill Clinton pardoned Second Lieutenant Henry Ossian Flipper. The pardon came 59 years after Flipper’s death and 117 years after the young lieutenant had been found guilty of the charge of “conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman.” A short statement by President Chester Arthur upheld the court’s sentence in 1882 and signaled the end to a promising military career. But Flipper fought back with the tenacity that had helped him become the first black graduate of West Point.

Flipper’s time in the U.S. Army was the fulfillment of his dreams after attending missionary schools and entering Atlanta University in 1869. With support from Georgia Congressman James Freeman, Flipper took the required exams at West Point and entered the academy in 1873. Afterward, “I made as honorable a record in the army as any officer in it,” he recalled, “in spite of the lack of social association, ostracism, and what not to which I was subjected by the great majority of my fellow officers.” This “barbarous treatment” reached its height when Flipper was court-martialed by a racist officer and dismissed from the army by a prejudiced court.

Flipper went on to work as a translator, land surveyor, and engineer for the Department of Justice and a Senate subcommittee on foreign relations. By 1921, he was appointed a special assistant to the secretary of the interior. Between 1923 and 1930, he worked as a consultant for a New York-based oil company, and all the while he kept contesting the charges brought against him.

Flipper fought back through the only avenue open to him — the passage of a bill by Congress. The eight bills meant to clear his name died in committee and Flipper passed away in 1940, never knowing that his rank would be restored. Clinton’s pardon was the final act of vindication for a man who kept speaking out to Congress against the wrongs done to his person and his race. “I ask only that justice,” he wrote in 1898, “which every American has the right to ask and which Congress alone has the right to grant.”
MARCH 22

Haing S. Ngor

*It is not enough to marry goodness. You have to find it in yourself.*

“Nothing has shaped my life as much as surviving the Pol Pot regime. I am a survivor of the Cambodian holocaust,” Haing Ngor wrote in *Survival in the Killing Fields*. His memoir describes his season in the hell created by the communist Khmer Rouge. Over the course of four years, he smashed rocks from dawn to midnight, though he was a gynecologist by profession. His tormentors starved and whipped him, cut off part of his little finger, and strung him up on a cross before a smoldering fire. They would have killed him had they known he was an educated person, but he survived by insisting he drove a taxi. His parents and siblings weren’t so lucky since they were murdered by execution squads. But the worst loss was his wife, who went into premature labor. Ngor had no surgical tools and could do nothing as she died in his arms.

Her picture was one of the few things he possessed after escaping in 1979 to Thailand, where he served as a doctor in a refugee camp before moving to the U.S. in 1980. He was working in Los Angeles as a job counselor for refugees when he answered a casting call for *The Killing Fields*, a movie about the Khmer Rouge reign of terror. By participating in the project, he was able to fulfill the promise he made his wife to tell the world about Cambodia’s ordeal. People listened after his performance earned him an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor.

His sudden fame and wealth allowed him to give back. “I don’t want history to say Dr. Ngor has many opportunities,” he explained. “Why does he not help?” So he established a school and clinics in Cambodia and founded aid organizations for refugees in camps near the Thai-Cambodia border. He also continued to help refugees as a social worker, all of which made him a hero to his people. But his stature didn’t stop three men from shooting him outside his home when he wouldn’t give up a gold locket with a photo of his wife. Ngor survived the killing fields but not the streets of LA.
Erich Fromm

*Love means to commit oneself without guarantee. Love is an act of faith and whoever is of little faith is also of little love.*

“Is love an art? Then it requires knowledge and effort,” as Erich Fromm pointed out. And he used both to plumb society and the human soul. As a practicing psychoanalyst and committed social theorist, he explored the link between public and private issues. The underlying problem, he thought, was that humans had been torn away from their prehistoric union with nature and left with no strong instincts to face a changing world. But because humans have learned to reason, they can think about their isolated condition, a situation Fromm called the “human dilemma.”

He faced his own dilemmas growing up with highly neurotic parents in Frankfurt. At the age of 14, he was very influenced by the start of World War I, which continued to shake his thinking. “When the war ended in 1918,” he recalled, “I was a deeply troubled young man who was obsessed by the question of how war was possible, by the wish to understand the irrationality of human mass behavior, and by a passionate desire for peace and international understanding.” The search for answers led him to earn a doctorate in sociology and then train at the Psychoanalytic Institute of Berlin before joining the Frankfurt School for Critical Theory and writing a study of German workers before Hitler’s rise to power.

In 1933, the tightening grip of Nazism led him to flee to the United States, where he taught at a number of schools, among them, the New School for Social Research, Columbia, and Yale. His busy career also involved running his own clinical practice and writing a number of influential books, including *Escape from Freedom*, *Man for Himself: An Inquiry into the Psychology of Ethics*, and *The Art of Loving*, his most popular work. In it, he describes love as a practice instead of a feeling. “Love isn’t something natural,” Fromm wrote. “Rather it requires discipline, concentration, patience, faith, and the overcoming of narcissism” — not just for the sake of a loved one but for society as a whole. It is only by developing the capacity to love one’s neighbor, Fromm maintained, that one can experience true love.
MARCH 24

Dorothy Height

*Without community service, we would not have a strong quality of life. It’s important to the person who serves as well as the recipient.*

Dorothy Height did much to open wide the freedom gates. When Eleanor Roosevelt needed to be lobbied on behalf of civil rights during the Harlem protests, Dorothy Height was there. When President Eisenhower needed prodding to act on school desegregation, she was there as a voice of experience and persuasion. She was also one of the organizers of the March on Washington in 1963 and stood close to Martin Luther King, Jr. when he delivered his “I Have a Dream” speech. Despite her skills as a speaker and leader, she was not invited to talk that day. Yet Height didn’t care about being in the spotlight. “My mother,” she once recalled, “helped me understand how not to show off what I knew, but how to use it so that others might benefit.”

Height followed this advice as she marched at civil rights rallies, sat through tense White House meetings, and witnessed every major triumph in the struggle for racial justice. Originally trained as a social worker, she was president of the National Council of Negro Women from 1957 to 1997, overseeing a range of programs on issues like voting rights, poverty, and AIDS. A longtime executive of the YWCA, she presided over the integration of its facilities nationwide in the 1940s. Along with Gloria Steinem, Shirley Chisholm, and Betty Friedan, she helped found the National Women’s Political Caucus in 1971. In the 1980s, she launched a series of “Black Family Reunions” that brought together African-Americans nationwide to celebrate their history, culture, and traditions.

Despite these achievements, Height is less well known than her contemporaries in either the civil rights or women’s movements. Perhaps it was because she was doubly marginalized, pushed offstage by women’s groups due to her race and by black groups due to her sex. Yet Height took these slights in stride because she thought it was important to “stop worrying about whose name gets in the paper and start doing something about rats and day care and low wages,” as she urged her co-workers many times. “Progress comes from caring more about what needs to be done than about who gets the credit.”
MARCH 25

Bill Marriott

*We know if we treat our employees right, they’ll treat the customers right. And if customers are treated right, they’ll come back.*

Bill Marriott believes in putting people first. So do the general managers who work in his multi-billion dollar hotel chain. “I think they’ve learned,” Marriott says, “that if they take good care of the associates who work for them, they’ll take good care of the customer, and the customer will come back. That was the principle my father followed in 1927 when he started this company with a root beer stand. After he had been in business a few days, one of his employees failed to show up. Since he only had three or four employees, he knew he was in trouble and would have to do all the work. He also realized he’d better take care of his people, and that’s been the founding principle of our company ever since.”

This approach has made Marriott International one of the world’s largest lodging companies with over 3,700 properties in 74 different countries. “We continue to open up over 200 hotels a year,” he says, offering many chances for advancement since most of Marriott’s managers started out as hourly workers. “Our people can move up in the business and become assistant managers, managers, and general managers of a hotel. When they see you are providing them with opportunities to move ahead, this is a real motivating factor.”

At least a third of the general managers in his lodging empire are women and 20 percent are minorities. “It's a good start,” Marriott says. And it’s one way he builds the future. Another is his wide range of philanthropic endeavors, especially in job training and education. His Pathways to Independence program trains welfare recipients to join Marriott’s workforce. His Foundation for People with Disabilities has helped more than 10,000 disabled youth find rewarding jobs and His Spirit to Serve our Communities program inspires Marriott associates worldwide to volunteer where they live and work. Besides these valuable programs, Marriott is a former board member of the Mayo Clinic, where he gave his advice on developing businesses based on human values. “We’ve got 78 years of a culture of caring for people,” he said, “that nobody can catch up to us on.”
MARCH 26

Viktor Frankl

*Love is the ultimate and highest goal to which a man can aspire. The salvation of man is through love and in love.*

Viktor Frankl searched for meaning in hell. In 1942, the prominent Viennese psychiatrist was transported to a Nazi concentration camp with his pregnant wife and parents. While there, he worked as a therapist and closely observed his fellow inmates. Every day in the camps, as he recalled, prisoners had moral choices to make about whether to submit internally to guards who threatened to rob them of their inner self and freedom. It was the way a prisoner resolved those choices that made the difference. While some tried to kill themselves, others realized that life expects something from each of us: a child waiting outside prison, work that remains to be completed, a cause to serve, or another person to love. The healthy prisoners joked, sang, and replayed cherished thoughts.

Frankl thought of his wife one cold, winter dawn as he and his fellow inmates trudged off to work. Despite the guards shouting and driving him with their rifle butts, his mind clung to the image of his wife. “I heard her answering me, saw her smile, her frank and encouraging look,” he remembered. “Real or not, her look was more luminous than the sun which was beginning to rise.” As it did, Frankl grasped the most important truth of his life: “The salvation of man is through love and in love.” He understood “how a man who has nothing left in this world may still know bliss, be it only for a brief moment, in the contemplation of his beloved.”

Frankl’s wife, along with his mother and father, was dead when his camp was liberated three years later. He had lost everything that could be taken from a prisoner except one thing: “the last of the human freedoms, to choose one’s attitude in any given circumstances, to choose one’s way,” as he wrote in his bestselling memoir, *Man’s Search for Meaning*. “The way in which a man accepts his fate and all the suffering it entails, the way in which he takes up his cross, gives him ample opportunity — even under the most difficult circumstances — to add a deeper meaning to his life.”
MARCH 27

Arthur Mitchell

*What does dance give you? The freedom to be who you are and do what you want to do.*

“The myth was that because you were black that you could not do classical dance. I proved that to be wrong,” says Arthur Mitchell, who founded the Dance Theatre of Harlem. A pivotal figure in the dance world for more than three decades and a self-described “political activist through dance,” Mitchell didn’t seem destined for success. He grew up in a Harlem neighborhood more conducive to being a gang member than a ballet student. His father left when he was 12 and Mitchell had to shine shoes to support his family. In his spare time, he learned to tap dance at the Police Athletic League glee club and when he was 13, a school guidance counselor encouraged him to audition for the New York High School for the Performing Arts. He was accepted and decided to make a life in classical ballet.

When he graduated from high school, he won a scholarship to study at the School of American Ballet, a famed institution associated with the New York City Ballet. And in 1955, he made his debut as the first African American in the ballet. Rising to the rank of principal, he performed in all the major ballets of the repertoire, and in 1957 he starred in Agon with white ballerina, Diana Adams. Although Mitchell danced the role with white partners throughout the world, he could not perform it on commercial TV before 1965 because states in the South refused to carry it.

Four years later, Mitchell heard that Martin Luther King, Jr. had been assassinated. The news shook him so much that he decided to help the black community of his childhood the best way he knew how: through dance. He began in 1969 with 30 kids in a church basement and two months later there were 400 youngsters attending class. Eventually, Mitchell used his personal savings to convert a garage into the company’s first real home. In Harlem, DTH created an explosion of professional opportunity in dance, music, and related theater activities. This success led the dance world to review its stereotypes and revise the boundaries that held talented people back.
MARCH 28

Saint Teresa of Avila

*Accustom yourself continually to make many acts of love, for they enkindle and melt the soul.*

Saint Teresa of Avila is known for her revelations and raptures, but her ecstatic love for God didn’t rob Teresa of her common sense. She was an extremely practical mystic who reformed her order of nuns, founded 17 convents, wrote four books — and loved good food. She taught her sisters to pray and read the saints’ lives, yet not be too grim. “A sad saint is a sad saint indeed,” she told them. “Long-faced saints make both virtue and themselves abhorrent” — not a wise move if you challenged established dogma during the Inquisition and came, as Teresa did, from a somewhat suspect background.

She was born in 1515 into a wealthy Spanish family whose members included conversos, or Jews who were forced by the church to convert to Christianity. Though attached to her parents, she ran away with her brother at age seven, hoping to find martyrdom among the Moors. Her faith didn’t stop her from becoming a normal teen who liked pretty clothes and boys. When she was 16, a flirtation with a male cousin led her father to pack her off to a Carmelite convent for lessons on how to be a lady.

Much to his shock, she decided to stay there and pursue a life of prayer. As a young nun, she was committed to caring for the sick, including a nun who was dying of a terrible disease that disgusted everyone — but not Teresa, who believed in following Christ’s example through good works and acts of charity for all, especially those most difficult to love “There is nothing annoying,” she thought, “that is not suffered easily by those who love one another.” And her own ability to love led many nuns to join her in embracing a simpler way of life.

One of these young nuns happened to stop by when Teresa was sitting in the convent’s kitchen savoring a big plate of partridge. Seeing the girl’s confusion, Teresa explained, “My child, there is a time for penance, but there is also a time for partridge.” That’s a balanced view of life and one we can all embrace, even if we’re not perfect saints.
MARCH 29

Pearl Bailey

*The deed of love is stronger than words.*

Pearl Bailey was America’s “ambassador of love.” The actress and singer with the sexy drawl and droll sense of humor never recognized color because her credo was “we are humans.” Her warmth helped her connect with the public and several presidents of the United States. Besides singing at Eisenhower’s inauguration, she served as U.S. Goodwill Ambassador to the UN under Ford, Reagan, and the elder Bush. She was also a favorite of Johnson, who came to see her in “Hello Dolly” when it played in Washington, DC. Waving to him at the curtain, she brought the house down with the remark, “I didn’t know this child was going to show up.” When she brought him on stage to sing along, it was the first time a president served as a chorus.

It was also the first time Dolly was performed by an all-black cast. When people criticized Bailey for it, she said, “I wasn’t hired to do an all-colored Dolly. It was just one of those things. A lot of talented people showed up, and what’s wrong with them having a job. What is good for the Negro? What is good for the Negro is good for every man. Every man has a place in this world, but no man has a right to designate that place.”

Her sense of justice and love went beyond her own race to embrace the world. She spoke out about threats to family life in our nation, and spent decades performing for the USO. In 1988, she toured the Persian Gulf to visit U.S. Navy personnel and addressed the UN about the need to fight AIDS.

She never minced words, as Nixon learned when he made her his Ambassador of Love. Her response was, “I will do anything for my country, but no one can use me.” And she was equally blunt after watching Ford’s State of the Union address on TV. “I kept hoping he would throw those damn papers in the air, and say, ‘Another thing, we’re going to clean up these buildings, clean the streets, and start progress.’ What the world really needs is more love and less paperwork,” she pointed out.
MARCH 30

Moses Maimonides

Never see in the patient anything but a fellow creature in pain.

What’s the best way of giving? Most of us just pop a check in the mail. But some driven philanthropists seek a “return” on their investment through concrete proof that they’re helping the world’s poor. This entrepreneurial take on charity has been called edgy. Yet it dates back to a twelfth-century rabbi and doctor who believed in giving with compassion and common sense. He developed a ladder of charity based on his own observations and the biblical commandments he’d learned as a boy.

Moses Maimonides was born in Spain to a distinguished rabbi and his wife, who died soon after her son’s birth. His father was his first teacher and exposed him to a wide range of religious and secular subjects. A precocious youth, Maimonides was writing religious treatises by the age of 16. After deciding to become a doctor, he rose to be the physician of Egypt’s sultan and spiritual head of the country’s Jews. For decades, he maintained a grueling schedule, combining medical practice, community leadership, scholarship, and teaching. In his last years, he also ran a charity clinic near his home.

With such an exhausting routine, it was a struggle fulfilling his oath to “never see in the patient anything but a fellow creature in pain.” Yet he managed to write 10 medical treatises where he took a holistic approach to his calling, stressing the importance of a “healthy mind in a healthy body.” He also produced three major scholarly studies, including the Mishneh Torah, a 14-volume code of Jewish law.

In it, he described a ladder of charity constructed of eight levels of giving from the lowest rung where “donations are given grudgingly” to the highest where we “anticipate charity by preventing poverty; assist the reduced fellow man, either by a considerable sum of money or by teaching him a trade or by putting him in the way of business so that he may earn an honest livelihood and not be forced to the dreadful alternative of holding out his hand for charity.” The best way of giving, as Maimonides knew, is to raise someone up so they no longer need your help.
MARCH 31

Cesar Chavez

We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community.

In 1966, Cesar Chavez led a 340-mile march from Delano, California, to Sacramento. The march was an attempt to make the state do something about collective bargaining rights for farm workers. It was also “the pilgrimage of a cultural minority who have suffered from a hostile environment,” Chavez explained. It ended on Easter Sunday with a rally of 10,000 at the steps of the state capitol.

Many of them were poor Mexican-American immigrants like Chavez, the first person to organize farm labor on a major scale. He was laboring in the apricot orchards outside San Jose in 1952 when he led a successful voter registration drive for Mexican Americans. A decade later he took his life savings of $1,200 and started the National Farm Workers Association, later to become the United Farm Workers, an organization based on tactics such as strikes, boycotts, pilgrimages and fasts.

“La Causa,” as the movement was known, drew on the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. Study of their lives convinced Chavez that “we can turn the world around if we do it nonviolently,” and he proved right in 1965 when the young union joined Filipino farm workers in a strike against Delano grape growers. To spotlight the strike, Chavez organized the march to Sacramento, leading to the first union contract between farm workers and a grower in U.S. history.

Chavez kept up the momentum by going on fasts and urging the public to make grapes a forbidden fruit. The boycott convinced 17 million to stop buying grapes and forced 26 growers to sign contracts with the union. In the 1970s, the UFW won tremendous wage increases and benefits for farm workers and Chavez became an icon. Still he never made more than $6,000 a year and always wore the simple, plaid shirt of a farm worker. When he died in 1993, 35,000 people accompanied his body on a four-mile procession. It was a fitting tribute to a man who showed that you can’t reverse social change. “You cannot humiliate the person who feels pride,” he said. “You cannot oppress the people who are not afraid anymore.”
APRIL
APRIL 1

Clara McBride Hale

*If you can’t hold children in your arms, please hold them in your heart.*

Clara Hale’s mission to care for kids began in the depths of the Depression. She was a 33-year-old widow with three kids, so she started caring for other children in her Harlem home to make ends meet. After providing day care and other respite services, she became a licensed foster parent in 1960 and took even more children into her home. She made sure their educations were not neglected, helped find permanent homes for homeless children, and guided parents at critical points in their lives. All these loving efforts earned her the affectionate nickname, Mother Hale.

By 1969, she had cared for 40 children and was looking forward to retirement after many years of work. Orphaned at 16, she had finished high school and become a domestic. She’d earned a rest, but fate intervened when a young woman and baby appeared on her doorstep. It was clear that the woman was a heroin addict, and Mother Hale said, “You must have the wrong house.” But she didn’t. The woman had a note from Mother Hale’s daughter, Lorraine, who had seen her on the street struggling to hold her baby. After reading it, Mother Hale went inside for a moment. When she returned, the mom had put the baby on the ground and disappeared. Other young mothers, many of them drug addicts, brought their babies, and a few years later local officials helped Mother Hale acquire a brownstone in Harlem. Hale House was born.

From then on Mother Hale rose to meet the challenges of the time. In the 1970s, her center expanded to include services for at-risk children and their families. In the 1980s, as the urban drug problem gave way to the AIDS crisis, Hale House responded by taking in children who were affected. In the 1990s, America’s drug problem spawned a grim new reality: an increase in the number of incarcerated women who were unable to care for their children. Mother Hale gave them all bed-time stories and big doses of kisses because she believed she was doing God’s work. Until her death at 87, she acted on her gospel: “Help one another. Love each other.”
Hans Christian Anderson

To be of use to the world is the only way to be happy

Hans Christian Anderson believed “every man’s life is a fairy tale written by God’s fingers.” And his life did seem like a fairy tale in many ways. Out of the hardships of his youth he came to be one of the most honored men of his time. Many of the more than 160 fairy tales he wrote depict characters who gain happiness after a hard life, just like their author.

He was born in 1805 in the slums of Odessa, Denmark, where his parents were very poor. His mother was a washerwoman. His father was a shoemaker who entertained young Hans with stories from The Arabian Nights and died when his son was eleven years old. Afterward, Anderson had to go to work, but he never stopped believing he would be famous. In 1819, he moved to Copenhagen, where he hoped to become an actor or playwright at the Royal Theater. The young man didn’t show much talent as an actor, but one of the theater directors raised money to send him to school, where the other students made fun of him for being gawky, clumsy, and poor. But even then he realized that “everything you look at can become a fairy tale, and you can get a story from everything you touch” — a thought he acted on as he began writing poems, books, and plays that met with some success.

At age 30, he wrote his first book of fairy tales and from then on his fame rapidly spread from country to country. Perhaps they touched so many hearts because Anderson put pieces of his own life into the tales. He never forgot that his mother as a young girl had been forced to go begging, and this led him to write “The Little Match Girl,” a story full of compassion for the poor. He also reflected on his own ordeals in “The Ugly Duckling,” which points out that the qualities that make you feel out of place can sometimes make you shine. “Being born in a duck yard doesn’t matter,” as he showed, “if only you are hatched from a swan’s egg.”
APRIL 3

John Burroughs

*For anything worth having one must pay the price; and the price is always work, patience, love, self-sacrifice; no paper currency, no promises to pay, but the gold of real service.*

John Burroughs taught millions of readers the art of seeing. In more than 300 articles and 27 books, he created the modern nature essay and inspired the conservation movement. Using easily understood prose, he brought his readers closer to nature by sharing his sense of place and purpose in the land. “I go to nature to be soothed and healed,” he told them, “and to have my senses put in order.”

He learned to love nature while growing up on the farm in the Catskills where he was born in 1837. As a child, he spent many hours on the slopes of Old Clump Mountain, looking off to the higher peaks of the Catskills, which he would write about later on. While working on the family farm, he was enthralled by the return of the birds each spring, and he, too, would return to the Catskills after teaching and holding government positions in Washington, DC. While there, he read the poetry of Walt Whitman and met Whitman, who encouraged Burroughs to develop his nature writing. The result was the publication of *Wake-Robin*, Burroughs’ first collection of nature essays, in 1871.

The great poet was also among Burroughs’ visitors after he returned to his roots in 1874. After settling on a nine-acre farm near the Hudson River, he devoted his life to writing and gardening. In 1895, he purchased a nearby tract of land and built a two-story cabin that he used as a place to write and entertain. He called the cabin Slabsides and it informed many of the essays in which he described nature close at hand. They inspired national leaders to preserve the land and led generations of readers to head outdoors. When they did, Burroughs urged them to realize that heaven was all around them. “To find the universal elements enough; to find the air and water exhilarating; to be refreshed by a morning walk or an evening saunter,” he rhapsodized, “to be thrilled by the stars at night; to be elated over a bird’s nest or a wildflower in spring — these are some of the rewards of a simple life.”
Maya Angelou

Our greatest urge is to be loved. The need to be loved is fundamental. It is love that holds us together as human beings.

At age 41, Maya Angelou gained literary fame with *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, describing the racism and abuse she had endured as a child. The first volume of her six memoirs focused on growing up in her grandmother’s care in segregated Stamps, Arkansas, and on her rape by her mother’s boyfriend at age 7, “a breaking and entering when even the senses are torn apart.” After she spoke her attacker’s name, he was found kicked to death behind a slaughterhouse. Convinced that her voice had the power to kill, she fell silent for nearly five years until her love for literature helped restore her use of language. As a teenager, living with her mother in San Francisco, she studied dance and drama at the California Labor School and became the first black woman to work as a streetcar conductor in the city. At 16, after a casual encounter with a neighborhood youth, she became a single mom.

This history of struggle might have crushed a lesser will, but Angelou was determined “not merely to survive but to thrive.” She moved into nightclub dancing and from there began a career in the arts that spanned over 60 years. She sang cabaret and calypso, danced with Alvin Ailey, acted on Broadway, directed for film and TV, and became active in the civil rights movement. Amidst this flurry of activity, she also wrote more than 30 books, including poetry, essays, and her six autobiographies.

Her writing attracted a mass audience of readers who were drawn to her themes of cultivating love, conquering injustice, and breaking out of silence. More than any autobiographer before her, she conveyed how the forces of racism and sexism played out on the individual level. “If growing up is painful for the southern black girl, being aware of her displacement is the rust on the razor that threatens the throat,” she wrote in the *Caged Bird*. But she didn’t let society still her lyrical voice. “You may not control all the events that happen to you,” she contended, “but you can decide not to be reduced by them.”
Colin Powell

*Giving back involves a certain amount of giving up.*

Colin Powell believes he fulfilled his promise, thanks to two hardworking immigrant parents and other caring adults. Their influence helped the one-time C student become the first black chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 65th U.S. secretary of state, and a prominent advocate for underprivileged youth. “I’ve seen so many kids who are not doing well, who are in homes that are broken,” he says. “I think I have an obligation to do something about it.” And he’s done so as founder of America’s Promise, a national network dedicated to investment in underprivileged kids.

Since 1997, Powell’s nonprofit has enlisted over 500 organizations in its mission to help America’s youth by carrying out five promises: ongoing relationships with caring adults, safe places with structured activities during non-school hours, a healthy start in life, marketable skills through effective education, and chances to give back through community service. His own commitment to giving back has convinced corporate America to donate over $295 million, providing more than 10 million children with crucial services. And Powell would like to make sure every American child has help pulling “the little red wagon” that serves as his group’s logo. “It’s a symbol of childhood,” he explains. “It could be filled with a child’s hopes and dreams or weighed down with their burdens. Millions of American children need our help to pull that wagon along.” So “let’s all pull together,” as he says in the speeches he gives to companies and schools.

He made one of them to a group of students after the election of Barack Obama. “I was born into a country where I was a second-class citizen,” he told the students. “Now we have a black president. In this country, nothing can hold you back. No more excuses.” That’s especially true when it comes to giving back, he stressed when he announced Obama’s Renew America Initiative, asking all Americans to do community service. And one of the most important ways for us to fulfill our own promise, he says, is by working to build our children. “Our children are not the problem. They are the future. They are America’s promise.”
APRIL 6

James Watson

*For all my life, America was the place to be. And we somehow continue to be the place where there are real opportunities to change the world for the better.*

“I think people are born curious and have it pounded out of them,” said James Watson, the man who co-discovered the structure of DNA. Fortunately, Watson never lost his interest in learning new things. At age 12, he was one of radio’s high-IQ whiz kids. He entered the University of Chicago when he was 15. He received his BS in zoology four years later and went on to earn a PhD at Indiana University. By 25, he was working with Francis Crick at Cambridge, where the two men attempted to determine the chemical structure of living matter. When their initial research failed to produce results, the directors of the lab ordered them to end their investigation, but they continued their work in secret. On February 28, 1953, they made the discovery that earned them a Nobel Prize.

Watson and Crick’s understanding of DNA’s double helix structure paved the way for astounding breakthroughs in genetics and medicine, and Watson’s 1968 memoir of the discovery, *The Double Helix*, changed the way the public perceives scientists, thanks to his candid account of the personality conflicts on the project. Watson later saw more of science’s inside world when he directed the Cold Spring Harbor Lab, where he guided scientists in uncovering the molecular nature of cancer and identifying cancer genes for the first time. He would go on to run the Human Genome Project at the National Institutes of Health, and in 2007, he put his fully sequenced genome online in an effort to encourage personalized medicine and early detection and prevention of diseases with a genetic component.

It is his hope that genetic science will soon conquer cancer and mental illness. “Final victory is within our grasp,” he said. “I wish to be among those at the victory line.” He has also helped others achieve victories of their own by supporting higher education. In 2014, he sold his Nobel Prize for $4.1 million and used most of the funds to support the educational institutions that had nurtured him. “As an educator,” he explained, “I have always striven to see that the fruits of the American dream are available to all.”
Saint Francis Xavier

*Sometimes people are helped by your telling of your own lamentable past.*

All of us are called to “go and preach to all nations,” says Matthew 28:19. Saint Francis Xavier took these words to heart as a missionary who travelled the world. Everywhere he went he was guided by the belief that “if you wish to bring forth much fruit, both for yourselves and for your neighbors, and to live consoled, converse with sinners, making them unburden themselves to you. These are the living fruits by which you are to study both for your preaching and your own consolation,” he told a fellow priest who was about to set off for Peru. “I do not say that you should not on occasion read written books,” he added because he, himself, had read many as a young philosophy teacher with a promising career.

Xavier was 24 and living in Paris when he became friends with Ignatius of Loyola, who convinced him to use his talents to spread God’s word. Xavier then made the spiritual exercises under the direction of Ignatius, and in 1534 joined his fledgling community, the Society of Jesus. Together in Montmartre, they vowed poverty, chastity, and service.

This vow took him to Venice, where he was ordained a priest in 1537, then to India’s west coast. For the next 10 years, he worked to convert such widely scattered peoples as the Hindus, Malayans, and Japanese. Wherever he went, he lived with the poorest people, struggling to learn their language and sharing their lives. He spent countless hours ministering to the sick, especially lepers, and often had no time to sleep.

The hardships he went through caught up with him when he was on a ship to China. A hundred miles from Hong Kong, he fell ill and the sailors left him at the beach on the island of Sancian. After a Portuguese merchant brought him into a ramshackle hut, he prayed continually until his death. Despite all he had endured he died believing that “it is not the actual physical exertion that counts toward a man’s progress, nor the nature of the task, but the spirit of faith with which it is undertaken.”
April 8

Mary Pickford

What do people go to the theatre for? An emotional exercise. I am a servant of the people. I have never forgotten that.

“The girl with the golden curls” had a golden heart. Mary Pickford was a film celebrity, film studio founder, producer, and philanthropist to boot. She made her name as “America’s sweetheart” when movies were black and white and silent. Her small stature and innocent air made her ideally suited to play young girls in films like *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* and *The Little Princess*. Even though she didn’t speak on film, her life story speaks volumes.

Born in Toronto, Canada, in 1893, she became a child actress at age 5 after her father’s death. At age 14 she was on Broadway, and at 16 she became a Biograph Player, working with director D.W. Griffith. Like the other players in Griffith’s stock company, her name was not listed in the credits, but audiences noticed her right away. Gradually, she rose through the ranks of the theater and then the silver screen, acting in more than 175 movies between 1909 and 1939. By the time she married her second husband, Douglas Fairbanks, Sr., with whom she co-founded United Artists along with Charlie Chaplin and D.W. Griffith, she was as big a star as you can get.

She and Fairbanks were anointed “The King and Queen of Hollywood,” and she used her stature in the movie industry to support a variety of causes. During World War I, she promoted the sale of Liberty Bonds through an exhausting series of fundraising speeches that kicked off in Washington, DC. Five days later, she spoke on Wall Street to an estimated 50,000 people. Though Canadian-born, she was a powerful symbol of Americana, kissing the American flag for cameras and auctioning one of her world-famous curls for $15,000. In a single speech in Chicago, she sold an estimated five million dollars’ worth of bonds, and her sweet heart led her to keep giving back when the war came to an end. In 1921 she conceived the Motion Picture Relief Fund to help financially needy actors. She knew the film business could be tough, so she urged them to remember that “failure is not falling down; it is not getting up again.”
J. William Fulbright

Man’s struggle to be rational about himself, about his relationship to his own society and to other peoples and nations involves a constant search for understanding among all peoples and all cultures.

“In democracy, dissent is an act of faith,” said J. William Fulbright. The Arkansas Democrat acted on this conviction as a senator during 30 years of cold war and domestic upheaval, 15 of them as chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. During this time, he left a lasting imprint on foreign policy by speaking out against the “arrogance of power.” He also left his mark on education by establishing the Fulbright fellowship for international study. His skepticism about the statements of his own government, stemming from the Gulf of Tonkin incident off Vietnam in 1964, helped rally opposition to the Vietnam War.

What was most amazing about him was the degree to which he acted as a critic while standing in the halls of power. That has seldom happened in U.S. history, but Fulbright believed “the legislator is an indispensable guardian of our freedom.” As a result, his Senate career was marked by notable instances of dissent. In 1954, he was the only senator to vote against an appropriation for the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, which was chaired by Senator Joseph R. McCarthy; and in 1961, he lodged serious objections to President Kennedy in advance of the Bay of Pigs invasion. He was especially outspoken during the turbulent Vietnam War era, when he chaired the Senate hearings on U.S. policy and the conduct of the war. “The price of empire is America’s soul, and that price is too high,” he noted grimly in 1967. Troubled over the gradual escalation of the war, he went on national TV to warn Americans that “power confuses itself with virtue and tends also to take itself for omnipotence.”

If America has a role to play in the world, he contended, it is serving as an example of international peace and social purpose. His commitment to spreading those values led him to sponsor the Fulbright Scholars Act, creating a flagship international educational program. Since its inception in 1946, the Fulbright Program has fostered bilateral partnerships in which citizens and governments of other countries work with the U.S. to set joint priorities and shape the program to meet shared needs.
William Booth

*I want to see a new translation of the Bible into the hearts and conduct of living men and women.*

When William Booth died 150,000 people filed by the casket and 40,000 attended his funeral. It was a remarkable end for a man who was born into poverty and worked in the midst of poverty his whole life. But Booth was a remarkable person who earned the title “Prophet of the Poor” as founder and first general of the Salvation Army, an organization that brings social and spiritual salvation to the poor.

His war cry was “Go for souls, and go for the worst” when he left the comfort of a London pulpit in 1865 and took his message into the streets, where it would reach the destitute, homeless, and hungry. His original aim was to send converts to established churches of the day, but he realized the poor did not feel welcome in the pews of most English churches. So Booth decided to create a church especially for them. At the East London Christian Mission, he and his followers held daily meetings to offer salvation to society’s dregs, including prostitutes, criminals, and alcoholics. They also practiced what they preached by opening soup kitchens and performing arduous social work.

Deciding he needed to revitalize his church, Booth changed its name to the Salvation Army, modeling it after the military with its own music, uniform, and flag. He became the General and his other ministers were given ranks in an “army of the revolution” that was “recruited by the soldiers of despair.”

At first Booth struggled to keep his mission going, but he believed “God loves with a great love the man whose heart is bursting with a passion for the impossible.” So he persevered as the Salvation Army grew from 10 people to become a global organization that has since cared for over 164,000 orphans. During his lifetime, Booth established the Army in over 58 countries, traveling extensively and holding salvation meetings. It was exhausting work, but Booth was determined to save as many people as he could. “If I thought I could win one more soul for the Lord,” he once said, “by walking on my toes and playing the tambourine, I’d learn how!”
APRIL 11

Annie Dodge Wauneka

Let’s talk about my people and what they need.

Annie Wauneka broke custom to become a health crusader and the first woman elected to the Navajo Tribal Council. For many years starting in the 1950s, she travelled to villages and clinics, covering the 24,000 square-mile territory of the Navajo Nation to preach public health standards. She cut a striking figure in her traditional Navajo clothing, including silver jewelry and a colorful shawl, as she strived to bridge the gap between traditional healers and medical doctors. Over the years, she urged the Navajo to adopt more modern dwellings and worked to improve the quality of water on the reservation. She also helped many people get medical attention after generations of reliance on tradition, lowered infant mortality, and received much of the credit for defeating tuberculosis among her people.

Her concern with public health could be traced to her grade school years at the end of World War I when many Navajos died from the flu. She escaped with a mild case, and even as an eight-year-old, helped the overworked nurse at her school in Arizona. Her formal education ended in the 11th grade, when she began tending to the needs of her tribe at the side of her father, who had become head of the Tribal Council. “From my childhood,” she once recalled, “I have been aware of the problems of my tribe and wanted to help them.”

The obstacles posed by tradition meant this goal took tremendous dedication. Among her greatest frustrations were the objections of tribal medicine makers to new ways, including modern approaches to contagious disease. She conceded that the medicine makers performed much good work, especially in family matters. At the same time, “the Navajo is caught between,” she said. “I must convince them to accept a mixture.” And her success in doing so led the U.S. surgeon general to put her on the Advisory Committee on Indian Health, where she continued lobbying for her tribe. “When I see something that is not right,” she explained, “I try to do something or say something.” What she succeeded in doing earned her a Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1963 and made her people proud.
Henry Clay

_Government is a trust, and the officers of the government are trustees; and both the trust and the trustees are created for the benefit of the people._

“I would rather be right than president,” said Henry Clay. His passion for doing the right thing made him one of America’s best-loved politicians, though his elaborate scheming raised some hackles. Throughout it all, he remained a statesman with an uncanny knack for brokering differences, finding the middle ground, and soothing opposing passions into reconciliation. His opposition to slavery led him to fail five times in his consuming goal to become president, but he won lasting fame in the role of “The Great Compromiser” who preserved the Union. Active on the national stage for over 40 years, he served as speaker of the House longer than any man in the 19th century, as secretary of state under John Quincy Adams, and as a key member of the Senate.

His tremendous influence allowed him to craft major legislative compromises in an attempt to resolve the sectional struggles that would spark the Civil War. In the House, he promoted the Missouri Compromise of 1820, and in the Senate he pushed through the Compromise of 1850, both measures designed to solve the problem of admitting new western states while maintaining a delicate balance between the free states of the North and the slave states of the South. In 1850, Clay’s “omnibus bill” offered concessions to the North, such as admitting California as a free state and abolishing the slave trade in Washington, DC, but also provided solace to the South by enacting a tougher fugitive slave law.

When the Senate met in February 1850, Clay was weakened by rapidly advancing tuberculosis, but he made a dynamic, two-day speech before his colleagues in support of his legislation. As he discussed each part of the bill, Clay argued that the South would be much better able to resolve its differences with the North by remaining a part of the Union and warned that secession would result in a bloody civil war. “I know no South, no North, No East, No West to which I owe allegiance,” he said in the debate over the compromise. “My allegiance is to this Union.” They were words that kept the country together until 1861.
APRIL 13

Thomas Jefferson

The care of human life and happiness is the first and only legitimate object of good government.

Thomas Jefferson wanted to be remembered for three things according to the epitaph he wrote. “Here was buried Thomas Jefferson,” his gravestone reads, “Author of the Declaration of American Independence, of the Statute of Virginia for religious freedom & Father of the University of Virginia.” Though Jefferson was America’s third president, second vice president, and first secretary of state, he didn’t consider these his most significant achievements. Jefferson wanted to be known as a philosopher instead of a politician because he considered this pursuit to be nobler.

And his belief in the innate nobility of the common man guided him when he wrote the Declaration of Independence. This groundbreaking document conveys his conviction “that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Protecting these rights led Jefferson, more than any of the Founding Fathers to fixate on minimizing government and maximizing personal freedom. While serving as U.S. minister to France, he wrote numerous influential letters noting the absence of term limits and a bill of rights in the new federal Constitution. “A bill of rights,” he urged James Madison, “is what the people are entitled to against every just government, and what no just government should refuse or rest on inference.”

He made sure his new nation’s government remained just by seeking to establish a federal government of limited powers. In the 1800 presidential election, Jefferson and Aaron Burr deadlocked, creating a constitutional crisis. But once Jefferson received enough votes in the Electoral College, he and the defeated incumbent, John Adams, established the principle that power would be passed peacefully from losers to victors in presidential elections. As president he also stood by his principles by ending the importation of slaves and maintaining the separation of church and state during his two terms in office. And in his retirement, he founded the University of Virginia to develop citizens who would be dedicated to freedom and public service. “Educate and inform the whole mass of people,” he advised. “They are the only sure reliance for the preservation of our liberty.”
Arnold Toynbee

Compassion is the desire that moves the individual self to widen the scope of its self-concern to embrace the whole of the universal self.

One day soon after the end of the First World War, Professor Arnold Toynbee was strolling along the Buckingham Palace Road when he felt a sudden connection with all of the past and all of the future. It was as though he were a node in the continuum of time, he wrote some years later. Looking back, he described “the passage of history flowing through me in a mighty current” and “my own life welling like a wave in the flow of this vast tide.”

He also realized his mission was to relate past, present, and future in one meaningful whole. The result was A Study of History, 12 copious volumes offering a new vision of the ages. While most historians depicted the past as a series of random events, Toynbee saw it as pattern of civilizations that lived and died in regular cycles. In an age of scholars who pronounced God dead, Toynbee maintained that the end of history is “God revealing himself.”

This spiritual model of history turned the English don into a star. When Oxford University Press launched an abridged version of the Study, it quickly vanished from bookstores. In 1947, Time put Toynbee on its cover and hailed him as a prophet of America’s postwar future. Readers hearkened to Toynbee’s plea for the U.S. to champion Christian civilization against the dark forces of communism.

The Study moved the public by speaking to both past and present. The first volumes, stressing the destructive impact of war, appeared in 1934, a year before Hitler’s rise to power. WWII and the Cold War followed, trailed by the publication of the last volumes in 1954. By then Toynbee had come to despair of western civilization and argue that only a “deliberate advance towards brotherhood” could save us in the nuclear age. “Now that mankind’s collective power is within sight of becoming able to extinguish all human life, and perhaps all life of any kind on the face of the planet, the works of righteousness are being demanded of us urgently, not only for their own sake, but by our concern for self-preservation.”
APRIL 15

A. Philip Randolph

A community is democratic only when the humblest and weakest person can enjoy the highest civil, economic, and social rights that the biggest and most powerful possess.

A. Philip Randolph had a talent for organization that led Martin Luther King, Jr. to call him “the dean of negro leaders.” Randolph was the principal organizer of the 1963 March on Washington, at which King delivered his “I Have a Dream Speech.” When his turn came to speak, Randolph discussed the goals of the demonstration that brought nearly 25,000 people together. “We are the advanced guard of a massive moral revolution for jobs and freedom,” he told the crowd. “We want a free, democratic society dedicated to the political, economic, and social advancement of man along moral lines.” This civil rights revolution must use “the spirit and techniques that built the labor movement,” he explained, because “you can’t take anything without organization.”

Randolph knew the power of organization because he had been bringing people together since graduating from college in 1911. While living in Harlem, he joined his friend, Chandler Owen, in starting an employment agency for black workers and founding The Messenger, an African-American journal critical of American involvement in World War I. The war over, he founded the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and managed to gain recognition of it from Pullman Palace Car Company in 1937. When the union signed its first contract with the company, membership rose to nearly 15,000, and this success gave Randolph the clout to take on the government of the United States. He helped convince FDR to ban discrimination in the defense industry in 1941 and President Truman to desegregate the armed forces in 1948.

During the 1950s, Randolph served as a principal member of various labor boards and also began to devote time to the civil rights movement. Working with King, Randolph organized a prayer pilgrimage to Washington, DC, and a series of Youth Marches for Integrated Schools. The 1963 march was the fulfillment of his dreams, leading to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. While King gets most of the credit for these legislative triumphs, we shouldn’t ignore Randolph’s relentless fight for civil rights. He knew that “justice is never given; it is exacted and the struggle for freedom is never a final fact.”
APRIL 16

Charlie Chaplin

Let us fight for a world of reason, a world where science and progress will lead to all men’s happiness.

In 1914, an icon shuffled onto the silver screen. He wore a too-small coat, too-large pants, shoes on the wrong feet, and a battered derby. He sported a postage-stamp mustache and carried a cane. He was “a tramp, a gentlemen, a poet, a dreamer,” said Charlie Chaplin, the man who brought him to life. And the Little Tramp was much like Chaplin who knew what it was like to be poor because his father was an alcoholic and his mother was a psychotic. At age ten, he came to know the poorhouses and shabby streets of London where he sometimes spent the night. This childhood misery would have broken a lesser soul, but he believed “to truly laugh, you must be able to take your pain and play with it.”

He would use comedy to express his pain and that of the world after conquering Hollywood, where he went on to direct his own films. His 1931 masterpiece, City Lights, follows the Tramp’s misadventures as he falls in love with a blind girl and tries to pay for the operation needed to restore her sight. It was a huge success, and more acclaim came in 1936 with Modern Times, in which he played a factory worker who is dehumanized by the mindless task he has to perform. “Unemployment is the vital question,” Chaplin said when discussing the film. “Machinery should benefit mankind. It should not spell tragedy and throw it out of work.”

But unemployment was rife as Chaplin saw in the early thirties when he visited Europe. While there he also witnessed the rise of fascism, inspiring him to make a film that mocked the regimes of Hitler and Mussolini. In The Great Dictator, Chaplin played a dual role: Hynkel, a dictator who wants to become emperor of the world, and a kindly Jewish barber who is mistaken for him. The film was full of gags but Chaplin’s goal was clear in the iconic speech that closed the film. “We want to live by each other’s happiness, not by each other’s misery,” the barber says as he impersonates Hynkel. “In this world there is room for everyone.”
Thornton Wilder

There is a land of the living and a land of the dead; love is the bridge, the key to survival.

Thornton Wilder wanted to show how much of human experience is universal. “I am not interested in the ephemeral — such things as the adulteries of dentists. I am interested in those things that repeat and repeat and repeat in the lives of millions,” he explained. And he touched millions of hearts as one of the greatest playwrights of the 20th century. Author of seven novels, three plays, many essays and articles, he is the only writer to win the Pulitzer Prize for both literature and drama.

He’s best known for his classic 1938 play, Our Town. It puts plain-spoken lyricism on an empty stage as it explores life — from childhood to marriage to death — in the fictional town of Grover’s Corners. Wilder’s simple story follows the daily existence of the Gibbs and Webb families to demonstrate the value of appreciating life. This message is clear in a much-quoted speech by Emily Webb, who returns to earth for a day, after dying in childbirth. “Goodbye to clocks ticking — and my butternut tree,” she says. “And Mama’s sunflowers — and food and coffee — and new-ironed dresses and hot baths — and sleeping and waking up! Oh Earth, you’re too wonderful for anyone to realize you! Do any humans ever realize life while they live it — every, every minute!”

Life is fleeting and fragile as Wilder showed in The Bridge of San Luis Rey, his 1927 novel of several unrelated people who happen to be on a bridge when it collapses, leading to their deaths. The book explores the question of why bad things happen to people who don’t seem to deserve them. That may be the human condition, Wilder suggests in The Skin of Our Teeth about a family facing war and other disasters. “I’ve never forgotten that life is a struggle,” the father says in the tragicomic play. “I know that every good and excellent thing in this world stands moment by moment on the razor edge of danger and must be fought for — whether it is a field, or a home, or a country.” When tragedy strikes, “the most important thing of all” is “the desire to begin again, to start building.”
APRIL 18

Carl Hammerschlag

*It is not enough just to make a living. You have to make a difference.*

The “healing doc,” as Carl Hammerschlag calls himself, is an internationally known speaker, author, storyteller, and humanitarian. A Yale-trained psychiatrist, he spent more than 20 years working with Native Americans, who showed him the value of healing in community. His journey from doctor to healer began after he finished his medical training and went to Indian country to fill his military obligation as an alternative to going to Vietnam. While there, he met an Indian medicine man who taught him how to dance. Like most Western-trained physicians, he was an expert in the disease model — one that emphasized the identification and treatment of pathology. Over the next 40 years, he learned how to expand that disease model to a paradigm of healing.

Now one of the world’s leading proponents of psychoneuroimmunology, or mind/body/spirit medicine, he is a faculty member at the University of Arizona Medical School and founder of the Turtle Island Project, a multidisciplinary nonprofit whose programs integrate the principles of mind/body/spirit medicine with Native American ceremonies and rites to move health care ahead. The future of health care, he says, lies less in treating disease than in predicting and preventing it. “We must move beyond acute care and emergency rooms to a community-based model with lots of support and healing resources. When we heal in community, it actually makes a healthy outcome more likely because everyone has a stake in the outcome.”

The role of community in our wellbeing is a central theme of his three critically acclaimed books: *The Dancing Healers, The Theft of the Spirit,* and *Healing Ceremonies.* He is also the author of three children’s books that help kids tackle the issues of love, loss, and relationships with elders. He holds the highest honor given in the speaking profession, the CPAE Speakers Hall of Fame, for his spellbinding presentations to audiences around the globe. And he has been recognized for his success in inspiring people to see beyond their limitations, celebrate their choices, and sustain their connections. “We are not here just for ourselves,” he says. “You have to give to others as much as you have been given.”
APRIL 19

Paul P. Harris

Of all the hundred and one ways in which men can make themselves useful to society, undoubtedly the most available and often the most effective are within the spheres of their own occupations.

In the fall of 1900, Paul P. Harris met fellow attorney Bob Frank for dinner on the north side of Chicago. As they walked around the area, they stopped at shops along the way. Harris was impressed by how many shopkeepers Frank was friendly with because he hadn’t seen this kind of camaraderie among businessmen since moving to Chicago in 1896. He wondered if there was a way to channel it because it reminded him of growing up in Wallingford, Vermont. “The thought persisted that I was experiencing only what had happened to hundreds, perhaps thousands of others in the great city,” he recalled. “I was sure there must be many other young men who had come from farms and small villages to establish themselves. Why not bring them together? If others were longing for fellowship as I was, something would come of it.”

And something did in February 1905 when Harris gathered with several associates in the Unity Building in downtown Chicago. This was the first meeting of the Rotary Club, an organization devoted to “fellowship and friendship.” As the club grew by leaps and bounds, Harris urged its members to do community service. “Life is a scheme of service,” he told them, “and the sooner that fact is understood, the more readily we shall be able to adjust ourselves, the larger our reward, the more abundant our happiness.”

They were words that inspired the members of the club to make a difference by helping the needy of Chicago. Seeing their achievements, Harris began campaigning for Rotary Clubs in other cities, and soon the clubs spread to San Francisco, crossed the Canadian border to Winnipeg, spanned the sea to Britain and eventually the world. By the time Harris died, the clubs had 200,000 members in 75 countries, and they now have over a million members in 230 countries. They offer literacy programs, provide scholarships, run student exchange programs, partner with universities to create peace centers, and work to end polio throughout the world. Whatever their race, color, or creed, Rotarians all embrace the slogan Harris set out over one hundred years ago: “Service above self.”
David Brainerd

There is nothing in the world worth living for but doing good and finishing God’s work.

David Brainerd would have been rejected as a missionary candidate by almost every standard known to missionary boards. He was sickly and showed signs of tuberculosis in 1739 when he began to study for the ministry at Yale. He never finished college because he was expelled from Yale for attending meetings of the “New Lights” revival movement, and he suffered often from depression. Yet he became a missionary to the American Indians and a pioneer of modern missionary work. What drove him was this goal: “Let me forget the world and be swallowed up in the desire to glorify God.”

He began fulfilling it as an itinerant preacher, filling pulpits of New Lights sympathizers throughout New England and New York. In the process, he gained the admiration of many clergymen, including Jonathan Dickinson, commissioner of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, who urged Brainerd to devote himself to missionary work. From 1743 to 1747, he ministered to Indians in Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, where he constructed a church, infirmary, carpenter’s shop, and school. Wandering along in the woods, he was frequently soaked to the skin by rain and chilled to the bone by snow and wind. An inadequate diet left him weak, and his ministry was interspersed with frequent illness.

He also suffered from spiritual turmoil and distress, as his diary made clear. “Oh how precious is time and how it pains me to see it slide away while I do so little to any good purpose,” he fretted. And his time was precious indeed because his constitution could not stand up to the hardships of frontier living. By April 1747, he left New Jersey for the home of his friend, Jonathan Edwards, in Northampton, Massachusetts, where he died the following October. In 1749, Edwards published a biography of Brainerd, drawn from the diaries he left behind. Since then missionaries worldwide have been inspired by Brainerd’s wish to burn himself out for God. “I long to be a flame of fire,” he prayed, “continually glowing in the divine service in building Christ’s kingdom to my last and dying moment.”
APRIL 21

John Muir

One touch of nature makes all the world kin.

“In every walk with nature, one receives more than he seeks,” said John Muir, an eloquent apostle for the gospel of nature. He learned to love the great outdoors while growing up in the 1850s in central Wisconsin. Unfortunately, this beautiful rural area didn’t hold many prospects for a young man who was a talented mechanic and inventor. At 23, he began travelling around the Midwest where he worked in a variety of industrial jobs. A promising career seemed to be in store for him until an accident changed his direction in life.

While working in an Indianapolis factory for wagon parts, Muir’s hand slipped, and a file he was using cut the cornea of his left eye. Not long after, his right eye also failed for a time and the ordeal of being blind for several weeks led him to rethink his plans. “The mountains are calling and I must go,” he thought as he embarked on a 1,000-mile walking tour of the American West.

During his ramblings, he was especially moved by the Sierra Nevada range in California, where he found his calling. Drawing on the ideas of American transcendentalists like Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, Muir argued that wild nature offered a “window opening into heaven, a mirror reflecting the Creator.” In 1892 his love for the area of the Sierra Nevada led him to join several other early preservationists to form the Sierra Club. During 22 years as president of the club, he never stopped stressing the importance of preserving wilderness as a place where thousands of “tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people” could find spiritual and physical rebirth.

This plea made an impact on President Theodore Roosevelt, who took a three-day camping trip with Muir in 1903. Muir was able to convince Roosevelt to return Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove to federal protection in 1903. For the millions who’ve been there, these cathedrals of nature have filled a basic human need. “Everybody needs beauty as well as bread,” as Muir understood, “places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul.”
APRIL 22

Jim Langevin

*Remember your responsibility to give back. We all have gifts and talents — things we can do better than anyone else.*

Congressman Jim Langevin has put a face on the disabled as the first quadriplegic to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives. “My life experiences have taught me that great challenges present us with great opportunities,” he says as he recalls the freak accident that paralyzed him as a teen and ended his dreams of joining the police. The damages he endured allowed him to prove that “individuals with disabilities remain one of our nation’s greatest untapped resources.”

This belief has led him to serve as co-chair of the Bipartisan Disabilities Caucus and play a key role in the full implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Since 1990, when the ADA was passed, “court decisions have increasingly narrowed the definition of disability to exclude many Americans who are discriminated against in the workplace based on a legitimate disabling condition,” Langevin explains. So he labored to pass the ADA Amendments Act, which upholds the ideals of equality and opportunity on which this country was founded.

To strengthen these ideals, Langevin advocates for more access to community services and supports. “By further exploring and supporting home and community-based programs, as well as other community supports like respite care, we can reduce costs to the system and improve the quality of care for individuals with disabilities across their lifespan.” And their loved ones also need help, so Langevin supports respite services for full-time family caregivers of the disabled and aged. In addition, he has opposed proposals to privatize Social Security and end the Medicare guarantee. “We must not weaken programs on which so many depend,” he says, “including both the seniors of today and tomorrow.”

He gave both age groups a lesson in courage on the 20th birthday of the ADA when he became the first lawmaker in a wheelchair to preside over the House. As he took the speaker’s rostrum, he recalled the bullet that shattered his dreams and showed him you can turn challenges into new chances. “I learned that a badge and a gun aren’t the only ways to make a difference. You can also change the world with a ballot ... a pen ... a creative mind.”
APRIL 23

Gordon Hirabayashi

*I consider it my duty to maintain the democratic standards for which this nation lives.*

Gordon Hirabayashi was imprisoned for defying the federal government’s internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. The challenge he posed to the internment order made him a central figure in a controversy that resonated long after the war’s end. By bringing a lawsuit before the U.S. Supreme Court, Hirabayashi emerged as a symbol of protest against unchecked government powers in a time of war.

Two months after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1943, FDR signed an executive order calling for those of Japanese ancestry to be evacuated “as protection against espionage and sabotage.” More than 100,000 people were transported to internment camps ringed with barbed wire, but Hirabayashi was not among them. The son of Japanese immigrants, he was a 24-year-old college senior when the government ordered him and his family to board a bus headed for a “relocation center.” After bidding his family goodbye, Hirabayashi turned himself in to the FBI and presented a statement: “This order for the mass evacuation of all persons of Japanese descent denies them the right to live. I consider it my duty to maintain the democratic standards for which this nation lives. Therefore, I must refuse this order of evacuation.”

His refusal led a Seattle federal court to sentence him to several months in prison, and in 1943, his appeal made its way to the U.S. Supreme Court where he lost. His case seemingly closed, Hirabayashi went on to earn a PhD and teach college. He was working at the University of Alberta when historian Peter Irons found documents at the Justice Department showing that the government purposely withheld intelligence reports saying that Japanese Americans posed no threat to the United States.

Using the new evidence, Hirabayashi reopened his case, and in September 1987, a three-member panel of a federal appeals court in San Francisco unanimously overturned his conviction — a triumph that vindicated Hirabayashi’s enduring belief in the Constitution. “The U.S. government admitted it made a mistake,” he said. “A country that can do that is a strong country. I have more faith and allegiance to the Constitution than I ever had before.”
APRIL 24

Saint Vincent de Paul

*Charity is the cement which binds communities to God and persons to one another.*

“You should never tread on the heels of Providence,” said Vincent de Paul, “but if Providence opens the way, you should run.” They are words that characterize this saint who “ran” with every chance to provide for the spiritual and material needs of the poor. His compassion, humility, and generosity earned him renown as the “Great Apostle of Charity” who told people, “Go to the poor; you will find God.”

That was where Vincent first found God because he had grown up poor in the village of Pouy, France. His father was a peasant farmer, and Vincent spent many of his early years herding the family’s livestock. As a youth, he also showed a talent for reading and writing, and he had the chance to develop it after his father sold the family’s oxen to send him to seminary school. In 1600, at age 19, he was ordained a priest. Five years later, he was on a ship to Marseilles when he fell into the hands of African pirates and was sold into slavery in Tunis. He preached constantly to his slave masters and managed to convert the third one, with whom he travelled to Rome. After returning to France, he became chaplain on a noble’s estate, where he was disturbed to see the destitution of the people and laziness of the clergy.

These observations led him to renounce his ambition of living out his priesthood in comfort and pledge his life to serving the poor. In 1625, he founded his own community, the Congregation of the Mission, which was devoted to working among the poor and training priests. Some eight years later, he founded the Daughters of Charity, a group of women who collected funds for missionary projects, ransomed galley slaves from North Africa, and gathered relief funds for victims of war. The Daughters went on to become involved in hospitals, prisons, and care for abandoned children. By 1780, there were 430 houses of the Daughters of Charity in Europe. Today, they have over 27,000 members in five continents and still act on Vincent’s conviction that “the highest form of worship is service to humanity.”
APRIL 25

Edward R. Murrow

We cannot defend freedom abroad by deserting it at home.

On October 15, 1958, broadcast journalist Edward R. Murrow made a speech to the Radio and Television News Directors Association. In it, he criticized developments in commercial TV and challenged his profession to do better. “This instrument,” he said of TV, “can teach, it can illuminate; yes, and it can even inspire. But it can only do so to the extent that humans are determined to use it to those ends. Otherwise, it is merely wires and lights in a box.”

Murrow’s love of truth would transform the circuitry of media into a sword against ignorance after CBS Radio sent him to England in 1937. He quickly realized that Hitler was going to invade Austria and assembled a team of reporters who helped him bring World War II into American homes. During the following years, Murrow’s clipped baritone would become one of the most famous voices in the United States. Listeners were enthralled as described the struggle of ordinary Britons against German bombing and reported from the roof of the BBC building in the midst of a Luftwaffe attack. His accounts did much to make America join the war. And he made people aware of its lasting impact when he visited Buchenwald after liberation.

Murrow didn’t hide his emotions as he described the hundreds of children with numbers permanently tattooed on their wrists. He also made his feelings clear when he returned to the U.S. and became the country’s top TV newsman. His most famous show was his broadcast on Senator Joe McCarthy and his witch hunt for communists. Murrow helped halt America’s slide toward fascism as he observed, “The only thing that counts is the right to speak, to think — that and the sanctity of the courts. Otherwise it is not America.”

It was a warning he repeated in 1958 as he watched news divisions sacrifice content for the sake of profits. News directors had a duty, he argued, to set a standard by using TV to fight intolerance and indifference. “Men at some time,” he once ended a famous broadcast, “are masters of their fates. The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves.”
APRIL 26

Horst Schulze

*You serve your people by leading them to excellence. That’s leadership.*

Ever wonder why Ritz-Carlton hotels serve afternoon tea? That light meal with fussy cucumber sandwiches and miniature éclairs on tiered platters seems more fitting on *Downton Abbey* than in a 21st-century hotel restaurant. A proper tea service is also expensive to do well when you factor in the cost of pastry chefs, formal waiters, and a classical pianist to set the right tone. Tea service is a relic from a bygone era, but hotel legend Horst Schulze would never think of getting rid of it. Afternoon tea lets people know his hotels are the best, staffed by people who care.

Schulze would know because he’s one of the masterminds behind The Ritz-Carlton “mystique.” During his 20 years as the chain’s CEO, he set the gold standard for high-end accommodations by giving people what they want. “First, they want high-quality service,” he explains. “Second, they want timely service. Third and most importantly, they want to know they are doing business with someone who cares about them. Caring is the greatest driver of customer satisfaction,” which reflects employee satisfaction, as Schulze understands.

So he treated his employees well, empowering them to make decisions and imbuing them with the company ethos, “We are ladies and gentlemen serving ladies and gentlemen,” as it said on the back of the business cards he gave everyone who worked in his chain. Schulze clarifies what this means by saying “We hire people to join us and be part of us; their job/function is incidental. You hire an individual to be part of a dream and part of a vision.”

That vision helped The Ritz-Carlton rise above the competition, and Schulze still embraces it as CEO of the Cappella Hotel Group. “We are superior,” Schulze says, “because we hire employees who work in an environment of belonging and purpose. That is my mantra. We foster a climate where the employee can deliver what the customer wants.” And the result is devoted employees who do the right thing. “We had a night bellman who went with a guest to the hospital and stayed all night there with him,” Schulze recalls. “That’s who we are.”
APRIL 27

Cory Booker

Small acts of decency ripple in ways we could never imagine.

As U.S. senator from New Jersey, Cory Booker is committed to putting partisanship aside. He believes “the lines that divide us still in this country are nowhere near as strong as the ties that bind us.” And he has shown how close he feels to the community as he addresses problems with which millions contend: improving economic opportunity, speeding the pace of Hurricane Sandy Recovery, and addressing the economic squeeze facing middle-class families.

Booker saw these problems in Newark, where he became known as a “super mayor” in his two terms. After taking office in 2006, he overhauled the police department, improved city services, fixed the financial deficit, and helped raise more than $100 million in private philanthropy. He implemented pay cuts for top-earning city officials, himself among them; reduced the crime rate—and personally patrolled the streets until 4 a.m.

Booker thinks “the biggest thing you can do in any day is a small act of kindness.” So he began his first term staying up all night to chase drug dealers off corners and once ran down a scissors-wielding assailant while shouting, “Not in our city anymore.” He shoved his bodyguard aside to rescue a neighbor trapped in a burning house, suffering smoke inhalation and second-degree burns in the process. He shoveled a senior’s driveway in the winter; and after Hurricane Sandy, he drove through Newark’s powerless neighborhoods in his Chevy Tahoe, delivering blankets, diapers, water, and other supplies. He checked on seniors at home, lifted morale on the streets, and used his very active Twitter account to personally respond to people ranging from the guy who couldn’t get a taxi to the eleven-year-old whose home had no heat.

His heroics are based on his belief that a single leader doing the right thing can influence a whole community’s behavior. “It helps to spread a message and a spirit of heroism to others,” he says and he plans to keep leading by example in the Senate. “I want to be a different kind of senator,” he says. “I want to create a record of doing and figuring out how to replicate the best ideas.”
Oskar Schindler

*I just couldn’t stand by and see people destroyed. I did what I could, what I had to do, what my conscience told me I must do.*

Oskar Schindler was not a saint. He cheated on his wife, drank excessively, and spied for the Germans. Yet he saved 1,200 Jews during World War II. His story became well known through the 1982 novel *Schindler’s Ark* and the 1993 movie *Schindler’s List*. But we still don’t know what made this unlikely hero dare something that others wouldn’t do.

An ethnic German, he was raised by well-off parents in what is now the Czech Republic. His drinking and gambling led him to lose the family business and he had become a salesman when opportunity came knocking in the guise of war. Never one to miss the chance to make money, he marched into Poland on the heels of the SS and made friends with the local Gestapo. In 1939, his connections helped him acquire an old enamel works factory in Poland, employing Jews from the Krakow Ghetto as cheap labor. At first, he was driven by profit but something changed as he came to know his workers. “When you know people,” he explained, “you have to behave towards them like human beings.”

So he worried about them as the Nazis intensified persecution of the Jews. In 1942 and early 1943, the Germans decimated the ghetto’s population of some 20,000 Jews through shootings and deportations. Several thousand Jews who survived the ghetto’s liquidation were taken to Plaszow, a forced labor camp run by the sadistic SS commandant Amon Goeth. Moved by the horrors he witnessed, Schindler contrived to transfer his Jewish workers to barracks at his factory.

In late summer 1944, through negotiations and bribes that depleted his war profits, Schindler secured permission from the SS to move his workers and other endangered Jews to Brunnlitz. Each of them was placed on that famous list and together with Schindler they set up a bogus munitions factory where they survived until the end of the war. The survivors were grateful though they didn’t understand why he had risked so much them. “I don’t know what his motives were,” one of them said, “But I don’t give a damn. What’s important is that he saved our lives.”
APRIL 29

Debbie Stabenow

*The ability to listen to other people, to understand, to find a way to create a win-win situation so we can solve problems is a hugely important set of skills.*

Debbie Stabenow made history in 2000 when she became the first female senator from Michigan. History is still on her mind as she strives to improve life for the aged, disabled, and ill at a time of fiscal cuts. Throughout time, she said in 2011, “there have been defining moments when Americans get called upon to define our values and morals, and this is one of them. We did that when we created Social Security. We did that when we created Medicare and Medicaid. We did that when we passed the Older Americans Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. We’re in one of those moments now to preserve some of these programs like Social Security and Medicare that have helped the aged and disabled. They were important to fight for yesterday, and they are important to fight for today.”

She has continued for fight for these vital programs throughout her political career. While a member of the Michigan State Legislature, she authored numerous bills benefiting the disabled and their families, including the Children’s Mental Health Act and the Handicapper Small Business Procurement Act. In 1990, she helped negotiate the Handicapper Civil Rights Act, which gave Michigan’s disabled some of the strongest civil rights protections in the country. And as a member of the Senate Finance Committee, she’s at the forefront of another great civil rights fight as she works to guarantee people the right to receive the care they need at home.

Stabenow knows the value of home care as a nurse’s daughter and former social worker who’s good at listening to people and learning what they need. Conversations with her constituents have shown her that “home health is a critical part of the health care system for thousands of Americans,” she says. “Citizens who would otherwise be required to be in nursing homes are able to live independently or with family members because of the services provided by home health professionals.” So Stabenow has opposed cuts that would harm home care agencies and reduce access to home care for millions nationwide. If she helps win this last great civil rights battle, she’ll make history once again.
A PRIL 30

John Peters Humphrey

No solution of the major international political problems will be worthwhile and stable unless we can do something about the rights of individual men and women.

The “Father of the Modern Human Rights System” didn’t have an easy childhood. John Peters Humphrey’s father died before he was one year old and his mother when he was eleven. His left arm was amputated when he was six because of a severe burn. As a boy, he attended a boarding school where other students bullied him, but he didn’t let himself become a victim. Instead these early ordeals built his character and sense of compassion. As an adult, he would promote equality worldwide by drafting the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

He knew the legal complexities of this task because he had earned a law degree at McGill University in Montreal. After practicing law for several years, he joined the faculty of McGill. In 1946, he was offered the position of dean of law at McGill but instead chose to take up a post at the UN, which had been founded only the year before.

Humphrey became director of the Human Rights Division in the UN Secretariat and in 1946 was asked to draft the Declaration. Writing such a revolutionary document and then pursuing its adoption through committee after committee was yet another demanding ordeal. Yet his character and sense of commitment allowed him to succeed. After further drafts and revisions by various officials and committees, the Declaration was adopted in 1948.

Humphrey was philosophical about the two-year delay because he realized what a giant step this was. “Rome wasn’t built in a day,” he said, “and what we’ve done is to create certain standards. The next thing to do, and that’s the challenge of this generation, or the coming generation, is to create mechanisms of implementation and enforcement that are necessary — and soon because there’s a close relationship between respect for human rights and the peace of nations.” And Humphrey continued promoting both after retiring from the UN in 1966, then returning to McGill where he devoted himself to advocacy and teaching. His relentless concern for human rights stemmed from his conviction that “the individual seeks not only protection against interference by governments; he looks to the collectivity for positive services.”
MAY
MAY 1

Anna Jarvis

*God bless our faithful, good mothers.*

Anna Jarvis was crushed when her mother died on the second Sunday of May 1905. Mrs. Jarvis was an inspiring woman who devoted much of her life to educating other mothers about health and sanitation. She was also a social activist who held the first Mother’s Friendship Day to unite families torn apart by the Civil War. She even found time to teach at the Sunday school her daughter attended in West Virginia. When Jarvis was 12, her mother gave a lesson on “Mothers of the Bible” and closed with a prayer: “I hope that someone, sometime, will found a memorial mother’s day commemorating her for the matchless service she renders to humanity in every field of life. She is entitled to it.”

Anna remembered that prayer, and at her mother’s graveside service she promised “by the grace of God, you shall have that mother’s day.” By then, she had graduated college and become the first female literary and advertising editor at Fidelity Mutual Life Insurance Company in Philadelphia. But she gave up her career to “establish a mother’s day to honor mothers living and dead.”

She wrote hundreds of letters to legislators and businessmen, including Philadelphia merchant John Wanamaker who embraced her idea in 1908. At the service held in the Wanamaker store auditorium, she explained, “This day is intended that we may make new resolutions for a more active thought to our dear mothers. By words, gifts, acts of affection, and in every way possible, give her pleasure and make her heart glad every day.”

They were words that touched President Wilson and in 1914 he officially established Mother’s Day as the second Sunday in May. But Jarvis’s triumph was short-lived as she watched the florist, card, and candy industries turn the holiday into a goldmine. She died penniless after spending all her resources on boycotts and lawsuits to return Mother’s Day to its roots. The use of greeting cards was “a poor excuse for the letter you are too lazy to write,” she scolded, as were candy and flowers on this sacred occasion. “I wanted it to be a day of sentiment, not profit.”
MAY 2

Benjamin Spock

*Our greatest hope is to bring up children inspired by their opportunities for being helpful and loving.*

In 1946, Dr. Benjamin Spock changed the way parents raised their kids. In a radical take on child care, he told them, “Trust yourself. You know more than you think.” These reassuring words from the *Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* went against the boot-camp thinking of the time based on strict discipline and schedules. Spock gently preached that what infants need most from their parents is love. The rules were overrated, he pointed out. “Don’t take too seriously all that the neighbors say. Don’t be overawed by what the experts say. Don’t be afraid to trust your own common sense.” It was advice that led his book to become one of the biggest bestsellers of all time.

By the mid 1960s, the tall, kind pediatrician had become the trusted family friend of a generation. Then he shocked the world by taking his radical thinking in a new direction. His focus on “doing what was right” led him to become an antiwar activist and opponent of the draft, nuclear armaments, and the Vietnam War. After being arrested in protest demonstrations, he explained the connection between parents, pediatricians, and politics. “What is the point of physicians like myself trying to help parents bring up children healthy and happy, to have them killed in such numbers for a cause that is ignoble?” he asked in 1968 after a court convicted him of conspiring to counsel draft evasion.

But this slap didn’t quell his sense of conviction. In 1972, he was presidential candidate of the People’s Party, a coalition of left-wing organizations. His platform called for free medical care, legalizing abortion and marijuana, a guaranteed minimum income for families, and the immediate withdrawal of all American troops from foreign countries.

He also struck out in new directions in his writing. Over the years, he updated his handbook to address issues like single parenthood, working mothers, and day care. Times had changed, he acknowledged in 1982. Yet he made a case for raising kids who were committed to the time-honored value of service. “A human being is happiest,” he explained, “when dedicated to a cause outside his own individual, selfish satisfaction.”
MAY 3

Ron Wyden

*If we are going to have a health care program that works for all Americans, we are going to have to get beyond the blame game.*

“Fixing health care and fixing the economy are two sides of the same coin,” Senator Ron Wyden believes. He has addressed both as a Democrat from Oregon and chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Finance. Whether he’s taking on powerful interests, listening to constituents at one of his town hall meetings, or standing up for the people of his state on the Senate floor, he’s an effective leader on issues that matter most. Wyden believes the nation’s biggest challenges can only be solved by “principled bipartisanship,” solutions that let both sides stay true to their respective positions and celebrate agreements. This approach has allowed Wyden to author over 150 bipartisan bills and assemble unprecedented bipartisan coalitions on issues such as infrastructure, tax reform, and health care.

Wyden has provided a passionate voice on health care since his days as co-director of the Oregon Gray Panthers, an organization devoted to social justice for both young and old. “It was a life-altering experience,” he recalls, and it has led him to strengthen Medicare and expand choices in health care. He authored the bipartisan Health Care for all Americans law, authored the first law to protect seniors from unscrupulous Medicare insurance scams, and reformed the community health center law to make vital services available to thousands of poor families. “Whether you love your job or hate your job, get laid off or are just between jobs,” he says, “you deserve health care that can never be taken away.”

Wyden brings this same sense of conviction to his support for home care and hospice. He has sponsored key legislation that would increase access to these vital services, including the Hospice HELP Act and the Independence At Home Act, a pilot program to bring primary medical care to Medicare beneficiaries with multiple chronic conditions in their homes. The result is to cut costs and raise quality, as Wyden explained when the program began. “With Independence at Home,” he said, “we have an opportunity to improve the health outcomes for thousands of Medicare beneficiaries and reduce the costs of treating these most expensive patients at the same time.”
MAY 4

Audrey Hepburn

You have two hands, one for helping yourself, the other for helping others.

“What the world needs is a return to decency and sweetness,” Audrey Hepburn said in 1953. “I couldn’t agree more,” Gregory Peck replied in *Roman Holiday*, the film that made Hepburn a star. Audiences were enchanted by her and critics hailed her beauty, praise Hepburn took with a grain of salt. “The beauty of a woman is not in a facial mode,” she said, “but the true beauty of a woman is reflected in her soul. It is the caring that she lovingly gives, the passion that she shows. The beauty of a woman grows with the passing years” — and it did in Hepburn’s case. She’s remembered for both her stroll past Tiffany’s at dawn in evening clothes and for her missions to famine-stricken children worldwide.

Hepburn was once among them because she grew up in Holland during World War II. Over five years of German occupation, the Nazis executed her uncle and a cousin of her mother because of their efforts in the resistance movement and placed her brother in a labor camp. “There was always a cloud of fear and repression,” she recalled, along with hunger. Food shortages led her to suffer from malnutrition, and when Holland was liberated, 16-year-old Hepburn had acute anemia, respiratory problems, and edema. But the spirit she would show in her films was still there. So was a lesson she’d learned from her mother as a girl. “It’s that wonderful old-fashioned idea that others come first,” she recalled. “You come second. That was the whole ethic by which I was brought up.”

She took this advice to heart as a goodwill ambassador for UNICEF, a role that fit her well as she raised funds and helped deliver aid to children in such far-flung places as Ethiopia, Guatemala, Venezuela, Bangladesh, and Vietnam. While in Sudan, she met a 14-year-old boy with acute anemia, respiratory problems, and edema, the same three ailments with which she’d finished the war. The plight of children like this only strengthened her belief that “those who have should give to those who have nothing.” And like Mr. Peck, we couldn’t agree more.
MAY 5

Søren Kierkegaard

_Those who think they can love only the people they prefer do not love at all. Love discovers truths about individuals that others cannot see._

Søren Kierkegaard urged us to take a “leap of faith.” To show what this meant, he used the example of the Old Testament patriarch, Abraham. Many praise Abraham as the “father of faith,” Kierkegaard pointed out, but do not seriously consider that he was willing to kill his own son, Isaac, to obey God. In other words, Abraham was willing to forsake the normal laws of human conduct, and the lesson Kierkegaard drew from this is that your personal interaction with God matters more than what others expect you to do. “Faith,” he wrote as he pondered Abraham’s act, “is namely this paradox that the single individual is higher than the universal.”

Abraham’s story appears in _Fear and Trembling_, one of Kierkegaard’s many philosophical works, and it has an anxious tone that reflects its author’s life. Kierkegaard’s father was a shepherd who became one of the richest merchants in late eighteenth-century Denmark. He had cursed God as a young man, and his guilt later caused him to become both depressed and devout. His piety had a grimness that his son struggled all his life to escape by attacking the Danish church and by calling on people to reject Christian dogma.

In Kierkegaard’s view, the Church should not try to prove Christianity or even defend it. Instead it should help individuals choose to believe that “God is love” and that He has a task for them. Reason and rational proofs were worthless, Kierkegaard wrote, because “he who loves God without faith reflects on himself, while the person who loves God in faith reflects on God.”

We choose to believe in God, just as we choose our path in life and Kierkegaard argued that we can embrace one of three lifestyles. In the aesthetic life, we live for pleasure. In the ethical, we live by universal moral rules, and in the religious we live to serve God. To get from the second to the third, you have to make a leap of faith, and this requires courage. But Kierkegaard advised us to try because “faith is the highest passion in a human being.”
Ken Blanchard

I am a loving teacher and example of simple truths who helps myself and others awaken to the presence of God in our lives.

“Too many leaders,” Ken Blanchard says, “act as if the sheep — their people — are there for the benefit of the shepherd, not that the shepherd has responsibility for the sheep.” Blanchard is working to change that as Chief Spiritual Officer of Ken Blanchard Companies, the international management training and consulting firm that he cofounded in 1979. “We’re dedicated to making a difference for people and their organizations,” Blanchard says. “Developing great people and great leaders is the key to organizational success.” And Blanchard has shown millions how to do it in The One-Minute Manager, the bible on how to increase your productivity, profits, and personal prosperity.

Blanchard’s classic book, co-authored with Spencer Johnson, is a parable about a young man in search of world-class management skills. As the story unfolds, it reveals the three secrets of venerable leaders who are highly regarded by their employees. The first is that good managers are not micromanagers; they expect employees to take initiative and solve their own problems. The second is that good managers have clear performance standards and goals for their employees. And third, good managers are honest with those around them. They look for opportunities to praise their employees because self-confident employees are happier and more productive. If a reprimand is in order, good managers follow it up by reminding the employee that they are important.

These simple but timeless truths made The One-Minute Manager a best-seller that started a management revolution. Since then, Blanchard has written or co-written 60 books, including Raving Fans, The Secret, and Leading at a Higher Level, which convey his passion to turn every leader into a servant leader. This mission keeps him forging on, despite all he has already achieved. “What keeps me motivated to continue is that I believe the world is in desperate need of a different leadership role model. When you look at leaders around the world — whether they’re running departments or countries, businesses or religious institutions — you see too many people focusing on self-serving goals. We need a new leadership model that focuses not only on goal accomplishment, but also on the greater good.”
MAY 7

David Hume

*It’s when we start working together that the real healing takes place... it’s when we start spilling our sweat, and not our blood.*

Are we born to be good? The answer may be yes, despite a long tradition that says people are savage by nature. Scientists are now finding signs of morality among our primate forbears. Even more convincing, scans of the brain suggest we have genetically shaped means for acquiring moral rules. These findings make headlines. Yet David Hume reached a similar conclusion back in the 1700s. “Morality,” he explained, “is determined by sentiment. It defines virtue to be whatever mental action or quality gives to a spectator the pleasing sentiment of approbation.” In other words, we like to think our views on right and wrong are rational, but ultimately they come from the gut, a proposition that challenged centuries of Christian thought locating the root of virtue in fear of eternal damnation.

Most Europeans still believed this in Hume’s time. So did Hume until age 12, when he felt a strong urge to challenge Christian ideas about human nature. And in his late twenties, he began constructing a secular theory of morality in works such as *A Treatise on Human Nature* and *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*. His starting point was the belief that morality is based on feelings and “everything which contributes to the happiness of society recommends itself directly to our approbation and good will.”

What causes these impressions? Virtuous actions appeal to our instincts, and we understand their value for society’s health. The experience of family love in childhood also plays a role. But Hume doesn’t even mention God since his ideal was a civil order in which people relied less on divine commands as a guide to daily living.

These theories led him to face the prospect of oblivion without alarm. Thirteen days before his death he was revising the *Enquiry*, which includes a sentence that sums up what he believed: “Upon the whole, it seems undeniable that nothing can bestow more merit on any human creature than the sentiment of benevolence in an eminent degree; and that a part at least of its merit arises from its tendency to promote the interests of our species and bestow happiness on human society.”
MAY 8

Fulton J. Sheen

*You must remember to love people and use things, rather than to love things and use people.*

“Right is right if nobody is right,” said Fulton J. Sheen, “and wrong is wrong if everybody is wrong.” This moral lesson reached millions of people in their homes because Archbishop Sheen was Catholic media’s greatest star, known for the TV show he appeared in after World War II. Wearing his full clerical garb, with scarlet cap and robe, he preached and offered simple lessons like the importance of laughing at oneself. When he signed off at the end of his show, *Life is Worth Living*, he often raised his hands above his head with a performer’s pizzazz.

The show, which ran from 1951 to 1957, drew as many as 30 million people each week. They were pulled in by the sense of drama and humor that earned Sheen fame as the patron saint of evangelization. And he used his pulpit to offer answers to life’s common questions, including the value of wealth and success. “You have a chance to move in far better society than the Joneses,” he said in one episode of his show. “Why worry about keeping up with the Joneses? Keep up with the angels and you’ll be far wiser and happier” — advice that touched viewers’ hearts. Fan mail flowed in at the rate of 8,500 letters a week and Sheen even won an Emmy. In 1952 when he accepted the award, he said, “I feel it is time I pay tribute to my four writers: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.”

He also tried to follow in the footsteps of these early saints by acting on his faith. As national director of the Society for Propagation of the Faith, he raised more money for the poor than any American Catholic before him. He was an early opponent of racism and donated large sums of his personal income to build a hospital and churches for blacks in Alabama. He strongly opposed anti-Semitism, spoke out against the Vietnam War, and made frequent visits to men on death row. When he said, “My greatest love has always been the missions of the church,” it wasn’t just words. Archbishop Sheen practiced what he preached.
MAY 9

Glenn Kielty

*We have found that whatever we have given always comes back in other ways.*

Glenn Kielty is an Irish businessman who does beautiful things for God. In 1977, he and his wife, Linda, vowed to help the needy in their adopted homeland of Kenya. By 2005, the Kielys succeeded in building 48 homes, hospices, orphanages, and schools for 18 religious orders that help the poor in Kenya, England, Tanzania, Cambodia, and Russia. Kielty’s commitment comes from his belief that “if every family ‘with’ put something into helping those ‘without,’ poverty as we know it today would be eliminated.”

It’s also good to teach a man to fish, as the old adage goes. So Kielty has strived to have his philanthropic work run parallel to his business endeavors. He employs local men and women with little training to work in his projects and also hires them to build his hospitals and homes. By doing so, he enlists them in giving aid to the poorest of the poor — the mission of his close friend and mentor, Mother Teresa. Her order, the Missionaries of Charity, is dear to Kielty’s heart, and he built several of her homes in Africa, where her sisters care for the ill and provide food for the hungry.

That’s what grandmothers do, and “Mother Teresa was the grandmother we all prayed for,” Kielty recalls. “She picked up some incredible strays in her life, and I’m one of them,” he jokes. “All my life, people have come forward and helped me.” But no one ever made as much impact on him as Mother Teresa, who showed him that business should be about more than greed.

He says that it should also be about doing good, and he speaks as a successful entrepreneur. “I’ve seen how big corporations lose touch with people,” though they “should use their intelligence to enhance the life of someone who’s not so fortunate. When it comes to charity, you’re never on a deadline,” as he’s seen at the Caring Institute, where he’s international chairman of the board. And this is a giving approach you should carry over to work. “Stay humble and listen to others,” he says. “Stay honest and don’t take shortcuts. Share your success with others.”
MAY 10

Bono

_Music can change the world because it can change people._

Bono is a rock star who believes “the job of rock and roll is to change the world.” Rather than “Imagine,” as the Beatles did, Bono is campaigning to end poverty and disease in Africa. His commitment to the continent dates back to 1985, when he appeared in Live Aid, a benefit for Ethiopian famine relief. His life changed forever when he decided to stay on after the concert and work in an Ethiopian orphanage. He has never forgotten the bodies of dead children that confronted him each morning. Equally unforgettable was the man who begged the singer to take his child and give it a chance at life.

These experiences have turned Bono into an anti-poverty evangelist when he’s not performing as U2’s front man. He has co-founded an organization called DATA (Debt AIDS Trade Africa) to promote his cause and ONE, an advocacy and campaigning group that fights extreme poverty and preventable disease. He has traveled to Africa with former Secretary of the Treasury Paul O’Neill to raise awareness of AIDS. And he has toured America’s heartland to remind audiences that “the poor are where God lives.” He has also gained the support of the world’s power brokers. In 2000, he convinced Bill Clinton to erase $6 billion of the debt the poorest African countries owed the U.S. In 2003, he talked H.W. Bush into providing 400,000 Africans with antiretroviral drugs over two years. In 2005, he persuaded G8 leaders to cancel the debt of the 18 poorest countries and give $50 billion more in aid by 2010. And in 2006, he co-founded Product (RED), which has an ongoing relationship with a number of global brands that sell (RED) products and donate a percentage of the profits to the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Bono has also called on the U.S. to give Africa an additional one percent of its budget. This is money that will save lives and determine how our country goes down in history, he believes. “The world is more malleable than you think,” he pleads, “and it’s waiting for you to hammer it into shape.”
MAY 11

Irving Berlin

God bless America, land that I love. Stand beside her, and guide her through the night with a light from above.

Irving Berlin set the tone for American life in his many popular tunes. His music marched to war with soldiers, helped people dance through the Depression, and filled the air when times were good. It also provided anthems for our culture in such classics as “White Christmas,” “There’s No Business Like Show Business,” “God Bless America,” and “Easter Parade.” His simple, direct, and catchy tunes were meant “to reach the heart of the average American,” Berlin explained, not the highbrow or the lowbrow. “My public is the real people.”

Many of them were immigrants like Berlin who was born Israel Baline in Russia. In 1893, a wave of violent attacks on Jews persuaded his father, Moses, to bring the family to New York, where they settled on the Lower East Side. Berlin was eight when Moses died and the boy took to the streets to help support his family. In the early 1900s, he was a singing waiter and starting writing songs. In 1911, “Alexander’s Ragtime Band” took the nation by storm, and Berlin went on to become a legend.

He loved the country that had opened its heart to a poor, immigrant boy and wrote songs that rallied the nation during two world wars. While serving in World War I, he wrote the musical “Yip Yip Yaphank,” which was produced by the men of Camp Upton and raised more than $150,000 to build a service center at the camp. On an Armistice Day celebration in 1938, he introduced “God Bless America,” which earned millions for the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts to whom Berlin signed over all the money. And during World War II, he wrote “This is the Army,” a musical that earned $15 million for the Army Relief Fund.

His songs still reach us on radio and TV. And members of Congress stood on the Capitol steps and sang “God Bless America” after the 9/11 attacks. This paean to patriotism comforted the nation that Berlin had loved so much. “To me, ‘God Bless America’ was not just a song,” he once explained, “but an expression of my feeling toward the country to which I owe what I have and what I am.”
MAY 12

Florence Nightingale

*I think one's feelings waste themselves in words — they ought all to be distilled into actions which bring results.*

“The ultimate destination of all nursing is the nursing of the sick in their own homes,” Florence Nightingale wrote around 1867. By then she had earned fame as “the lady with the lamp” for her habit of making hospital rounds at night. She is well known for her role in the Crimean War, where she oversaw the introduction of female nurses in military hospitals, improved the conditions of the wounded and reduced mortality rates among soldiers from 40 percent to 2 percent. It is less well known that she shined a light on the value of home care through her support of “district nursing,” an early term for public health nursing. In *A Guide to District Nurses and Home Nursing*, she maintained that “every poor person should be as well and as tenderly nursed as if he were the highest in the land.”

While giving this gentle care, nurses should focus on their patients’ quality of life and on treating problems before they become acute. A district nurse, she explained, must “nurse the room” as well as the patient, and teach the family also how to make the room one in which the patient can recover. “The work we are speaking of,” she pointed out, “has nothing to do with nursing disease but with maintaining health by removing the things which disturb it: dirt, drink, diet, damp, draughts, and drains.”

Nightingale passed on these beliefs at the Nightingale School and Home for Nurses at St. Thomas’s Hospital in London, which she founded in 1860. Nurses there were held to the highest standards, but Nightingale asked no more of her nurses than she did of herself. Despite poor health, she published over 200 reports and pamphlets on a wide range of issues, including hygiene, hospital administration and design, midwifery, and health care for the poor. Nightingale’s sense of calling comes through in the *Guide to District Nurses*, where she notes, “A district nurse must be motivated by a real love of the poor and a real desire to lessen the misery she may see among them.” The nurse’s aim must be “to gain influence for good.”
MAY 13

Kenneth Maryboy

*My grandfather taught me that you learn to be a man and a warrior by sharing and keeping promises.*

“Where my family and other families used to live is sacred,” Kenneth Maryboy says. These are places like Cedar Mesa, Dark Canyon Plateau, East Canyon, Harts Draw, Montezuma, North Comb Ridge, Salt Creek Mesa, and White Canyon. They were once the roaming ground of the Navajo Tribe, to which Maryboy belongs. Known as a “medicine man” among people living in the Four-Corners Region of the U.S., he ministers to his people as Navajo Nation Council Delegate for the Utah Navajo Section. His constituents need all his dedication because Navajos living on the Utah portion of the Navajo reservation have long been one of our country’s poorest and most neglected groups. Housing is limited, and few people have electricity, running water, or plumbing.

He knows what they’re going through because he grew up poor on a reservation near Bluff, Utah. When he was a child, he and his family used to stare across the river at Saint Christopher’s Mission and admire the Christmas celebrations. “We would sit there as the light went down,” he recalls. “We could see Christmas lights twinkling at St. Christopher’s and all of that was beautiful. The people played Christmas music that echoed across the valley, and it still brings tears to my eyes because back then we never knew what Christmas was. But there was a lot of fun and there were a lot of people there.”

These memories stayed with him as he worked in construction and then as a sports announcer before becoming a Navajo legislator. His efforts to improve his people’s lives led him to found the Navajo Santa project, which provides clothing, blankets, food, toys, medical care, and other necessities for needy Navajos in southeastern Utah. Maryboy, dressed in a Santa suit and accompanied by his “elves,” distributes the “presents” every year during the first week of December. And he keeps the Christmas spirit alive year round as he keeps helping those in need. “My grandfather taught me that you learn to be a man and a warrior by sharing and keeping promises,” Maryboy says. He follows this advice since he knows caring is the best medicine you can give.
MAY 14

Robert Owen

There is but one mode by which man can possess in perpetuity all the happiness which his nature is capable of enjoying — that is by the union and co-operation of all for the benefit of each.

Corporate responsibility is now a sexy field, but it’s not a new idea. In the early industrial age, Robert Owen claimed that happy, educated workers are more productive. This was a bold position at a time when children worked in factories, when there were no limits on working hours, and no pay for workers who were sick. That’s what it took to make a profit, most employers claimed. But Owen was a self-made man who couldn’t escape his conscience.

The son of a Welsh saddler, he went to work for a grocer at age nine. A year later, he was apprenticed to a haberdasher with a library, where the boy picked up an education. By his early twenties, he was earning a handsome salary managing a textile factory. Then in 1799, he bought a cotton mill in New Lanark, Scotland, and turned it into a workers’ utopia.

The changes he made showed that a factory could be both profitable and humane. He reduced the work day from 14 to 10 hours, built housing, gave sick pay, and increased wages. He stopped employing children under 10 and created a school where kids were exposed to an education designed to mold their characters.

These reforms drew thousands of visitors to New Lanark. Yet Owen decided to sell the mill and pursue his dream of running an entire town based on “the union and cooperation of all.” In 1824, he invested most of his fortune in New Harmony, a 20,000-acre colony in Indiana. The venture attracted 800 settlers who shared Owen’s views, but few of them had the skills needed to support a working community. By 1828, New Harmony had collapsed, and Owen had returned to England.

For the rest of his life, Owen would plead for factory reform as a leader of Britain’s growing labor movement. “I know that society may be formed,” he maintained, “so as to exist without crime, without poverty, with health greatly improved, with little if any misery, and with intelligence and happiness increased a hundredfold. And no obstacle whatsoever intervenes at this moment except ignorance to prevent such a state from becoming universal.”
MAY 15

Diane Nash

*There is a source of power in each of us that we don’t realize until we take responsibility.*

Diane Nash has lived her conviction that segregation is wrong. In 1962, she spent two days in prayer and meditation before deciding whether her first child would be born in a Mississippi prison. At the time, she was 23 and well known for coordinating Freedom Rides of buses full of black and white protesters across the South. Her actions led a judge to sentence her to two years in prison for civil disobedience. Though Nash was six months pregnant, she refused to ask for leniency, make an appeal, or post bond, as she explained in an open letter: “If I go to jail now, it may hasten the day when my child and all children will be free—not only on the day of their birth but for all their lives.”

Ultimately, the judge sentenced her to 10 days in jail, where she passed time washing her only set of clothing in the sink and listening to cockroaches skittering overhead. But Nash found them less disturbing than the prejudice that led her to help found the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee of the American civil rights movement and drop out of college to work for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. She became the unofficial leader of the 1960 sit-ins that desegregated lunch counters in Nashville, Tennessee. In 1961, she took over responsibility for the Freedom Rides from Birmingham, Alabama, to Jackson, Mississippi, and she persisted even after Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy tried to dissuade the Nashville Freedom Riders from going to Alabama, warning of the violence ahead. Her response was that the Riders had signed their last wills and testaments prior to departure.

She kept this blazing sense of commitment after her contributions helped lead to enactment of the Voting Rights Act in 1965. The following year she joined the Vietnam Peace Movement and then went on to fight for women’s rights. Nash remains determined to do “the next right thing” because she doesn’t “think what needs to be done in this country is going to be done by elected officials.” Instead, “American citizens have to take the future of this country in their own hands and do what’s necessary.”
MAY 16

Elizabeth Palmer Peabody

*Kindergartening is not a craft. It is a religion, not an avocation, but a vocation from on high.*

Elizabeth Palmer Peabody believed in lifelong learning, and in 1860, this notion led her to found the first kindergarten in the U.S. “The advantage to the community,” she explained, “in utilizing the age from 4 to 6 in training the hand and eye; in developing the habits of cleanliness, politeness, self-control, urbanity, industry; in training the mind to understand numbers and geometric forms, to invent combinations of figures and shapes, and to represent them with a pencil — these and other valuable lessons will, I think, ultimately prevail in securing to us the establishment of this beneficent institution in all the city school systems of our country.”

These words came at a time when girls couldn’t attend high school or college. Yet Peabody was driven to learn and educated herself by reading widely. At age 12, she taught herself Hebrew, and at 16, she paid a teenaged Ralph Waldo Emerson to teach her Greek. She corresponded with William Wordsworth and was friends with the Alcott family. She opened a bookstore in Boston and got involved in women’s rights. She was also sister-in-law to both the author Nathaniel Hawthorne and the education reformer, Horace Mann, whose contributions have unfairly overshadowed hers.

Mann argued that public education was the best way to turn the nation’s children into good citizens of the Republic. Yet he failed to realize, as Peabody did, that children’s play had intrinsic merit and educational value. And the school she founded drew heavily on Frederick Froebel, a German teacher who invented kindergarten in 1837. Froebel rejected fear-based discipline in favor of fostering children’s curiosity and senses, an approach that Peabody also embraced.

At the school she founded in Boston, children studied reading and writing, and learned about gardening, tending animals, and nature. Within a year, her kindergarten had 30 children and two assistant teachers who followed her belief that children should get an education that nurtures both body and spirit. “The little flower that opens in the meadows lives and dies in a season,” she explained, “but what agencies have concentrated themselves to produce it. So the human soul lives in the midst of heavenly help.”
MAY 17

Edward Jenner

_The highest powers in our nature are our sense of moral excellence, the principle of reason and reflection, benevolence to our creatures and our love of the divine being._

Smallpox was once a horrific minister of death. The virus induced pus-filled spots and left its victims disfigured or dead. By the late eighteenth century, smallpox killed 400,000 Europeans a year, so you’d have expected nothing but cheers for the man who gave the world a vaccine. Instead many called Edward Jenner a heretic, charlatan, and murderer.

The object of this outrage was a country doctor who loved studying the nesting patterns of cuckoos. Yet the problem that most consumed him was the link between smallpox and cowpox, a much milder disease that milkmaids caught from infected cows. Jenner was a student when a clear-skinned milkmaid told him, “I cannot have smallpox – I’ve already had cowpox.” Just an old wives’ tale, most doctors sniffed, but Jenner began gathering case studies of people who had resisted smallpox many years after catching cowpox.

In 1796, he took a gamble after treating a milkmaid for cowpox. On May 14, he injected pus from the young woman’s arm into an eight-year-old boy named James Phipps. Then he inoculated James with smallpox, but the boy proved to be immune. After repeating this experiment with many others — his own son included — he submitted his results to the medical press.

Reviewers rejected it as “a wild idea,” so Jenner published his findings at his own expense. Though insults were all he earned, he kept performing vaccinations. By 1800, 100,000 had been vaccinated, but public acceptance didn’t make Jenner rich. He refused to patent his discovery and devoted so much time to research that his medical practice suffered. Fortunately, Parliament honored his achievement in 1802 by voting him a generous grant.

By then Jenner was sick of both infamy and fame. His point made, he spent his time treating patients, studying nature, and vaccinating the poor for free. When he died of a stroke, he left behind this prayer: “I hope that some day the practice of producing cowpox in human beings will spread over the world — when that day comes, there will be no more smallpox.” It was a wish that came true in 1979 when the World Health Organization announced an official end to the disease.
MAY 18

John Paul II

*Love consists of a commitment which limits one’s freedom — it is a giving of the self, and to give oneself means just that: to limit one’s freedom on behalf of another.*

“The pope cannot remain a prisoner of the Vatican,” John Paul II told reporters in 1978. “I want to go to everybody...from the nomads of the steppes to the monks and nuns in their convents...I want to cross the threshold of every home.” And he fulfilled this wish by delivering more speeches, meeting with more world leaders, and kissing more babies than any previous pope. In visits to nearly 130 countries, he fought social ills that enveloped the world in a dark night of the soul.

Believing “there is no morality without freedom,” he played a subtle but crucial role in the fall of communism. A visit to his native Poland in 1979 inspired the first mass gatherings ever seen in the communist state, sparking a chain of events that would ultimately end the Cold War. Following that, John Paul focused on the ethical failures of western capitalism and campaigned for more economic aid to the famished millions in developing nations.

Implicit in John Paul’s plea was a vision of universal brotherhood and a reminder that we are all God’s children, no matter how poor. “I speak on behalf of those who do not have a voice,” he said, because “love of our brothers and sisters involves an attitude of respect and compassion, gestures of solidarity, and cooperation in service of the common good.”

His commitment to “the human family” led him to open new interfaith doors. He recognized the state of Israel, prayed at Jerusalem’s Western Wall, and presided over a Vatican ceremony commemorating the Holocaust. He further strengthened the bonds of brotherhood by leading the Church to reach deeply into Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

By the time of his death in 2005, he had left a truly global Church. It also seemed like the whole world had come to honor him as the crowds flooded Rome for the funeral. The pope spoke his final words while listening to tens of thousands of people singing in St. Peter’s Square. Though racked by pain, John Paul managed these last gracious lines for his audience: “I sought you out and now you come to me. Thank you.”
MAY 19

Father Greg Boyle

There is no force in the world better able to alter anything from its course than love.

“I work with gang members every day,” Father Greg Boyle once remarked. “These are not monsters. These are human beings with problems. We have always tried more cops and more prisons. The problem is much too complex for such simple solutions.” Boyle had seen just how complex during six years as pastor of Dolores Mission, the poorest church in Los Angeles. Daily contact with Latino gang members had shown him the kids were basically good at heart. They needed hope, not jail, so he provided it in 1988 by founding Jobs For A Future.

The new program gave gang members a future by offering employment referrals, counseling, and even free tattoo removal. It was clear how badly these services were needed when the LA riots erupted in 1992. In response, Boyle started Homeboy Industries as an economic development branch of Jobs For A Future. This second venture includes five businesses staffed by former gang members who work together to produce merchandise with the Homeboy logo, make baked goods, and provide home-maintenance services.

Together the two agencies underline the truth of Boyle’s favorite motto, “Nothing stops a bullet like a job.” Every month, over 1,000 gang members show up with expertise in fighting and stealing; they leave with new vocational skills and a new-found sense of self-respect. “We work with the population that nobody desires to work with, and it’s a principle of this place that we stand with them,” Boyle says. And he has been able to reach even more young people since his program moved from the barrio to new headquarters in downtown LA. The modern two-story building includes a café, catering kitchen, offices, and counseling rooms. In front is a ramp that allows former gang members, victims of drive-by shootings, to maneuver their wheelchairs inside.

These young men, like many others, have put their trust in the caring man who teaches them the meaning of hope and faith. “You always imitate the kind of God you believe in,” Boyle says. “If you believe that your God loves you without measure and without regret, and in an unconditional way, then you generally behave that way towards others.”
MAY 20

John Stuart Mill

Bad men need nothing more to compass their ends than that good men should look on and do nothing.

“If the cultivation of the understanding consists in one thing more than in another,” said John Stuart Mill, “it is surely in learning the grounds of one’s own opinions.” And Mill did because his father trained him to be a prodigy from an early age. Story has it that he was reading Greek at three. By eight, he was translating Latin texts into English, and by 12, he had completed an extensive study of classical literature, history, mathematics, and logic. All this combined to make him a leading thinker whose ideas were ahead of his time. He supported equality between the sexes, equal process for all, the end of slavery, the right to birth control, and the common intelligence of all races.

In the nineteenth century, these ideas seemed like fantasy, but Mill believed you should think big and aim far. “Do not pare down your undertaking to what you hope to see successful in the next few years or in the years of your own life,” he advised. “The crochet of one generation becomes the truth of the next and the truism of the one after.” And he was right, as he showed in the books he wrote between 1838 and his death in 1873. His major works from A System of Logic, to The Subjection of Women and On Liberty look in retrospect like a blueprint for 21st-century values.

Whenever you find a debate over freedom of speech, you’ll find influences from Mill, who championed freedom, especially of speech and thought. He defended freedom because he believed society’s usefulness would be maximized if people were free to make their own choices and because freedom was required for us to reach our full potential.

Freedom was also part of the “happiness principle,” which Mill described in 1863. Since the business of ethics is to produce the best possible world, he explained, our goal should be to maximize the total amount of pleasure and minimize the total amount of pain. And we reach this desired state by thinking beyond ourselves. “Those only are happy who have their minds fixed on some other object than their own happiness,” he wrote.
MAY 21

Andrei Sakharov

_The strategy of peaceful coexistence and collaboration must be deepened in every way._

In 1962, Andrei Sakharov was an honored Soviet physicist working on atomic weapons of terrifying power. The U.S. and the U.S.S.R. were locked in an arms race, and the Kremlin was about to conduct two tests of weapons Sakharov had helped design. Sakharov believed the radioactive fallout from the second test would kill many thousand civilians, as he told Soviet Prime Minister Nikita Khrushchev, who assured him he would see about postponing the test. The bomb was detonated anyway, and it set something off in its creator. “The feeling of impotence and fright,” he recalled, “that seized me on that day has remained in my memory ever since.”

Over the next 10 years, he went from warning about the hazards of radiation to fighting for human rights. In 1968, while still working on the Soviet nuclear weapons program, he wrote an essay that made an explosive impact. “Reflections on Progress, Peaceful Coexistence, and Intellectual Freedom” called for “a democratic, pluralistic society free of intolerance and dogmatism, a humanitarian society which would care for the Earth and its future” — words that reached millions after the article appeared in the _New York Times._

Soon Sakharov was fired from the weapons program, but this didn’t defuse his fiery beliefs. He kept speaking out for human rights because he knew “intellectual freedom is essential to human society — freedom to obtain and distribute information, freedom for open-minded and unfearing debate, and freedom from pressure by officialdom and prejudices.” When he exercised this freedom by denouncing the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the authorities exiled him to the closed city of Gorky.

He remained there from 1980 until 1986, when Mikhail Gorbachev invited him back to Moscow, where he spent the three remaining years of his life working to promote democratic reforms. He was elected to the Congress of People’s Deputies and appointed a member of the commission responsible for drafting a new Soviet constitution. He was 68 the night he came home from a long legislative day and told his wife, “Tomorrow, there will be battle.” His heart gave out that night, so his tomorrow never came. But his battle must go on.
MAY 22

Harvey Milk

All young people, regardless of sexual orientation or identity, deserve a safe and supportive environment in which to achieve their full potential.

Harvey Milk was ready to make any sacrifice for human rights. As the first openly gay person elected to a substantial political office, he didn’t let frequent death threats deter him from his cause. “Knowing that I could be assassinated at any moment, at any time,” he said in 1978, “I feel it’s important that people know my thoughts.” Among them was the hope that he wouldn’t die in vain. “If a bullet should enter my brain,” he prayed, “let that bullet destroy every closet door in the country.”

 Millions of gay people hid behind them when Milk entered public life. In the 1970s, many psychiatrists considered homosexuality a mental illness. In 1978, the Supreme Court had let stand the firing of a stellar teacher who told the truth when a principal asked him if he was gay, and no real gay national organization existed. To be young and gay at the time was to face a life of dim career prospects, fake wedding rings, and darkened prison windows.

Milk brought in some light when he was elected to the San Francisco County Board of Supervisors after three unsuccessful campaigns. To win the election, he gained support from all segments of his district, and after taking office he embraced a wide range of causes. Besides getting the city council to pass an ordinance protecting gays from being fired from their jobs, he championed larger, less expensive child care facilities; senior rights; development of a civilian police-review board; and free public transportation.

Not everyone was thrilled, and in 1978, Milk was shot by a former police officer who had clashed with him over gay issues. But he left an important legacy when he urged people “to know there is better hope for tomorrow, not only for gays, but for blacks, Asians, the disabled, our senior citizens, and us. Without hope we give up. I know you cannot live on hope alone, but without it life is not worth living. You and you and you have got to see that the promise does not fade.” And it didn’t. In 2015, the Supreme Court made same-sex marriage the law of the land.
MAY 23

Margaret Fuller

*If you have knowledge, let others light their candles in it.*

At 4 a.m. on July 19, 1850, a storm drove the freighter Elizabeth onto a sandbar near Fire Island, where it stuck fast. Three hours later, the passengers could make out land 50 yards away through the driving rain. During a brief lull, some managed to swim ashore, but one woman refused to abandon her baby and went down with the ship. When news of Margaret Fuller’s death reached Ralph Waldo Emerson, he sighed, “I have lost in her my audience.”

Like Emerson, Fuller was a Transcendentalist who saw individual souls as the source of knowledge and stressed the value of self-perfection. The search for fulfillment led her to speak out for the downtrodden, call for greater democracy, and write a major feminist tract. In 1845, she published *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*, urging Americans to “rise above the belief that woman was made for man.”

By then she had become editor of the Transcendentalists’ journal, *The Dial*, which she used to “call out the higher sentiments and stimulate each man to judge for himself.” Women, too, had this privilege, she claimed in her article “The Great Lawsuit.” “It is not woman,” she wrote in 1844, “but the law of right, the law of growth that speaks in us and demands the perfection of each being in its kind.” The same held true for those who weren’t white, she declared in attacks on class prejudice, slavery, and anti-immigrant feeling.

Thoughts like this led many readers to brand her a visionary or a flake, so she sailed for Europe, where Italy was in the throes of a liberal revolution. While there she met Giovanni Ossoli, a young freedom fighter with whom she bore a son. In 1850, the revolt in Italy failed and the fleeing couple found themselves on that sinking ship. “I see nothing but death before me,” Fuller reportedly said toward the end. Late in the morning, she drowned, along with Ossoli and the child. Her body was never found, but she survives in her writings about diversity, equality, and human potential. Fuller’s words on these enduring issues have let her spirit transcend time.
MAY 24

Bob Dylan

*A hero is someone who understands the responsibility that comes with his freedom.*

Bob Dylan voiced the spirit of a generation. His songs were anthems of the baby boomers as they fought for civil rights and spoke out against war. When makers of movies, documentary films, or TV news programs want to evoke the sixties, they show pictures of long-haired hippies with one of Dylan’s songs playing in the background. “Blowin’ in the Wind” and “The Times They are A-Changin’” were among the hits that made him a star as he challenged the status quo. “I like America, just as everybody else does,” he explained. “I love America, I gotta say that. But America will be judged.”

He did, beginning in 1962, when he wrote “The Ballad of Emmett Till” about a black teenager who was beaten and shot to death in Mississippi for whistling at a white woman. Within a year, he followed it up with such songs as “Talkin’ John Birch Society Blues,” poking fun at the right-wing group; “Oxford Town,” about the riots when the University of Mississippi admitted its first black student; “Paths of Victory” about the civil rights marches; and “A Hard Rain’s A-Gonna Fall,” about the fear of nuclear war.

For his most famous song, “Blowin’ in the Wind,” Dylan wrote lyrics in which listeners could read their own concerns about where America was heading: “How many times must the cannonballs fly before they’re forever banned?” “How many deaths will it take till he knows that too many people have died?” “How many years can some people exist before they’re allowed to be free?” And “How many times can a man turn his head pretending he just doesn’t see?” “The answer is blowin’ in the wind.”

And the wind did blow in something new on election night 2008 when Barack Obama triumphed as the first black president of our country. At the time Dylan was playing a concert in Minnesota and stopped the show to say, “I was born in 1941. That was the year they bombed Pearl Harbor. I’ve been living in darkness ever since. It looks like things are going to change now.” Then he played “Blowin’ in the Wind.”
MAY 25

Theodore Hesburgh

Caring is at the heart of love. The whole message of Jesus Christ in one sentence is: Love God and love your neighbor.

If Father Ted Hesburgh had one word to put on his tomb, it would have been “priest.” And yes, he was a priest who offered mass just about every day of his life. He was also a defender of justice and champion of civil rights who served as president of the University of Notre Dame from 1952 to 1987. By bringing his sense of faith to national and global issues, Hesburgh made the whole world his congregation and embraced its problems as his mission.

His belief in the connection of all human beings steered Hesburgh during nearly 50 years of public service. He held 16 presidential appointments and they involved him in virtually all major social issues, including peaceful use of atomic energy, campus unrest, Third World Development, immigration reform, and justice most of all. He served on the U.S. Commission of Civil Rights from 1957 to 1972 and was a member of Gerald Ford’s Presidential Clemency Board charged with deciding the fate of various Vietnam offenders. His work on these commissions led to the creation at Notre Dame Law School of the Center of Civil and Human Rights.

It was at Notre Dame that he first preached the gospel of activism that arose from his belief that success means touching others’ lives. “Education,” he told students, “is about taking the inherent intelligence that we have, and the inherent judgment and knowledge that we all grow in as we get educated and using it for the good of the world, if you will, of other people, our country, our neighborhood, our families, our schools.”

Based on this belief, he began a strong tradition of public service at Notre Dame during the 1960s when he invited the first 45 Peace Corps volunteers to train on campus before traveling to their assignments in Chile. But he knew you didn’t have to be a vigorous, young volunteer to make a difference in the world. “All that matters is that you’re open to the good you can do for others and you’re able to say ‘come holy spirit,’ which means you’re saying make me an instrument of your peace.”
MAY 26

Dorothea Lange

*The camera is an instrument that teaches people how to see without a camera.*

The woman in the black and white photograph gazes into the distance. Her tanned face is lined with worry, her eyes full of despair, a hesitant hand raised to her drawn mouth. Two tousle-haired children cling to her, their faces turned away from the camera. A third child sleeps in the woman’s arms, hidden within the folds of a frayed, old coat.

The picture, *Migrant Mother*, was taken by Dorothea Lange on a dark, damp afternoon in 1936. The empathy she brought to her subject may have reflected her own ordeals. At age seven, she contracted polio, which left her with a weak right leg and permanent limp. Yet she became a successful portrait photographer and came to think that suffering had enhanced her ability to see. “It formed me, guided me, instructed me, helped me, and I am aware of the force and power of it,” she said. “Seeing is more than a physiological phenomenon. We see not only with our eyes, but with all that our culture is.”

That culture was sunk in the Depression when Lange took her camera into the streets of San Francisco. Her photos of the homeless and unemployed in breadlines, labor demonstrations, and soup kitchens led to a job with FDR’s Farm Security Administration. From 1935 to 1939, she captured the plight of the poor and displaced so the public would ask, “How could we? How did it happen?”

Lange also asked questions during World War II when FDR ordered the relocation of Japanese Americans into armed camps in the West. Soon afterward, the War Relocation Authority hired Lange to photograph Japanese neighborhoods, processing centers, and camps, but she was not prepared for the disturbing civil rights issues raised by the internment. Lange soon found herself at odds with the government, which censored many of her images for decades.

The public didn’t see them until 1972 when the Whitney Museum used 27 of her photographs in an exhibit about the Japanese internment. These scenes of courage amidst incarceration moved viewers and showed that Lange had fulfilled her goal: to convey the feelings of the victims, along with the facts of the crime.
MAY 27

Rachel Carson

*The more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders and realities of the universe about us, the less taste we shall have for destruction.*

_Silent Spring_ was a cry in the wilderness that launched the environmental movement. Its author, Rachel Carson was a quiet, retiring person, yet she shook society by waging a moral crusade against pesticides. In the early sixties, when Carson started writing it, few Americans talked about pollution. But she looked around and worried “there is a great chance that the next generation will have no chance to know nature as we do.”

Carson had learned to love nature while growing up on a farm outside Pittsburgh. Her family was poor, but she earned a scholarship to attend Chatham College, where she developed a lyrical prose style while studying marine biology. Then she went on for her masters in marine zoology at Johns Hopkins University. Afterward, she taught at Hopkins for four years before taking a job at the Federal Bureau of Fisheries, now the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

In her spare time, Carson wrote three successful books about the mysteries of the sea. The third gave her the financial success she needed to write full-time. She adopted her niece’s five-year-old son in 1957 after his mother’s death and built a house for the two of them in Silver Spring, Maryland. Soon afterward, she developed breast cancer and began undergoing radiation. Despite her rapidly failing health, she produced a densely researched and poetic book. In 1962, _Silent Spring_ stunned the nation with its tale of a strange blight that silenced the birds.

The birds may have been silent. But the chemical companies railed loudly against the shy marine biologist. Carson was now near death, and she knew “there would be no peace for me if I kept silent.” When it came time to fend off her critics, she put on a wig, went on TV, and testified before Congress. “Man is a part of nature, and his war against nature is inevitably a war against himself,” she told CBS in 1963. “I truly believe that we in this generation must come to terms with nature, and think we’re challenged as mankind has never been challenged before to prove our maturity and mastery, not of nature, but of ourselves.”
MAY 28

Patch Adams

*The purpose of a doctor or any human in general should not be to simply delay the death of the patient, but to increase the person’s quality of life.*

Dr. Patch Adams will do anything to get a laugh since he thinks clowning around is good for the ill. “The role of a clown and a physician are the same. It’s to elevate the possible and to relieve suffering,” he says. Let other doctors sport white coats and a somber demeanor. Give Adams a pair of baggy pants and red rubber nose like the one Robin Williams wore in the film about his life. Then lead him to a children’s hospital, senior home, and anywhere else people are suffering. “I’m really interested in moving our society away from a society needing Xanax and Prozac and that is really depressed to one that is celebrating,” Adams explains, “so I find just walking around in colorful clothes makes people smile.”

Adams’ quest to make humor part of the healing process has taken him around the world. He has entertained orphans in Russia, visited refugee camps in Bosnia, and travelled to Trinidad, where he clowned for murderers who were hanged three days later. He also volunteers each year for the Belen Project, an effort to improve the health, education, and living conditions of people in one of Peru’s most remote slums.

And he’s trying to change health care in the U.S. through the Gesundheit Institute, a not-for-profit health care clinic he founded in 1971. Over the course of 12 years, Adams and his colleagues treated 15,000 patients who didn’t pay a cent for their care, and he plans on treating more when he completes his new hospital in West Virginia. The hospital will be based on his conviction that American health care is expensive and elitist. “It is inexcusable,” he fumes, “that the richest country in the world does not take care of all its people,” so “we’re thoughtfully trying to create a beautiful health care model.”

The 40-bed hospital will include a theater, arts and crafts shops, horticulture, and vocational therapy. Patients will get free health care, including services like acupuncture and massage. Along with pills and plasters, the hospital will provide love and lots of laughter. When it opens, it will be the first ha-ha hospital in the world.
MAY 29

Bob Hope

*If you haven’t got any charity in your heart, you have the worst kind of heart trouble.*

In 1991, Bob Hope traveled to the front to entertain American troops in the Persian Gulf. On stage, Hope questioned all the hoopla over America’s new radar-invisible bomber. “The stealth bomber is supposed to be a big deal,” he said. “It flies in undetected, bombs, and then flies away. Hell, I’ve been doing that all my life.”

Hope would say almost anything to get a laugh, but he seldom bombed during his long career as an entertainer. He was best known for his movies with Bing Crosby, appearances as announcer at the Academy Awards, and volunteer work for the military. By the time he retired, he’d racked up millions of miles in a 50-year crusade to entertain U.S. troops abroad.

In the course of five wars, Hope became known as the “GI’s best friend” who used gags and girls to dispel the clouds of war. Jokes were Hope’s stock in trade, and he dispensed them freely whenever he and his troupe went to hospitals. But Hope was awed by the soldiers’ valor and determined to raise their spirits. In 1963, he defied his doctors’ orders to stay in bed so he could make a tour of bases in Africa and the Middle East. In 1965, he hobbled on a broken ankle rather than let down the guys in Saigon. And in 1971, he offered North Vietnamese officials 10 million dollars to release all POWs.

Hope traveled to places where no one else would go because he lived for applause. Giving was another thing that kept him going, and he believed that “if you haven’t got any charity in your heart, you have the worst kind of heart trouble.” So he donated millions to build hospitals, fight cerebral palsy, and fund college scholarships.

When he died at age 100, Hope had become a hero whose many awards included a gold medal that John F. Kennedy had given him in 1963. The inscription honoring him as “America’s most prized ambassador of goodwill,” sure sounded good but it did raise “one sobering thought,” Hope worried. “I received this for going outside the country. I think they are trying to tell me something.”
MAY 30

Candy Lightner

*Talking about your feelings with someone who is willing to listen can be enormously consoling, especially if that person has experienced a death similar to the one you are grieving.*

Candy Lightner doesn’t believe in getting even. The founder of Mothers Against Drunk Driving believes in getting MADD. That’s what she did in 1980 when a drunk driver killed her 13-year-old daughter, Cari, as she walked down a quiet street in California. It turned out that the driver had an extensive record of impaired driving and had been released just two days before after committing a hit and run. When the police told Lightner that the driver would likely receive little punishment for killing Cari, she vowed “to make this needless homicide count for something in the years ahead.”

Lightner went on to start MADD and set out to change the law. At the time, drinking and driving was accepted, and the price was that 70 people a day were killed in the U.S. by drunk drivers. Though no one was doing anything about it, Lightner found countless mothers who had suffered similar tragedies and also wanted change. They had no legal or political experience, but they quickly learned how to bring their cause to the public eye.

MADD began its campaign on the state level as Lightner lobbied California’s governor, Jerry Brown, to set up a state task force to investigate drunk driving. Brown eventually agreed, making her the task force’s first member. In 1981, California passed a law imposing minimum fines of $375 for drunk drivers and mandatory imprisonment of up to four years for repeat offenders. President Ronald Reagan soon asked Lightner to serve on the National Commission on Drunk Driving, which recommended raising the minimum drinking age to 21 and revoking the licenses of those arrested for drunk driving. In July 1984, she stood next to Reagan as he signed a law reducing federal highway grants to states that failed to raise their drinking age to 21.

The following year when all 50 states tightened their drunk driving laws, Lightner began to think Cari hadn’t died in vain. “Death changes us, the living. In the presence of death we become more aware of life,” she realized. “It can inspire us to decide what really matters in life — and then to seek it.”
MAY 31

Walt Whitman

When one reaches out to help another he touches the face of God.

Walt Whitman sang the body electric in groundbreaking verse. The “Bard of Democracy” tried to encompass all of America and show how much we shared. He celebrated great people like President Abraham Lincoln, as well as the common man. “The genius of the United States is not best or most in its executives or legislatures, not in its ambassadors or authors or colleges, or churches or parlors, not even in its newspapers or inventors, but almost always in the common people,” Whitman explained. He captured the rhythms of their life in “I Hear America Singing,” part of his famous Leaves of Grass.

He wrote his slim volume of poems as tensions between North and South intensified in the 1850s. It broke established rules as Whitman searched for a poetic voice that could bind Americans together. Most people didn’t get his message and Whitman thought Leaves was a failure as the country raced toward civil war. But Whitman never stopped caring about the common man or putting his feelings into words.

At the outbreak of the war, he wrote “Beat, Beat Drums!” a rally cry for the North, and during the war, he nursed thousands of sick, wounded, and dying soldiers in Washington, DC. “I dress the perforated shoulder, the foot with the bullet wound, Cleanse the one with a gnawing and putrid gangrene, so sickening, so offensive, While the attendant stands behind me holding the trail and pail,” he wrote, recalling his experiences during the war.

His years in the wards wrecked Whitman physically but renewed his faith in America’s future and in Leaves. After the war, Whitman incorporated his ordeals into a new Leaves of Grass. It has been quoted in films like Dead Poets Society and Bull Durham, as well as the hit show Breaking Bad. And Whitman remains a much-loved poet who celebrates all of life. “I am the poet of the body and I am the poet of the soul,” he wrote. “I go with the slaves of the earth equally with the masters. And I will stand between the master and the slaves, entering into both so that both will understand me alike.”
JUNE
JUNE 1

Brigham Young

_True independence and freedom can only exist in doing what's right._

“Suppose we had the power to take the poor and the ignorant, the low and degraded who are trodden under foot by the great and powerful among Earth’s inhabitants, and bring them together and purify them and fill them with knowledge and understanding and make them a nation worthy of admiration, what would you say to this?” Thousands thundered their approval when Brigham Young posed this question. Their consequent trek in covered wagons to Utah is among the great epics of U.S. history.

The American Moses who inspired this exodus was second president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. While Joseph Smith founded the Mormon faith, Young made it work. Under his leadership, the Mormons created a caring, egalitarian community, based on the celestial order. “We are trying to be the image of those who live in heaven,” Young explained. “We are trying to pattern after them, to look like them, to walk and talk like them, to deal like them, and build up the kingdom of heaven as they have done.”

Young’s mission to build a godly kingdom depended on cooperation. “We should go to work with a united faith, like the heart of one man,” he urged. “Whatever we do should be performed in the name of the Lord; and we will be blessed and prosper in all we do. We have a work on hand whose magnitude can hardly be told.”

Young learned about hard work growing up poor in rural New York. He converted to the Mormon Church in 1832 and became its head following Smith’s assassination in 1844. Under his stewardship, the faithful fled persecution by moving from one western settlement to the next. When they reached the Salt Lake Valley, Young announced, “This is the place. Here we are, and here we will stay.” He went on to found Salt Lake City and many decades later, it’s still headquarters for the Mormon Church. Young’s godly kingdom now has millions of members who embrace his belief that “it is your duty to use all that is put in your possession to build up the kingdom of God here on earth.”
JUNE 2

Thurman Arnold

*Dissent is not sacred; the right of dissent is.*

The cowboy of the legal world wrangled with the rich to keep corporations fair. Thurman Arnold, the New Dealer’s chief trustbuster was born in Laramie, Wyoming, where he worked as a sheep rancher, and he didn’t forget the small guy after becoming a famous attorney. Despite moving in the halls of power, he never lost his sense of honesty and humor. “It is part of the function of law,” he once remarked, “to give recognition to ideas representing the exact opposite of established conduct. Most of the complications arise from the necessity of pretending to do one thing while actually doing another.”

Some lawyers might have been willing to make this compromise, but Arnold’s western roots made him a maverick. He was an outsider at Harvard Law School and in Chicago, where he began practicing law before serving in World War I. The war over, he returned to Laramie where he became mayor and helped found the law college at the University of Wyoming. But the wider world called after the dean of Yale Law School offered him a position as professor.

While at Yale, Arnold accepted a number of positions within FDR’s administration and resigned in 1938 when he accepted a full-time position as head of the Antitrust Division of the Department of Justice. And though he had previously mocked antitrust enforcement as a way of substituting appearances for realities, he came to see it as a key to conquering the Great Depression. Trusts were major “bottlenecks” in the economy, he said as he set out to restore competition.

During Arnold’s tenure, the division grew exponentially both in number of employees and budget, and it engaged in its most extensive litigation. His division pursued trusts in the automobile, dairy, oil, and aluminum industry, the medical profession, the railroads, and even the wooden ice-cream stick industry. He often argued cases personally before the Supreme Court and made frequent speeches that earned him fame as a champion of the underdog in DC. He didn’t hesitate to speak his mind because he believed “unhappy is a people who has run out of words to describe what is going on.”
JUNE 3

Patrick Devine

We should never give up on each other and our ability to do something because God never gives up on us.

“Shalom is a Hebrew word that means peace with justice and harmony,” says Father Patrick Devine, an Irish priest who seeks to resolve conflict in eastern Africa. He has taken on a daunting task given the region’s long history of poverty, ethnic diversity, and violent unrest. During 30 years as a missionary in Africa, Devine has often put himself in harm’s way so he could respond to the cry of the poor. “From a very young age,” he says, “I knew that if I was going to become a priest I wanted to work among the poorest of the poor, like Mother Teresa. I wanted to go places where there’s underdevelopment, where the good news of love and forgiveness is not fully heard, and where there is a great need for medical and educational development.”

His wish came true after the Society of African Missions asked him to work in a very remote part of Tanzania. He was truly in the wilderness, 18 hours from the nearest tar road. But that didn’t stop him from forging his own road ahead. From the mid 1990s, the society gave him leadership roles in Kenya and Tanzania, where he was in charge of a medical center, a 600-pupil secondary school, numerous AIDS education programs, and care of 1.5 million refugees from Rwanda who had crossed into Tanzania seeking refuge from genocide. In 2005, he was elected chairman of the Religious Superiors Conference of Kenya. When inter-ethnic violence shook Kenya in 2007, he gave up this high-profile position to found the Shalom Center for Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation.

The center is recognized by the Kenyan government and endorsed by the church as a means to bring peace through conflict transformation. One aspect of its work is conducting rigorous research to determine the cause of conflict and offer a basis for new projects and policies. The other is conducting grassroots workshops, where Devine teaches warring ethnic factions about tolerance and mutual respect. “Shalom should not be owned by any religious tradition,” he says. “If we can bring about peace in the world, we can all find our path to God.”
Andrea Jaeger

*If you’ve brought joy to a child, or protected them in their need. If you’ve lent a hand and put them under your wing, for me there’s nothing that compares.*

Andrea Jaeger went from being a superstar to a superhero by touching the lives of sick kids. At age 14, she was the brat of the women’s tennis tour. While rising to number 2 in the world, she sometimes screamed at linesmen and was hostile to opponents. But she showed a different side when she entered her first children’s hospital at age 15. “I was in a tournament,” she recalls, “and I passed a hospital and I thought, ‘I’m going to go and bring some presents for kids stuck in a hospital.’ One of the girls said, ‘I haven’t had a visitor in a week. Everyone is afraid I’m going to give them cancer.’” And hearing this rocked Jaeger’s world. “I knew then,” she says, “that when I grew up I wanted to help kids in hospitals.”

That day came sooner than she expected because she popped her shoulder at the French Open when she was 18. Seven surgeries and two years later, she retired in 1987. With the $1.4 million she won on the tour, Jaeger moved to Aspen to start a foundation with her best pal, Heidi Bookout. Today, their Little Star Foundation provides programs for more than 8,000 disadvantaged or seriously ill children a year. “Our programs are at no cost to families or hospitals,” she explains. “We also have a facility in Colorado where kids come for a week and go horseback riding, white-water rafting, play tennis, have talent shows, and do arts and crafts.”

These experiences change kids’ approach to life, and they’ve taught Jaeger a life-changing lesson in caring. “When you work with the kids I do,” she says, “you end up dealing with a lot of life issues, and you deal with God a lot. I was fascinated by how people keep their faith during an illness or sometimes lose their faith.” And after years of thinking about this, Jaeger became a nun at age 42. “When people ask me if I miss tennis,” she says, “my answer has always been ‘no regrets.’ God wanted me to do something else, and it happened to be helping children with cancer.”
JUNE 5

Bill Moyers

What’s right and good doesn’t come naturally. You have to stand up and fight for it as if the cause depends on you — because it does.

“Bullies — political bullies, economic bullies, and religious bullies — cannot be appeased,” Bill Moyers said. “They have to be opposed with courage, clarity, and conviction. This is never easy.” But Moyers rose to the task because he believed “freedom is not license but responsibility.” For 43 year he was the face of public TV, and he was even there at its creation. As a young aide, and later press secretary, to Lyndon Johnson in the sixties, he was part of the early planning that led to passage of the Public Broadcasting Law, which established NPR and PBS.

Starting in 1971, he worked for PBS where he hosted the Bill Moyers Journal. Then he worked as an editor and senior correspondent for the program CBS Reports, as a senior news analyst for the CBS Evening News, and as head of Public Affairs Television, which he founded in 1986. In all these roles, he produced groundbreaking reports on subjects ranging from the Iran/Contra scandal and Iraq War to economic inequality and the corrosive influence of money on politics. In 2000, he showed the wisdom of hospice in an eye-opening series, On Our Own Terms.

And his commitment to telling the truth on his own terms made him the target of attacks from critics who tried to dismantle the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Yet he never backed down because he knew democracy is at risk when voters are misinformed. “The framers of our nation never imagined,” he explained, “what could happen if big government, big publishing, and big broadcasters saw eye to eye in putting the public’s need for news second to their own interests — and to the ideology of market economics. The greatest moments in the history of the press came not when journalists made common cause with the state but when they stood fearlessly independent of it.”

Moyers provided many of these moments by refusing to be bullied by those in power, whether they were on the left or right. “We journalists are of course obliged to cover the news,” he once remarked. “But our deeper mission is to uncover the news that powerful people would prefer to keep hidden.”
JUNE 6

Peggy Dolan

You can help yourself and others by being a voice for families in crisis.

Peggy Dolan turned tragedy into triumph nearly 40 years ago when she lost her six-year-old daughter, Kelly, to a rare form of leukemia. Instead of focusing on her loss, she started the Kelly Anne Dolan Memorial Fund, which helps families with seriously ill children. The organization provides financial assistance for needs not covered by insurance, respite programs, and essential items for families in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New Jersey. In addition they give help and hope to families nationwide by providing advocacy, education, and information.

And many of these families do have dire problems, as Dolan saw firsthand after Kelly was hospitalized at age two. “These families are in a downward spiral financially,” she says. “They’ll take time off from work without pay to take care of the child at home on sick days, or to be with the child in critical condition at the hospital. And the out-of-pocket expenses, like parking at the hospital and the additional co-pays, can run into hundreds of dollars every month, which takes away from their budget.” Many times, these families lose their homes and cars and have utilities cut off while caring for a sick or disabled child.

This is a stressful time for families like these so Dolan is glad she’s been able to help more than 23,000 of them since her organization began. Besides giving them practical help, Dolan takes steps to brighten their lives. Her holiday program provides toys and other gifts to hundreds of families in need. Her yearly Fun Day cruise aboard the Spirit of Philadelphia allows patients, parents, and siblings a chance to get away from it all for a day, and her Longwood Gardens Day hosts families to see the colors of fall.

Raising the funds to do all this hasn’t been easy, Dolan admits, but it’s been worth all the efforts she’s made. “No matter how difficult this path has sometimes been I know I’m doing what I was meant to do,” she says. And she urges others to support her cause. “You can bring joy to a child who’s been traumatized and friendship to families who are emotionally worn.”
Gwendolyn Brooks

We are each other’s magnitude and bond.

Gwendolyn Brooks once said that she wrote about what she saw and heard in the street. Looking out from the window of her apartment on Chicago’s South Side, she poured her thoughts into poems about black culture in the 1940s and ’50s. But her skill was more than her ability to write about struggling black folk; she was also an eloquent wordsmith who believed “poetry is life distilled.”

Her own life shaped her approach to racial dynamics. Her father was a janitor who had hoped to become a doctor and her mother a teacher and classically trained pianist. Although she graduated from an integrated high school, she also attended an elite, white high school and an all-black high school before graduating from junior college. What Brooks learned in these four different schools gave her a take on race relations that would always influence her writing.

While working for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, she published her first collection, A Street in Bronzeville. The book chronicled the daily lives, hopes, and disappointments of the ordinary black people in her neighborhood. It won her instant acclaim as a new voice on the literary scene, and in 1950, she came to national attention when she became the first black writer to win the Pulitzer Prize with Annie Allen, the story of a black woman’s passage from childhood to adulthood. That collection give loving attention to the lives of those “who are poor, / Who are adjudged the leastwise of the land, / Who are my sweetest lepers (the children of the poor).” Whether from the perspective of mother, daughter, wife, or advocate for the black community, Brooks offered social commentary in an incomparable style.

Her talents led her to earn more honors, including being appointed Poet Laureate of Illinois. Yet she said her greatest interest was being involved with young people and students. The readings she gave at schools, prisons, and hospitals gave her a chance to convey this central message: “Don’t let anybody call you a minority if you’re black or Hispanic or belong to some other ethnic group. You’re not less than anybody else.”
JUNE 8

Joan Rivers

*I have no methods; all I do is accept people as they are.*

“I’ve had so much plastic surgery,” Joan Rivers once quipped, “when I die they will donate my body to Tupperware.” But Tupperware wasn’t the one that gained when Rivers passed away in 2014. Instead, the comedian left much of her fortune to various charities, including Guide Dogs for the Blind, Jewish Guild Healthcare, and the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. Other charities she singled out were the Simon Wiesenthal Center, the Jewish Home and Hospital Foundation, and the food pantry God’s Love We Deliver. But she didn’t just leave money to good causes, she also devoted her time.

The comedian who was known for making sharp barbs had a softer side. She took risks early on, before it was red carpet de rigeur, to support individuals living with HIV/AIDS. She was the first celebrity to host an AIDS benefit in 1982 and received death threats for being so bold. She cared for friends and family when they became ill, and she went on to support God’s Love We Deliver, which provides meals for HIV/AIDS patients in New York City.

Rivers was a friend and board member of God’s Love for over two decades. She took charge of its Cupcake Challenge and was an eternal cheerleader at the finish line of its annual Race to Deliver. She designed a fashionable wrap and broach for its fundraising shop and won over $500,000 for God’s Love when she competed on Celebrity Apprentice. She also made a point to deliver meals with her family on Thanksgiving and Christmas, besides volunteering as often as she could between her professional engagements. A few months before her death, she attended an event to celebrate God’s Love’s delivery of its fifteenth-millionth meal, which she helped prepare.

God’s Love acknowledged her contributions by naming its new bakery after her, but Rivers said she wasn’t looking for any honors. “I don’t care about my legacy: ‘that she was a good person, and she had exquisite taste, and she deserved that fur coat.’” What she cared about was doing all she could for those with AIDS. “If there’s something that might be changed,” she maintained, “keep trying till the end.”
Catherine Filene Shouse

I have come to believe that music should be a necessary part of children’s lives.

Catherine Filene Shouse was a modern Renaissance woman who led by her example. Born into a family whose fortune was built on a famous Boston department store, she dedicated herself to public service. After earning an MA in education from Harvard, she went on to become a leading activist for women’s rights and a prominent patron of the arts.

Over the course of seven decades, she held a remarkable range of public and private posts. In 1918, she became an assistant to the Chief of Women’s Division at the U.S. Department of Labor. In 1919, she became the first woman appointed to the Democratic National Committee, and in the mid 1920s she served as chairwoman of the First Federal Prison for Women, where she instituted a job training and rehabilitation program. Finally, in 1929, she founded the Institute of Women’s Professional Relations and became its chairman. In this role, she organized conferences on opportunities for women with more than a high school education.

In her thirties, she had already accomplished more than most would in a lifetime. Yet she went on to work alongside every president from FDR to Bill Clinton, as well as diplomats, senators, and royalty, to advance women’s rights, education, and access to the arts. An early supporter of the John F. Kennedy Center she donated the pipe organ that dominates the Concert Hall. But she felt that her crowning achievement was Wolf Trap, a place where “young people with talent could be heard, seen, and taught the demands of a professional career in the arts.”

In 1966, at the age of 70, she donated 100 acres of her farm in Virginia to the U.S. government to create a national center for the performing arts. There she established the Wolf Trap Foundation to manage the park, arrange programming, and raise money. Since opening in 1971, the park has been home to some of the world’s greatest singers, actors, dancers, and musicians. The many who’ve attended open-air concerts there know Shouse was right when she said “people find through the performing arts their balance in tense times, their joys in their everyday life.”
JUNE 10

E.O. Wilson

*Aim high. Behave honorably. Prepare to be alone at times, and to endure failure. Persist! The world needs all you can give.*

“Every kid has a bug period,” E.O. Wilson says. “I never grew out of mine.” In his long career, he has transformed his field of research — the behavior of ants — and applied his scientific perspective to illuminate the human condition, including our origins, nature, and interactions. He has also been a pioneer in spearheading efforts to preserve and protect the diversity of this planet. “Nature,” he says, “holds the key to our aesthetic, intellectual, cognitive, and even spiritual satisfaction.”

Growing up in the countryside outside Mobile, Alabama, he was entranced by nature and all its creatures. A fishing accident left him blind in one eye, interfering with his ability to study birds and other animals. He focused instead on insects — creatures he could examine under a microscope. In high school he decided to devote his career to studying ants, and he did after earning a PhD and becoming a professor at Harvard. His research revealed to his colleagues and the general public the complexity of ant societies and their dominance in terrestrial ecosystems. From this understanding of insect behavior, Wilson began examining the social behavior of other creatures, including man.

Over the years he has become increasingly worried by how people are hurting the environment and biodiversity of our planet. “Destroying rainforest for economic gain is like burning a Renaissance painting to cook a meal,” Wilson warns. And his sense of concern has led him to speak out at universities and conferences, work with environmental organizations, and write numerous articles and books that describe our genetically based tendency to bond with parts of the natural world.

Sadly, the juggernaut of development is threatening this natural symbiosis and could bring on a “sixth extinction,” as Wilson puts it. But just as we have the power to destroy our natural surroundings, we also have the power to change our course and maintain the diversity of life on Earth. “A very Faustian choice is upon us,” he says, “whether to accept our corrosive and risky behavior as the unavoidable price of population and economic growth, or to take stock or ourselves and search for a new solution.”
JUNE 11

Jeannette Rankin

_I want to stand by my country, but I cannot vote for war._

Jeannette Rankin cast the sole Congressional vote against the U.S. entering World War II. She was also among the few members of Congress who voted against American entry into World War I nearly a quarter century before. “As a woman, I can’t go to war and I refuse to send anyone else,” she said, showing the grit that helped her become the first woman to serve in Congress.

Rankin got her gumption while growing up in Montana, where she helped her father on his ranch. And she found her calling in Washington State, where she joined the drive to amend the state’s constitution to give women the right to vote. The measure passed in 1911, and Rankin returned home to win the same right for Montana women in 1914. These achievements helped Rankin in her 1916 run for the U.S. House, where she helped pass the Nineteenth Amendment, giving all American women the right to vote.

But her success in politics stalled after she voted against entry in World War I in 1917. Many citizens saw her vote as evidence that a woman couldn’t handle the burdens of leadership. Perhaps this explains why Montanans voted her out of office two years later. While disappointed, Rankin cared little about the damage her beliefs caused her political career. And she continued to fight for them as a founding member of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom. She was also the founding vice president of the ACLU and a field secretary for the National Consumers’ League. Over 20 years, she toured the U.S., giving speeches that supported children’s welfare and women’s rights.

At the verge of another world war, Rankin ran again for Congress and won in 1939. This time her pacifist stance led to angry outcry from her colleagues and the press. As a result, she did not even run for a third term. But this did not stop her from leading protests against the Korean War and later the Vietnam War. Despite her devotion to her country, she was convinced “you can no more win a war than you can win an earthquake.”
JUNE 12

George H.W. Bush

America is never wholly herself unless she is engaged in high moral principle. We as a people have such a purpose today. It is to make kinder the face of the nation and gentler the face of the world.

George H.W. Bush marked his 90th birthday by going skydiving. It’s not the first time the former president has been a source of inspiration. He made the call to service a centerpiece of his administration. At his inauguration in 1989, he spoke of “all the individuals and community organizations spread like stars through the nation doing good.” Their example led him to found Points of Light, an organization that promotes volunteerism. “I will keep America moving forward,” he said “for a better America, for an endless, enduring dream and a thousand points of light. This is my mission, and I will complete it.”

He did by using his term in office to promote public service. He launched the modern volunteer service movement by signing the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and creating the Daily Point of Light Award to celebrate people who spark change that improves the world. By the end of his term, he had recognized over 1,000 Points of Light, addressing issues ranging from job training to care for infants with AIDS. In 2013, 20 years after leaving office, he honored the 5,000th Daily Point of Light with President Obama.

The Republican ex-leader has never let political differences stop him from doing the right thing. “I’m an old-fashioned guy,” Bush says. “I believe most people in politics are honorable people who are serving for the right reasons.” And that applied to Bill Clinton, with whom he partnered to help those affected by hurricanes, earthquakes, and other disasters. When they visited Asia after the tsunami of 2004, Bush saw something he couldn’t forget. “Here was a young child, life shattered, mother drowned in front of her, sitting on a mud floor,” he recalls. “The children are what gets me most.”

One of the kids who also touched him was Patrick, the young son of a Secret Service agent assigned to his detail. While undergoing treatment for cancer, Patrick lost his hair, so Bush shaved his head to show support. And though Bush now has his own health issues, he maintains, “Old guys can still do fun things.” For Bush, that means lighting up people’s lives.
W. B. Yeats

*Think like a wise man but communicate in the language of the people.*

Unrequited love led to one of the most famous poems about old age and loss, “When You are Old.” Irish poet William Butler Yeats was still young and unknown in 1892 when he wrote it, inspired by the beautiful actress Maud Gonne. Yeats was besotted by her and proposed to her several times, but she didn’t return his feelings. Yeats eventually married another woman, but his failure to attain Gonne led him to make a moving forecast of their love.

In “When You Are Old,” Yeats invites her to envision a time when she is “old and grey and full of sleep.” He asks her to take down a book, perhaps one that recounts her life or one containing poems Yeats had composed for her. In any case, it is a book meant to help her recall her former glories. This would be a poignant moment since the frail, old woman can now only “dream of the soft look your eyes once had” and “how many loved your moments of glad grace.”

Many of them were infatuated with her, “but one man loved the pilgrim soul in you / And loved the sorrows of your changing face.” In other words, this man saw beneath her exterior and loved her for her spirit and mind. That’s the way Yeats loved her, and the poem is not actually meant for an old woman. Instead, Yeats is warning Gonne that if she does not choose to love him she will lead a “grey” life. Someday, instead of standing tall among the bright lights, “she will be bending down beside the glowing bars.” By then she may come to “murmur, a little sadly, how Love fled,” and regret her repeated rejections of Yeats. Because of these rebuffs, Love, or Yeats, will have left her and “paced upon the mountains overhead / And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.”

Will these warnings change the woman’s mind as she ponders the future? Yeats left that up to the reader to decide. But his message is still clear. A person has only one life to live and should not be blind to true love.
JUNE 14

Robert Marion La Follette

Men must be aggressive for what is right if government is to be saved from men who are aggressive for what is wrong.

On March 25, 1921, 65-year-old Robert M. La Follette took the greatest risk of his long political career. Four years after leading congressional opposition to World War I, La Follette was still condemned in Washington and in his home state of Wisconsin as a traitor. But he wasn’t ready to surrender the U.S. Senate seat he had held since 1906. He wanted to return to Washington to do battle against the twin evils of the young century: corporate power at home and imperialism abroad.

The passion with which he opposed them earned him fame as “Fighting Bob La Follette,” and he began showing his combative spirit as Dane County district attorney, a post to which he was appointed despite Republican bosses who objected to his progressive ideas. In 1884, he was elected to Congress but was defeated in the Democratic landslide of 1890 and returned to Wisconsin to practice law. The following year, the state’s Republican leader offered him a bribe to fix a case, and the incident led him to spend the next 10 years speaking out against big business and corrupt politicians.

The celebrity he gained helped him become Wisconsin governor in 1900. In this role, he encouraged close cooperation between state government and the University of Wisconsin in the development of open government. The threat of exposing legislators’ votes for special interests helped La Follette make many reforms, including the first workers’ compensation system, women’s suffrage, and progressive taxation.

These successes led him to resign as governor in 1906 and make a successful run for the U.S. Senate, where he showed the integrity that would lead a Senate committee in 1957 to name him one of the five best senators of all time. His opposition to America’s entry into World War I endangered his political career, yet he was reelected to the Senate in 1922. Convinced the war had given big business too much say in government, he spent the rest of his political career exposing corruption. This crusade exhausted him, but he was driven by the belief that “free men of every generation must combat renewed efforts of organized force and greed to destroy liberty.”
JUNE 15

Pedro José Greer

You fight for what you need to do. The poor happen to be our sickest. They deserve our undivided attention.

Dr. “Joe” Greer has taken medicine out of the hospital and into the streets. His mission as Miami’s physician to the people was inspired by a phone call he received in 1979. Greer was a young medical student when he learned that his sister had died when her car flipped over on a highway. The loss sent a shiver down his spine and pushed him to make the ultimate promise. “I promised my sister and God that if I ever became a doctor,” he recalls, “I would not let anyone die or suffer alone.”

And he kept this promise in 1984 when he met a patient in Bed 9 at Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami. The man’s wrist band read “No Address” and he was dying of tuberculosis. “This is a disease in third-world countries,” Greer says, and it killed the man — a tragedy that opened Greer’s eyes to the plight of Miami’s poor. “Disease, 80 percent of the time is a consequence of something other than genetics or biology,” he explains. “And if the cause is social, then the answer must be social.”

His answer was to make house calls on Miami’s forgotten souls: drug addicts, alcoholics, runaways, and the homeless. “I used to go on rounds in street clothes,” Greer recalls, “until a homeless man pulled a gun on me and didn’t believe I was Dr. Joe. Since then I have worn my white coat.” And he wears it in the private practice where he has cared for the uninsured for more than two decades.

He also offers basic health care services to the homeless as founder of Camillus Health Concern, named after his sister, Chichi. And he’s guiding a new generation of doctors as chair of the Department of Humanities, Health, and Society at Florida International University’s School of Medicine. Following in Greer’s footsteps, doctors go into the poorest neighborhoods and learn to take care of individual families for at least four years. The program is redefining the doctor’s role to restore a sense of service, as Greer explains. “We’re trying to create an army of young physicians oriented to saving the world.”
JUNE 16

Adam Smith

*To feel much for others and little for ourselves; to restrain our selfishness and exercise our benevolent affections, constitute the perfection of human nature.*

“No society can be flourishing and happy of which the greater part of the members are poor and miserable.” They’re not words you’d expect to come from Adam Smith, author of *The Wealth of Nations*, a manifesto on free-market capitalism and the division of labor. Yet his discussion of “the invisible hand” came after an ethical treatise on human nature and the search for happiness. In *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, published in 1759, the Scottish economist wrote eloquently on the reason why money couldn’t buy you a happy life.

At first glance, there seems to be a conflict between Smith’s two works: one which advocates economic self-interest and the other which suggests empathy and altruism are as natural to us as eating and sleeping. But these two points are not as discordant as they seem. A free market, as Smith pointed out, betters the human condition by channeling self-interest into socially positive outcomes, even when the exchanges occur among strangers. A strong government serves the common good by defending the realm, administering justice, and building infrastructure in the nation. Meanwhile, a well-developed civil society makes more bearable the human condition by tapping into the altruism most of us feel. And all three sectors work together because we’re wired to care about others.

Smith doesn’t deny that we’re all looking out for ourselves and competing to get what we want. At the same time, he believes in our ability to share the feelings of others, so we can be self-interested and selfless at the same time. We will sacrifice for others because of our belief in an imaginary “impartial spectator” who is judging the morality of our actions. The impartial spectator is a sort of moral yardstick by which we judge what we do against the greater good and realize that giving back makes you feel good. “No matter how selfish we suppose man to be,” Smith wrote, “there is obviously something in his nature that makes him interested in the fortunes of others and makes their happiness necessary to him, even if he derives nothing from it other than the pleasure of seeing it.”
JUNE 17

James Weldon Johnson

*This country can have no more democracy than it accords and guarantees to the humblest and weakest citizen.*

James Weldon Johnson sang a song of faith and hope in his work. “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” a song he composed with his brother was adopted by the NAACP and dubbed “the Negro National Anthem.” It expressed the sense of faith, endurance, and determination that Johnson showed in a wide range of fields. Besides being a songwriter, he was a lawyer, diplomat, novelist, and poet. He also played an important role in combatting racism through his work with the NAACP. His multifaceted career reflected his conviction that “we must begin to tell our young, there’s a world waiting for you. Yours is the quest that’s just begun.”

Johnson began his own quest for achievement after finishing college in 1894. He went on to become principal of a black high school in Florida and then began studying law. After passing the Florida Bar, Johnson continued serving as principal and also began practicing law. Despite the demands of his dual career, he found time to write poetry and songs.

Bored with Florida, he set out with his brother to write songs in New York City. They achieved success by composing two hundred songs for Broadway, and Johnson stepped into the limelight on the political stage. In 1904, he served as treasurer for the Colored Republican Club. In 1906, the Roosevelt Administration appointed him U.S. counsel to Venezuela, where he wrote *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*, a frank look at race relations.

The problems faced by blacks would occupy him even more in 1916 when he became field secretary of the NAACP. Johnson worked at opening new branches and expanding membership until 1920 when the NAACP appointed him its executive secretary. In this position, he brought attention to racism, lynching, and segregation, issues that still concerned him after he resigned from the NAACP to teach creative writing at Fisk University in Nashville. The poetry he left behind would inspire a generation of young, black writers, as would his refusal to let prejudice beat him down. “My inner life is my own,” he announced, “and I shall defend and maintain its integrity against all the powers of hell.”
JUNE 18

Paul McCartney

*Love is all you need.*

“I don’t ever try to make a serious social comment,” Sir Paul McCartney says. But he’s serious about making society better. The one-time Beatle won’t let it be when he learns about a problem. Besides playing to sell-out crowds, he’s known for his support of animal rights and environmental organizations. McCartney also champions a number of humanitarian causes and supports charities that fight cancer, the disease that killed his first wife, Linda.

McCartney, Linda, and their kids were tucking into a Sunday roast on their farm when he noticed lambs frolicking in the fields. “So we made the connection,” he says, recalling that day in 1975. “We looked at our food, we thought, ‘Ah, this is the same thing as these beautiful animals who had just been born.’” And just like that he became an outspoken advocate for animal rights. He’s the narrator of PETA’s *Glass Walls*, a short documentary that exposes the cruel treatment of farm animals and urges people to give up animal products altogether. To drive home the message, McCartney created Meat Free Monday. His campaign encourages people to give up meat one day a week to reduce animal suffering and improve public health.

McCartney has also written several animal-rights themed songs, including “Martha, My Dear,” an ode to his English sheepdog, and “Looking for Changes.” This powerful song is a protest against vivisection, in which McCartney declares, “I tell you we’ll all be looking for changes, changes in the way we treat our fellow creatures.”

And he’s played his part in promoting change by giving numerous charity concerts and donating songs to benefit a variety of causes. Recordings he’s given away have gone to support the U.S. campaign for Burma and disaster recovery in the wake of the 2004 tsunami in Southeast Asia. He’s also a supporter of the Make Poverty History campaign, and in 2013, he used his birthday to raise funds for the Royal Marsden Cancer Charity, which treats over 40,000 patients. There’s a long and winding road ahead before we beat cancer, but we can succeed. All we need is love and little help from friends like Sir Paul.
Aung San Suu Kyi

By helping others, you will learn how to help yourselves.

Many people in Myanmar believe Aung San Suu Kyi is a living saint. And like many saints, Suu Kyi has suffered for her beliefs. A major voice for human rights in military-rule Myanmar, Suu Kyi spent nearly two decades in some form of detention. During much of that time, she was in solitary confinement, forbidden to see her two sons or husband, who died of cancer in 1999. Despite the heartache she endured, Suu Kyi doesn’t think of herself as unbreakable. Instead, as she suggests, “perhaps I’m just rather flexible and adaptable.” She’s also committed to putting the public’s good above her own. “I was brought up,” she says, “to think that politics has to do with ethics, it has to do with responsibility, it has to do with service.”

She may have inherited her sense of conscience from her father, Myanmar’s independence hero, General Aung San. He was assassinated during the transition period in July 1947, just six months before independence, when Suu Kyi was only two. In 1960, she went to India with her mother and four years later, she studied at Oxford in the UK. When she returned to Rangoon in 1988, Myanmar was in the midst of political upheaval as thousands took to the streets demanding democratic reform.

As her father’s daughter, she couldn’t remain indifferent to their calls and she wrote an open letter to the government asking for the formation of an independent committee to hold democratic elections. Inspired by the nonviolent campaigns of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi, she formed the National League for Democracy and travelled the country calling for peaceful reform, actions that led the regime to place her under house arrest in 1989. Despite her detention, the NLD won the election, but the military dictatorship refused to recognize the results. So she rejoined the political process after being released from house arrest in 2010. As leader of the parliamentary opposition, she asked citizens of the world “to use your liberty to promote ours.” And her wish came true when the NLD won a landslide victory in the 2015 elections. After 26 years, democracy finally dawned in Myanmar.
JUNE 20

Audie Murphy

*I’ll tell you what bravery really is. Bravery is just determination to do a job that you know has to be done.*

Audie Murphy went to hell and back. He was the most decorated hero of World War II despite being rejected from the Paratroopers and Marines for being too small and thin. He returned from the war as a hero and went on to become a movie star and advocate for vets. These achievements made him a celebrity, yet he remained humble to the end. “I’m just a friendly, sort of scrawny, freckled kid from Texas,” he once remarked, “so how can anyone honestly expect me to maintain an air of superiority and romantic mystery?”

Granted, his early years weren’t filled with glamor as he grew up the son of a sharecropper who deserted his 12 kids when Murphy was 15. He had only five years of schooling and lost his mother to heart disease when he was 16. Moved to honor her life, he enlisted in the U.S. Army a few days before his 18th birthday. After receiving advanced training at Fort Meade, he fought in North Africa, Italy, Germany, and France. Over the course of the war, he witnessed the deaths of hundreds of fellow and enemy soldiers, experiences that chilled him to the bone. “I was scared before every battle,” he admitted, “but while the action was going on some part of my mind shut off and my training and discipline took over. I did what I had to do.”

This grace under fire led Murphy to earn 33 medals and awards though he was only 21 at the end of the war. *LIFE* magazine put him on its cover, and that photograph inspired actor James Cagney to invite Murphy to Hollywood and begin an acting career. He would go on to appear in more than 40 films, including one based on his autobiography, *To Hell and Back*. But his success didn’t stop him from being plagued by insomnia and nightmares, a condition now known as PTSD. By speaking out about his problem, he helped draw attention to suffering vets and the sacrifices they had made. “Nobody likes for his life to be disrupted,” he pointed out, “but when the country calls they need you.”
JUNE 21

John Huntsman, Sr.

*Except for my family and faith, there is no cause more important to me than fighting cancer.*

John Huntsman, Sr. went from barefoot to billionaire. The son of a school-teacher in rural Idaho, he made his first fortune in 1974 with the invention of the clamshell box that holds a McDonald’s Big Mac. He sold the company two years later and got into the polystyrene industry with the Huntsman Chemical Corporation. The company became a wide-ranging entity, the Huntsman Corporation, which made everything from specialty textiles to a carbon-fiber chassis for Lamborghini. The company now has revenues of over $12 billion and Huntsman’s wealth has ballooned. Yet he’s been giving money away all along.

By the time, he and his wife, Karen, made their first million, they had given 25 percent of it away. Throughout the 1980s, they were giving to 30 or 40 charities at $10,000 to $50,000 per donation, with the occasional multi-million-dollar gift. Then in 1992, he suffered the first of four bouts of cancer, the disease that killed his mother, father, and stepfather. After his first tussle with cancer, he decided to whittle his causes down to five or six, with cancer as the main one. Since 1993, Huntsman has been known for his focus on cancer research and treatment through the Huntsman Cancer Institute in Utah.

While his major target is fighting cancer, he also supports disaster relief and education. He provides college scholarships to hundreds of students each year and donated funds to create a business school at Utah State University. He gave $50 million to build hospitals and schools in Armenia after an earthquake rocked the nation in 1988. “I don’t know what took hold of me or why I gave,” he recalls. “It just got to my heart. I was watching television, and I saw these families were destroyed.”

Seeing how many need help convinced him to give half his wealth to charity under the Giving Pledge, a challenge from Warren Buffett. And he intends to distribute about $1 billion more. “I don’t want to have a will or a large fund of money for other people to distribute,” he explains. “I desire to leave this world as I entered it — barefoot and broke.”
Cicely Saunders

How people die remains in the memory of those who live on.

Dame Cicely Saunders liked to recall an encounter that shaped her ideas about death. “I once asked a man who was dying what he needed above all in those who were caring for him. He said, ‘For someone to look as if they are trying to understand me.’ Indeed, it is impossible to understand fully another person, but I never forgot that he did not ask for success but only that someone should care enough to try.” And Saunders did by founding the first modern hospice. A pioneer in the field of palliative care, St. Christopher’s Hospice in London inspired the spread of hospices worldwide where the terminally ill could die with dignity and without pain.

Saunders had seen too much pain as a nurse in the 1940s while working with the terminally ill. One of them was a Polish refugee who had fled the Warsaw ghetto. She fell in love with him and he left her his worldly wealth of 500 pounds to be “a window in your home.” Those words, which gave Saunders the idea for St. Christopher’s, are commemorated by a plain sheet of glass in the entrance to the hospice.

Before the idea became reality Saunders qualified as a doctor and spent seven years researching pain control at St. Joseph’s Hospice. While working there, she met a second patient for whom she deeply cared. His death in 1960 coincided with her father’s death and helped her empathize with the dying and their family members. Saunders’ sensitivity and expertise made St. Christopher’s a unique place.

In 1967, it became the first hospice to bring together teaching and clinical research, pain control, and compassionate care. There was always more to be done, Saunders pointed out, and she did it as the hospice’s medical director, and then as its chairman and president. For more than 30 years, she worked to let the dying know they had value as human beings. “You matter because you are you,” she maintained, “and you matter to the end of your life. We will do all we can not only to help you die peacefully but also to live until you die.”
Richard Bach

Happiness is the reward we get for living to the highest right we know.

“Jonathan,” says author Richard Bach, “is that brilliant little fire that burns within us all, that lives only for those moments when we reach perfection.” He’s also an adventurous bird who launched a million spiritual journeys and made Jonathan Livingston Seagull the biggest bestseller since Gone with the Wind. Bach’s much-loved book is the tale of a seagull who’s different from the other birds in his flock. “For most birds,” as Bach recounts, “it is not flying that matters but eating. For this gull, though, it was not eating that mattered but flight.” His love of flying led him to go faster than any bird had gone before and his quest to push his limits brought him to a higher plane of life.

Like his famous creation, Bach found meaning in the skies. His first airplane flight occurred at age 15 when his mother was campaigning for a seat on the council of Long Beach, California. He served in the Navy Reserve and in the Air Force as an F-84F pilot. Then he worked at a variety of jobs, including as a technical writer for Douglas Aircraft and a contributing editor for Flying magazine. In 1960, he was deployed in France as part of the Air Force Reserve and became a barnstormer later on. Since then, most of his books — including Stranger to the Ground, Illusions, and Out of My Mind — have involved flight, often to show that our physical limits are only appearance. “To fly as fast as thought,” he believes, “you must begin by knowing that you have already arrived.”

He’s kept his commitment to pushing the limits despite suffering a near-fatal plane crash in 2012. The doctors said he might not live and if he did, he might not walk, speak, read, or write. But Bach went on to write a memoir of his encounter with spirit guides following the crash. One of them is Jonathan, who makes him think his accident might actually be a test. In sharing the story of his near-death ordeal, Bach suggests “there’s no blessing that can’t be a disaster, and no disaster that can’t be a blessing.”
**JUNE 24**

**Norman Cousins**

*The capacity for hope is the most significant fact of life. It provides human beings with a sense of destination and the energy to get started.*

Norman Cousins laughed in the face of death. In 1964, the famed journalist headed a cultural delegation to Russia and had a stressful trip. Upon returning to the U.S., he was diagnosed with a deadly form of arthritis and given six months to live. But Cousins reasoned that if stress made him sick the opposite emotions would make him well. So he checked himself out of the hospital, hired a nurse to care for him, and started to watch everything funny he could find: Marx Brothers, Laurel and Hardy, and I Love Lucy. Within two weeks, he was off his medication. Within six months, he was back to work.

Cousins described the healing power of laughter in *Anatomy of an Illness*, but he knew life was no joke. As editor of the *Saturday Review*, he championed world peace and the United Nations. After World War II, he urged readers to become foster parents to over 400 children orphaned by the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and he himself became one of the foster parents. He helped arrange for Hiroshima victims to come to the U.S. for medical treatment and acted as a liaison between JFK and Khrushchev on negotiations for the Limited Test Ban Treaty, which restricted nuclear testing in 1963.

Cousins was committed to giving others help and hope because of his own struggle with tuberculosis in the 1920s. In the sanatorium, he noticed that two patients might be in the same condition, but the one who was confident of recovery was more likely to get better. That observation made him realize that “genuine belly laughter has an anesthetic effect,” and he acted on this discovery decades later when he again became ill. He defied that six-month diagnosis by living another 16 years, during which he encouraged millions to harness the healing power of humor. This was among the insights in *Human Options*, where Cousins shared life lessons from famous figures like Churchill, Einstein, and Nehru whom he had known. The central theme that emerged from these encounters, he explained, was that our options are limitless, our capacities unbounded, and “no challenge is beyond human conception and reach.”
JUNE 25

Dikembe Mutombo

You must help your family and the people of your country, and the more you give the more will come back to you.

Dikembe Mutombo is a giant in the world of basketball, but he’s never forgotten those closer to the ground. At 7’ 2”, he was a star center with the Houston Rockets and a frequent choice for the NBA All-Star Team before retiring from the game in 2009. He remains an all-star humanitarian, who is considered the “most caring athlete” in pro sports largely for his efforts to improve health in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

He has dreamt of helping others since childhood and knew by age nine that he wanted to be a doctor. He planned to study medicine in the U.S. and return home to practice in the Congo. For years, he worked, saved, and studied before earning an academic scholarship to Georgetown in 1987. As a sophomore, he was recruited to play basketball for the college team and showed remarkable talent on the court. After deciding to go pro, he was drafted by Denver in 1990 and then traded to Atlanta. Later, he moved to Philadelphia, where he helped his team reach the NBA finals and earned a four-year $65 million contract. He knew by then that basketball would allow him to help his country far more than he could have done as a doctor. He also realized that the lights of the NBA were weak compared to the love that burned in him for home.

He has fulfilled his childhood dream by creating clinics and providing medical supplies. As the first UN Youth Emissary, he has toured the world to tell all children they can make a difference. In 1997, he founded the Dikembe Mutombo Foundation and donated $15 million toward a new, modern hospital in his hometown of Kinshasa. Since opening in 2007, the Biamba Marie Mutombo Hospital, named for his mom, has treated over 120,000 patients, a big step toward the big guy’s goal of making society better. “We have an obligation to give back to the place from which we have come,” Mutombo explains. “In Africa, there is a saying: when you take the elevator to the top, don’t forget to send it back down so someone else can use it.”
JUNE 26

Pearl S. Buck

*Our society must make it right and possible for old people not to fear the young or be deserted by them, for the test of a civilization is the way that it cares for its helpless members.*

“One does not live half a life in Asia without return,” Pearl Buck wrote in 1962 after the U.S. banned travel to Communist China. “When it would be I did not know, nor even where it would be, or to what cause. In our changing world nothing changes more than geography. The friendly country of China, the home of my childhood and youth, is for the time being forbidden country. I refuse to call it enemy country. The people in my memory are too kind and the land too beautiful.” They also became known to millions through *The Good Earth*, Buck’s epic novel of peasant life. It was an eloquent plea for building bridges between Asia and the West.

Buck came to know both as the daughter of missionaries who brought her to a Chinese village when she was five months old. Buck’s parents chose to live among the Chinese and not in the missionary compound, so she grew up speaking Chinese, playing with Chinese children, and absorbing their culture. These experiences would form the basis for the books she began writing while living in China with her husband and mentally disabled daughter, Carol. Concerned about paying for Carol’s schooling, she wrote her first novel, *East Wind, West Wind*. It was followed by *The Good Earth*, which became the bestselling American novel of both 1931 and 1932.

A few years later, she moved to the U.S. because she had placed Carol in an American institution and wanted to live nearby. But she kept writing about Asian cultures and became well known for her efforts on behalf of Asian and mixed-race adoption. In 1949, when she became aware of the immense problems faced by children of mixed race, she founded the Welcome House Adoption Agency which continues to this day. When it holds its yearly reunion in June, hundreds of families come together for a day of barbecues and games. The parents and kids don’t look alike, but they’re bridged by love, as Buck explained. “Parenthood has nothing to do with color, race, or religion. It has to do with far deeper likeness of mind and heart and soul.”
JUNE 27

Helen Keller

Fortunately, I have much work to do and while doing it I shall have confidence, as always, that my unfulfilled longings shall be gloriously satisfied in a world where eyes never grow dim nor ears dull.

Helen Keller spent her days in darkness. Yet she lit up countless lives through her achievements. Despite being blind and deaf, she became an influential campaigner for social, political, and disability issues. Her public profile helped lift the stigma from blindness and deafness, and she became a role model for those who faced difficult conditions. “We can do anything we want,” she said, “if we stick with it long enough.”

Keller’s enduring mission came from her own life and ordeals. Struck both blind and deaf at 19 months by a raging brain fever, she might have been consigned to an asylum but for a resourceful mother who had her examined by experts. They sent Anne Sullivan, a teacher of the blind, to act as a governess for seven-year-old Keller. Sullivan taught her to connect objects with letters and the result was to give Keller a new attitude towards the world. “Once I knew only darkness and stillness,” she would recall, “my life was without past or future. But a little word from the fingers of another fell into my hand that clutched at emptiness and my heart leaped to the rapture of living.”

From then on, Keller’s mind raced ahead as she picked up words. She learned to speak when she was ten by feeling her teacher’s mouth when she talked. She came to read five languages in Braille and entered Radcliffe when she was 20. While there she published The Story of My Life, which recounted her struggles to overcome her limitations.

After becoming the first deaf-blind person to earn a BA, she used her skills as a writer to fight for the disadvantaged and disabled. She was a tireless advocate for women’s suffrage and an early member of the ACLU. But her ideals found their most lasting expression in work for the American Foundation for the Blind. Her 40 years working for AFB provided her with a global platform to advocate for the needs of those with vision loss and make people realize the blind deserved opportunities and education. “The only thing worse than being blind,” she pointed out, “is having sight but no vision.”
JUNE 28

John Wesley

*Do all the good you can, to all the people you can, for as long as you can.*

John Wesley was driven to serve God wherever he could. “I look on all the world as my parish,” he explained; “thus far I mean that whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty to declare unto all that are willing to hear the glad tidings of salvation.” His teachings formed the basis for Methodism, a movement that encourages people to have personal experiences of Christ. And he spread the word by forming societies of Christians throughout England, Scotland, Wales, North America, and Ireland. They consisted of small groups that stressed discipleship, accountability, and salvation by faith. They also applied the Bible’s teachings to daily life under the guidance of unordained preachers who gave their sermons in the open air. Wesley himself preached over 40,000 sermons while riding on horseback over thousands of miles, so it seems fitting that his movement began on a journey.

In 1735, he travelled from England to Georgia with German Protestants who planned on settling in Savannah. When the ship encountered a fierce storm, the English feared for their lives while the Germans remained calm. As Wesley watched the Germans sing hymns and pray he was deeply moved by their faith. He remained in touch with them while in Georgia and what he learned from them served as a starting point for his ministry in England. He would go to preach that love of God is linked directly to love for your neighbor, so he urged Methodists to “make all you can, save all you can, give all you can.” They had a duty to visit the sick, feed the disadvantaged, and refrain from buying and selling slaves.

So strongly was Wesley opposed to slavery that he wrote a pamphlet entitled *Thoughts on Slavery*, in which he argued that “no circumstances can make it necessary for a man to burst in sunder all ties to humanity.” Though preaching against slavery put him at great personal risk he told himself, “Oh be not weary of well-doing!” He knew it was his duty to “be zealous of good works” by helping those most in need.
JUNE 29

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

Love does not consist in gazing at each other, but in looking outward together in the same direction.

One day a pilot crashes in the desert and falls into a slumber. Imagine his surprise when a small, crowned figure awakens him and requests, “If you please — draw me a sheep.” The little prince, the pilot learns, lives on a tiny asteroid and has left after quarreling with a rose. Determined to find the meaning of life, he seeks it on six worlds. Then he comes to earth where he learns a great secret from a fox before vanishing into thin air.

Sounds like a fairytale. But The Little Prince emerged from the experiences of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. An aviator before World War II, he made flights from France to Asia over routes that took him across the Sahara. He was trying to set a speed record between Paris and Saigon, when he crashed in the desert and survived for three days before being rescued. Did he dream of the little prince in the desert? — Maybe so. For years afterward, Saint-Ex sketched the figure of a golden-haired child whom he described as “just a little fellow I carry around in my heart.”

A publisher noticed his doodles in 1942 and suggested he turn them into a book. By then, war had erupted and Saint-Ex had won a medal for flying missions. When France fell to Germany, he fled to New York, where he pushed for U.S. intervention in the war and wrote his tale of an extraterrestrial waif.

With the little prince as an alter ego, Saint-Ex meditates on his life. The Nazis appear as giant trees whose roots threaten to strangle the prince’s world. And the U.S. is represented by soulless men: a king without subjects, a braggart who demands admiration, and a man who has never smelled a flower. They have all forgotten the value of friendship, says a fox who urges the prince to tame him. The prince takes his advice, and slowly they become friends. When it’s time for the prince to go home, the fox weeps as he reveals the secret of life. “It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye.”
Michael Phelps

*I think that everything is possible as long as you put your mind to it and you put the work and time into it.*

There’s no limit to what you can do if you have the will to succeed. Michael Phelps has proved it by beating the odds to become the most decorated Olympian ever. The 18-time Gold Medalist swimmer comes from a broken home and experienced life from a humbling perspective. Heading into middle school, he was a hyperactive kid with ADHD and protruding ears, making him an easy target for bullies “It was very frustrating at the time,” Phelps recalls, but some of these early ordeals may have helped Phelps in the pool. It was a place to unleash frustrations. And if kids picked on him on dry land, he’d make sure nobody could keep up with him in the water.

He had the last laugh after making a splash in the swimming world with help from Bob Bowman, his mentor and coach. At the 2001 U.S. spring nationals competition, he became the youngest world-record holder in men’s swimming. Though just 15, he swam the 200-meter butterfly in under two minutes, a feat he would top in time. At the 2008 Games in Beijing, he won an unprecedented eight gold medals in a single Olympics. He also earned a $1 million bonus from longtime sponsor Speedo and used it to makes waves in the world of giving.

Since 2008, the Michael Phelps Foundation has promoted active lifestyles, especially for children. The foundation’s first initiative was a nationwide tour to share Phelps’ Olympic experience and message of Dream, Plan, Reach with members of the Boy & Girls clubs. It went on to provide grants for talented swimmers and offer autographed caps for charity auctions. It also works with Boys & Girls clubs to implement a program that has taught nearly 3,000 kids how to swim. The im program, named for Phelps signature event, the Individual Medley, is also short for “I-am,” and it’s meant to show kids how much they can do. Perhaps one of them will get to the Olympics by taking the great swimmer’s advice. “You can’t put a limit on anything,” says Phelps who now coaches beside his mentor. “The more you dream, the farther you get.”
JULY
JULY 1

Wally Amos

For me, giving thanks is a sign of appreciation and gratitude that also brings about a deep sense of peace.

His name is now a household word, but Wally Amos worked hard to become famous. The man whose face launched a thousand chips had a troubled youth in the segregated South. That’s the way the cookie crumbles for many folks and they just give up. Fortunately, Amos had a gift for seeing the sweet side of life and lived with a loving aunt in New York after he was 12. She was the first to bake him chocolate chip cookies, and she gave him a can-do approach to life. “You have to focus on what you can do,” he says. “There are people who convince themselves they can’t do anything with their lives because of what happened to them — and they’re right,” he says. “They can’t. But the reason is that they’ve told themselves they can’t.”

Amos meanwhile made his way in the world believing “nothing is an obstacle unless you say it is.” After a four-year stint in the Air Force, he got a job in the stockroom of Saks, where he rose to become manager of the supply department. Then he went on to join the William Morris Talent Agency and become the company’s first black agent. But he became tired of chasing clients and opened his first cookie shop in 1975. From then on success had a very sweet smell, as Famous Amos Chocolate Chip Cookie Corporation gained a following nationwide.

Knowing that being famous only meant lots of people knew who he was, Amos wanted to use his wide recognition for an important cause. That cause became literacy, and Amos dedicated his efforts to Literacy Volunteers of America, where he served as spokesman from 1979 to 2002. As a literary advocate, Amos still uses his well-known name to support educational causes and serves on the boards of the National Center for Family Literacy, Read to Me International, and Communities in Schools. In 2005, Amos founded Chip & Cookie Read Aloud Foundation to promote reading aloud to children. Amos wants to instill kids with his “do it” approach and show them that “everything is possible; you’ve just got to find a way to make it work.”
JULY 2

Thurgood Marshall

The measure of a country’s greatness is its ability to retain compassion in times of crisis.

How did the great grandson of a slave and son of a dining car waiter become the first black justice of the U.S. Supreme Court? With hard work and some help from others, as Justice Thurgood Marshall explained, looking back on his groundbreaking rise. “None of us got where we are solely by pulling ourselves up by our bootstraps. We got here because somebody — a parent, a teacher, an Ivy League crony, or a few nuns — bent down and helped us pick up our boots,” Marshall said. And he intended to do the same by striving to end discrimination. “A child born to a black mother in a state like Mississippi,” he explained, “has exactly the same rights as a white baby born to the wealthiest person in the United States. It’s not true but I challenge anyone to say it is not a goal worth working for.”

Marshall made it his goal after graduating first in his class from Howard Law School in 1933 and then joining the civil rights battle being waged by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. He first served as special counsel for the NAACP and then as director of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, where he argued and won a long string of cases to strike down many forms of legalized racism, including whites-only primary elections and restrictive covenants that barred blacks from buying or renting homes. His greatest legal victory came in 1954 with the Supreme Court’s decision in Brown v. Board of Education, which declared an end to the “separate but equal” system of racial segregation then in effect in the public schools of 21 states.

The decision set the stage for the civil rights movement, and Marshall played a key role in the ongoing fight after 1967, when President Johnson nominated him to be associate justice of the Supreme Court. During his 24-year tenure he supported affirmative action and equal protection under the law as a matter of the decency and fairness he cherished. “In recognizing the humanity of our fellow beings,” he explained, “we pay ourselves the highest tribute.”
Sue Ryder

Young people have got to be made more aware, from the age of five or six, of what needs doing. Money is not the be-all and end-all of life.

“If one didn’t believe in God and justice in the next world, one might despair,” Sue Ryder wrote her mother when she was not yet 15. By then World War II was brewing and one of Ryder’s friends at her English boarding school was a Jewish girl who had fled Italy with her parents. “She tells me in graphic detail about the arrests, suspicions, and the Fascists,” Ryder explained. “Her family only just got out in time; thousands were left. Many won’t realize or believe the fate which awaits them. Equally, the majority of people don’t understand the full horror of what is happening and being planned.”

But Ryder did, so when war broke out she left school and volunteered for the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry, though she was only 16. She went on to serve in the Special Operations Executive, which took care of diversions in occupied Europe. While there she was so moved by the suffering she saw that she volunteered for relief work after the war.

Her duties took her to concentration camps and prisons, where she had experiences that led her to become engrossed in charity work for those who were ill, homeless, or in need. She took on the cases of 1,400 young Poles who had been abandoned in German prisons, and she managed to get all but four of them home. Then she founded a home in Germany for men who had been in the camps. Volunteers came from 16 countries to build cottages for them, and the project was such a success that she decided to add more homes for the disabled and ill.

In 1953, she began the Sue Ryder Foundation and turned a house in Suffolk, into a home for 41 disabled people from all over Britain. In time she opened more than 80 homes throughout Europe, supported by 500 charity shops that sold new and second-hand items.

When Ryder became a peer in 1979, she was asked whether she had sought reward. “Reward,” Lady Ryder responded, “I don’t look for reward. Surely, according to God’s judgment, our reward is when we die. We are all pilgrims on this earth.”
Stephen Mather

Who will gainsay that the parks contain the highest potentialities of national pride, national contentment, and national health?

Stephen Mather always found time to climb mountains and hike canyons as he made a fortune selling borax. He loved parks, so he was disgusted by the poor condition of Yosemite and Sequoia National Park when he visited them in 1914. At the time, American parks had natural wonders, but instead of amenities they had mud. Vacationers often had to pay tolls to logging companies to access the country’s few and far-flung national parks, and thanks to Henry Ford, the number of vacationers had grown. Having been through these ordeals, Mather wrote a letter of complaint to Secretary of the Interior Franklin Lane. The secretary recognized Mather’s name and wrote back, “Dear Steve, If you don’t like the way the national parks are being run, come down to Washington and run them yourself.” So Mather did.

As the first director of the National Park Service, Mather molded a random collection of national parks into a cohesive system and set up ways to care for them. Since Congress was slow to fund his plans, he dipped into his own pocket as he hired staff and began a PR campaign to build awareness of the parks. He donated new park lands to the service and raised funds to purchase even more. He spent thousands to improve park access and create the first visitors centers. He pushed for nature study and interpretation programs that would attract people to the parks and invited in concessionaires who could provide basic comforts. He took influential people on trips to parks and supplied material to the press, which generated over 1,000 magazine articles on park lands between 1917 and 1919 alone.

He got car companies to “democratize parks” by supporting the construction of roads to get a broader cross-section of people into the wild spaces he loved. “The parks do not belong to one state or to one section,” he explained. “The Yosemite, the Yellowstone, the Grand Canyon are national properties in which every citizen has a vested interest. They belong as much to the man of Massachusetts, of Michigan, of Florida as they do to the people of California, of Wyoming, and Arizona.”
JULY 5

Mary Maxwell Gates

*The thing about old age is you don’t get to practice.*

Mary Gates was widely respected long before her son, Bill, gained fame. The mother of the Microsoft founder was a tireless community-service advocate and role model for women seeking corporate advancement. But when it came to getting credit, she always deflected spotlight away from herself and onto her many causes.

They included education because Gates had a degree in the field from the University of Washington and taught junior high school after her marriage to Seattle attorney William Gates Sr. She gave up teaching when her second child, Bill, was born in 1955, but she remained interested in education, volunteering as a lecturer for Seattle’s Museum of History and Industry. She often took her young son with her when she travelled to area schools to talk about the region’s history and culture.

By then Gates was lending her talents to a wide range of civic activities. Her volunteer roles included serving on the boards of the Children’s Hospital Foundation, Seattle Symphony, and Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce. She served as president of the Junior League of Seattle and as a member of the Board of Regents for the University of Washington, where she led a movement to divest UW’s holdings in South Africa as a way to protest apartheid. She also headed Washington Gives, a volunteer project that urges people to donate 5 percent of their income and 5 percent of their time.

In 1975, the year her son co-founded Microsoft, Gates became the first woman president of the United Way of King County, and in 1983, she was named the first woman to chair the national United Way’s executive committee, where she served with IBM President John Opel. A discussion he had with Gates led Opel to hire Microsoft to build an operating system for IBM’s first personal computer.

She helped her son in another way by inspiring him and his wife, Melinda, to make giving a family affair. On the eve of her wedding, Melinda received a letter from Gates, telling her, “From those to whom much is given, much is expected.” Melinda and Bill went on to build a foundation, where they’ve followed this advice.
JULY 6

Dalai Lama

*True happiness comes from a sense of inner peace and contentment, which in turn must be achieved through cultivation of altruism, of love, of compassion, and through the elimination of anger, selfishness, and greed.*

“I am a simple Buddhist monk,” His Holiness once said. But the life of the 14th Dalai Lama has hardly been simple. At age two, he was identified as the reincarnation of the Buddha of Compassion and brought to live in a 1,000-room palace where doting monks prepared him to fulfill his glorious fate as Tibet’s spiritual leader. Though he had not volunteered for this role, he came to realize he had a duty. “Sometimes, it is difficult,” he says, “but where there is some big challenge, that is also truly an opportunity to serve.”

His chance came in 1950 when he became head of government in Tibet. He was only 15 and the Chinese had invaded his country and brutally put down a Tibetan civilian uprising. “It was a very difficult situation,” he admits, and it only got harder in 1959 following a Tibetan revolt against Chinese rule. When the communist army reached Lhasa, capital of Tibet, he fled to India where he established a government-in-exile dedicated to work for the freedom of his country. “It was there we decided on representative government — the first step in democratization,” he says. And as part of this progression, he retired from official duties in 2011.

But this didn’t mean an end to the tremendous force he exerts on behalf of human rights. The Dalai Lama is an inveterate traveller who has often visited the West to advance his nonviolent struggle for the people of Tibet and speak out for oppressed people throughout the world. He has written two memoirs, *My Land and My People* and *Freedom and Exile*, along with several books dealing with spirituality and religion. The most recent is *Beyond Religion*, in which he reveals that his “religion is kindness.”

After a lifetime of prayer, he now thinks you can lead a happy, ethical life without organized religion. “We are born free of religion, but we are not born free of the need for compassion,” he says. By caring for others, we’ll find what is often lacking in our lives. “Altruism is the best source of happiness,” His Holiness says. “There is no doubt about that.”
Lillien Jane Martin

Many of the powers of the mind as well as of the body wane with advancing years. Memory reaches a peak and then declines. But there are compensating gains in insight and wisdom, and judgment is improved.

Lillien Jane Martin defied the odds to become one of the best-known psychologists in this country. At a time when few women went to college, she won a scholarship to Vassar in 1875 and went on to teach high school for several years. In time, she was drawn to the field of psychology and quit her teaching job to study for a PhD in Germany, the hub of psychology at the time. The University of Göttingen, where she spent four years, was not keen on accepting women, yet she became the second female in the program. After 15 years of research and publication, Martin became a professor of psychology at Stanford and then department head, the first woman to head a department at the school. In 1916, at age 65, she was forced to retire and didn’t like it a bit.

At first, she felt “old, lost, and lonely and discouraged.” But drawing on her own distress at being cast aside, she went on to write key works that founded the study of gerontology. Foreshadowing modern perspectives on aging, she once said, “Age is an accident and nothing to pride oneself on. The important thing is to adapt oneself to the requirements of each successive age class and to function in each as an active participant in life, a fully adjusted human being.” Helping seniors live a full life required a scientific approach in which we look on old age as “a period with its own struggles, its aspirations, and accomplishments,” Martin maintained.

And she put her theories to work. At age 78, she established the world’s first old-age counseling center, based on a system that promoted productivity and healthy living. At 86, she opened a farm in California “to give employment and restore self-confidence to a group of elderly men.”

It was possible to keep on growing as she herself showed. She learned to type at 65 and afterward wrote numerous articles and books. At 74, she went around the world; at 78, she learned to drive and went on to drive across the continent twice. Martin put her best efforts into living until the end.
JULY 8

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

*Each of us has within us a Mother Teresa and a Hitler; it is up to us to choose what we want to be. Free choice is the greatest gift God gave to his children.*

Death was supposed to be met with words of welcome rather than woe in centuries past. This was the core lesson of the art of dying, which linked the experience of the dying person to that of Christ on the Cross. It was also the theme of numerous handbooks that set forth a model of the good death for both the dying and their survivors. This vision of life’s end consoled many people, but it faded as science led society to sanitize and prolong the act of death. By the twentieth century, both doctors and laymen saw death as just the failure of technology and stopped discussing its meaning for all human beings.

Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross questioned this denial of a universal experience and addressed the unmet needs of the dying and their families. She offered an alternative to the institutional model of health care by urging a return to traditional customs that had once helped people face the end. She challenged the culture of the hospital by arguing that the ill should die in the familiar atmosphere of their homes. She lamented that the tubes and wires of modern medicine dehumanized people at the final moment of their lives. She denounced a medical mindset that ignored patients’ individual feelings and envisioned a way for people to have a different end.

In 1969, Kübler-Ross spoke to both the physical and spiritual needs of the terminally ill in *On Death and Dying*. Her seminal work argued that patients thought more about the quality of life than the quantity of life. And it inspired a hospice movement that gives patients physical comfort, helps them cope with their fears, and lets them spend their remaining time with the people they love. By bringing back the notion of a good death, Kübler-Ross helped millions see beauty in the journey to a higher plane that we must all go on one day. “Watching a peaceful death of a human being reminds us of a falling star,” she explained, “one of a million lights in a vast sky that flares up for a brief moment only to disappear into the endless night forever.”
JULY 9

Susan Levine

_Treating patients the way they should be treated, to me, is quite a privilege._

Every November, Hospice of the Valley holds its Light Up a Life celebration in Phoenix. This commemoration of loved ones who have died is open to all and “marks the beginning of fall and the holiday season,” says HOV’s director, Susan Levine. “It exemplifies everything community represents and everything hospice is about — families coming together, offering support to one another, honoring loved ones, focusing on the good times, melding spiritual reflections with physical comforts.” And all this is part of Levine’s mission at HOV, the nation’s largest not-for-profit hospice, where no one is ever turned away because they lack the financial means.

Levine is a passionate advocate of community-based end-of-life care, though she took some detours before finding her vocation. Her first career was in retail management. Then she became a teacher, a role that took her from the classroom to the hospital where she set up a training program for nonclinical managers and began checking on patients though it wasn’t her job. “I was drawn to the intimacy and importance of excellent health care, taking care of people when they were vulnerable,” she recalls. So she earned a nursing degree and became a home care nurse. As a caregiver, “I’d go out and do anything,” says Levine, who was Senator Barry Goldwater’s personal nurse before their marriage.

After his death, she joined HOV, where she’s been ever since. Under her leadership, HOV has grown from serving 130 patients a day with a $5 million annual budget to caring for nearly 17,000 patients a year with a $162 million budget. It has also established numerous inpatient hospice programs, including an innovative dementia program, and partnered with the Mayo Clinic to help physicians deal better with end-of-life issues.

These achievements are part of Levine’s goal to serve both patients and their families. “Everyone can’t always take care of their loved one as much as they’d like to,” she says. “Our role is to provide the physical support so the family can just love each other.” And HOV’s work isn’t done when patients have died. Each year, Light Up a Life continues to give families the comfort they need.
Eunice Kennedy Shriver

You are the stars and the world is watching you. By your presence, you send a message to every village, every city, every nation. A message of hope. A message of victory.

In 1962, Eunice Kennedy Shriver revealed a family secret in the Saturday Evening Post. The fifth of nine children in the Kennedy clan, Shriver disclosed that her older sister, Rosemary, was mentally disabled. “Like diabetes, deafness, polio, or any other misfortune, mental retardation can happen in any family,” Shriver wrote. It was different from mental illness, she explained, and there was no reason for the common practice of shunting people like Rosemary from sight. “The truth is that 75 to 85 percent of the retarded are capable of becoming useful citizens with the help of special education and rehabilitation. Another 10 percent can learn to make small contributions, not involving book learning, such as mowing a lawn or washing dishes.”

Rosemary never had that chance because she was lobotomized and placed in an institution, where she spent most of the time staring at walls. But Shriver never stopped visiting her and she never forgot the sister with whom she’d grown up swimming, sailing, and playing games. She began to think sports could help the mentally challenged live fuller lives, and since there were few programs for kids like Rosemary at the time, she began her own.

In 1961, Shriver established a summer camp near Washington, DC, for children who were mentally disabled. Some couldn’t speak, eat, or care for themselves, but Shriver recruited volunteers and worked with the kids herself. She would get down in the dirt to play with campers, pitch softballs, or teach them to swim. She had the kids riding horses and shooting bows and arrows.

Seeing what they could do inspired her to launch the Special Olympics in 1968. The first competition attracted 1,000 contestants who competed at Soldier Field in Chicago. There were few spectators and most of the press ignored it, but Shriver persisted. And today the Special Olympics draw more than 2.5 million athletes from 180 countries. Their achievements have changed public attitudes toward the mentally challenged but one thing hasn’t changed, the Special Olympics Oath Shriver recited at the very first game: “Let me win, but if I cannot win let me be brave in the attempt.”
JULY 11

John Quincy Adams

*Always vote for principle, though you may vote alone, and you may cherish the sweetest reflection that your vote is never lost.*

John Quincy Adams held fast to his ideals, and it hindered him as sixth president of the United States. Though he had fine ideas for improving the economy and education, his moral fervor made it hard for him to play the political game. With few exceptions, like the building of the Cumberland Road, he was unsuccessful in persuading Congress to adopt his program. The voters tossed him out of office after one term, choosing instead Andrew Jackson, a military hero whose ethos more closely matched that of the public. Unlike Jackson, Adams was a fierce opponent of slavery, not a stance shared throughout the Union. His refusal to bend made him the kind of crusader who can only succeed as head of state when times are ripe for change.

The uncompromising beliefs that crippled his presidency led to the most successful post-presidency in U.S. history. As a member of the House of Representatives for almost two decades, he became “the acutest, the astutest, the archest enemy of Southern slavery that ever existed,” as one enemy described him. Adams spoke relentlessly against slavery and in particular against the “gag rule” by which Southerners tried to prevent Congress from discussing anything to do with the issue. Adams’ opponents unsuccessfully tried to censure him and strip him of his chairmanship of a congressional committee. But his efforts convinced growing numbers of Northerners that the southern “slave power threatened civil liberties” and the gag rule was suspended in 1844.

Four years earlier Adams had formally retired from public life, but he decided to take on *United States v. Amistad*, an important legal case. In 1841, he went before the Supreme Court on behalf of African slaves who had revolted and seized the Spanish ship Amistad. He appeared on February 24 and spoke for four hours though he was 72 and nearly blind. The court’s decision to free the slaves and let them return home gave him “great joy” and strengthened his faith in the value of principled leadership. “If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more,” he believed, “you are a leader.”
Malala Yousafzai

When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful.

In 2012, 15-year-old Malala Yousafzai was shot in the head by Taliban gunmen. Her crime was to have spoken up for the right of girls to an education. She survived the assault, in which a militant boarded her school bus in Pakistan’s northwestern Swat Valley and opened fire, wounding two of her school friends as well. The story of her recovery — from multiple operations to rehabilitation in the UK, followed by a global campaign for her cause — has captured the world’s attention. Her current life is not one she could have imagined when she was an anonymous voice expressing the fears of schoolgirls living under the Taliban’s shadow.

Her father had founded a school, where Malala picked up her love of learning and drive to succeed. She was 11 when the Taliban began attacking female education and she knew her dreams were at risk. “I wanted to speak up for my rights,” she recalls. “And also I didn’t want my future to be just sitting in a room and being imprisoned in my four walls and just cooking and giving birth to children. I didn’t want to see my life in that way.” So in 2008 she gave a speech in which she asked, “How dare the Taliban take away my basic right to education?” With a growing public platform, she began blogging to BBC about her hopes to keep going to school and her fears for the future of Swat.

At age 14, she learned that the Taliban had issued a death threat against her. When they acted on it, she narrowly survived the ordeal. The shooting resulted in a massive outpouring of support for Malala, which only strengthened her commitment to education, despite the Taliban’s continued threats.

On July 12, 2013, nine months after the shooting, Malala stood at the UN headquarters in New York and addressed an assembly of 400 young people from 100 countries. It was her 16th birthday and her speech was broadcast around the world. When she took the stage, she summed up her convictions in these words: “One child, one teacher, one book, one pen can change the world.”
Edward Flanagan

*The poor, innocent, unfortunate little children belong to us, and it is our problem to give them every chance to develop into good men and good women.*

Father Edward Flanagan never forgot the house where he grew up in Ireland. “The old-fashioned home with its fireside companionship, its religious devotion and its closely knit family ties is my idea of what a home should be. My father would tell me many stories that were interesting to a child — stories of adventure, or the struggle of the Irish people for independence. It was from him that I learned the great science of life, of examples from the lives of the saints, scholars, and patriots. It was from his life I first learned the fundamental rule of life of the great Saint Benedict, ‘prayer and work.’”

Flanagan would embrace it after coming to the U.S. in 1904 and being ordained as a priest eight years later. His first parish assignment was in Omaha, where he started a shelter for homeless and jobless men. As he listened to the stories of these drifters, he realized they were all victims of parental neglect or broken homes, an observation that led him to think that “there are no bad boys. There is only bad environment, bad training, bad example, bad thinking.”

Based on this conviction, he found his mission to help troubled young boys get a fresh start in life. In 1917, he brought five boys to live in a rundown Victorian mansion. Four years later, the Boys’ Home moved to Overlook Farm, just 10 miles outside of Omaha. And in short time, Boys Town grew to be large community with its own boy mayor, schools, chapel, post office, cottages, and gymnasium where boys between 10 and 16 could receive an education and learn a trade.

Boys Town became world renowned through the 1938 movie *Boys Town* and Flanagan became an acknowledged expert in the field of juvenile care. He went to discuss his views throughout the United States, Asia, and Europe, where many children had been left orphaned or displaced by World War II. Wherever he went, he urged people to give boys a chance to develop into good men. “It costs so little to teach a child to love,” he said, “and so much to teach him to hate.”
JULY 14

Emmeline Pankhurst

_Trust in God — she will provide._

When we say Emmeline Pankhurst fought for women’s rights, we mean she really fought. She put herself in the way of horses’ hooves and stood up on platforms facing a rain of bullets. She was put in jail, where she went on a hunger strike and was force fed by officers. When they let her out at the brink of death, she rested for a day or two, then climbed back on the platforms and staggered back under the horses’ hooves. As a leading English suffragette, she was determined to do whatever it took to get women the vote. “If it is right for men to fight for their freedom,” she explained, “then it is right for women to fight for their freedom and the freedom of the children they bear.”

Pankhurst had borne five of them with her husband Richard Pankhurst, a lawyer and supporter of women’s rights. During their marriage, she entered public life as a poor law guardian, a role that took her to work houses and made her aware of the shocking levels of poverty many faced. “I began to think about the vote in women’s hands not only as a right but as a desperate necessity,” she said. And her sense of urgency increased in 1898 when her husband’s death left her in shock.

In 1903, she formed the Women’s Social and Political Union, whose members joined her in window smashing, hunger strikes, and demonstrations. To raise support for her cause, she got smuggled into lecture halls, spoke from automobiles, and addressed crowds from a stretcher. In 1913, she had a warrant on her head as she spoke in Hartford, Connecticut, to raise funds for her cause. “Human life for us is sacred,” she told an attentive crowd, “but if we say any life is to be sacrificed, it shall be ours; we won’t do it ourselves, but we will put the enemy in the position where they will have to choose between giving us freedom or giving us death.” And as it turned out, Pankhurst got both. Women were granted the right to vote in 1928 just 18 days after her death.
JULY 15

Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini

Let your example speak louder than your words.

In the apse of a midcentury chapel in Upper Manhattan, there’s a sparkling, mosaic mural that depicts the life of Frances Xavier Cabrini, America’s first saint. In 2015, the mural was restored to its original luster using marble tiles and gilded Venetian glass tiles made by fusing 22-karat gold leaf between layers of crystal and glass. Built into an altar beneath the mosaic is the reliquary of Mother Cabrini, patron saint of immigrants, whose body lies in a coffin of glass.

Born in Italy in 1850, she grew up enthralled by tales of missionaries in the Far East and made up her mind to join a religious order. Because of her frail health, she was not permitted to join the Daughters of the Sacred Guide, with whom she had studied to become a teacher. Undaunted, she raised funds and enlisted seven young women to join her in founding the Institute of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. She and her sisters wanted to be missionaries in China, but Pope Leo XIII told Cabrini to go “not to the East but to the West,” to New York instead of China. Her mission was to help thousands of Italian immigrants already in the United States.

When she and her sisters arrived in New York in 1889, they had no money, couldn’t speak English, and faced obstacles at every step. The house intended to be her first orphanage in the U.S. was not available. The archbishop advised her to return to Italy, but she left the archbishop’s residence even more determined to stay.

Cabrini began her work in the U.S. by establishing schools and adult education classes for immigrants who’d lost their faith. Soon requests for her to open schools came from around the world, and over the next 28 years she made 24 transatlantic crossings and established 67 hospitals, orphanages, and schools. Today Cabrini’s order remains active in 17 countries and preserves her mission to venture wherever there is need. “I will go anywhere and do anything in order to communicate the love of Jesus to those who do not know him or have forgotten him,” she said.
JULY 16

Mary Baker Eddy

_Happiness is spiritual, born of truth and love. It is unselfish; therefore it cannot exist alone, but requires all mankind to share it._

In 1866, Mary Baker Eddy was destitute and often ill. She had been widowed by one husband, abandoned by another, and crippled after a fall on the ice. Bedridden, she turned to her Bible and read an account of Jesus healing a paralyzed man. Suddenly she was better to the surprise of her pastor, doctor, and friends. Later on Eddy would refer to this astounding rebirth as the moment she discovered Christian Science. Though she could not explain what had happened, she knew it was the result of what she had read in the Bible. This conviction led to nine years of intensive scriptural study culminating in the publication of _Science and Health_. In 1875, her famous book marked out what she thought to be the science behind this healing method. “Health,” as she pointed out, “is not a condition of matter, but of mind.”

She went on to cure hundreds of hopeless cases and taught her healing techniques to thousands despite opposition. As part of her teachings, she stressed the vital role of compassion on the route to spiritual understanding. _Science and Health_ points out that we have to learn to help those who are grief-stricken and heartbroken before we can learn to help the sick through prayer and spiritual healing. “True prayer is not asking God for love,” she pointed out, “it is learning to love, and to include all mankind in one affection. Prayer is the utilization of the love wherewith He loves us.”

But not everyone shared her commitment to love or her ideas about healing. Her repeated attempts to get established churches to accept her teachings failed, so she founded her own church in Boston, along with a publishing house to spread her beliefs. But her mission came under fire from some of the most powerful men of the day, including Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst. This onslaught led Eddy to found the _Christian Science Monitor_ in which she pioneered a new form of journalism that “would injure no man but bless all mankind.” Today the _Monitor_ is highly acclaimed and — ironically — it has received seven Pulitzer Prizes.
Art Linkletter

*Things turn out best for the people who make the best of the way things turn out.*

Art Linkletter was great at getting kids to say “the darndest things.” In the 1950s and 1960s, he parlayed his talent for the ad-libbed interview into two of television’s longest-running shows, *House Party* and *People are Funny*. His programs sometimes featured conversations with stars but emphasized man-in-the-street interviews, interaction with audience members, and comic conversations with kids. His famed interviews with youngsters began as a regular segment of *House Party*, which debuted on radio in 1945 and ran on CBS TV from 1952 to 1970. Sitting at eye level with his small subjects, Linkletter gave viewers a number of classic TV movements, such as the eight-year-old boy who told him, “My mom is going to have a baby, but my father doesn’t know.”

Gems like this made people laugh and led some parents to wish TV had never been invented. But jokes aside, Linkletter had a big heart for children, which came through on his program. He had been an orphan himself, abandoned by his Canadian family and adopted by an evangelist. He suffered the heartache of losing his own children, a daughter to drug-related suicide and a son to a car accident, tragedies that made him question his faith in God for some time. “Then my whole life changed,” he said. “I began to realize it was payback time.”

He made good on this pledge by campaigning against drug abuse, entertaining lepers, travelling the globe on behalf of World Vision, and giving his time as a leader of Goodwill Industries and the Los Angeles Orphanage. As he aged, he also worked to help other seniors, serving as president of the UCLA Center on Aging; national spokesman for the senior lobbying group, USA Next; and board chairman of the John Douglas French Alzheimer’s Foundation.

His charity work took time away from his broadcasting career, but Linkletter didn’t need the money. He did “need the satisfaction of helping other people who were hurting.” And when Larry King asked him about his personal credo, he said a thing all kids should hear. “My philosophy is to do the best you can for somebody. There isn’t anything better than the Golden Rule.”
Nelson Mandela

Real leaders must be ready to sacrifice all for the freedom of their people.

“I was not a messiah, but an ordinary man who had become a leader because of extraordinary circumstances,” Nelson Mandela once said. Yet, by general consensus, he was far from a simple, ordinary man. At the same time, he did use fairly simple methods to fight apartheid in South Africa. Mandela’s faith in dialogue led him to see his task as one of building trust and binding the country’s wounds.

Initially, Mandela didn’t flinch from taking up arms to transform the white-dominated police state into an open democracy. A lawyer by training, Mandela joined the African National Congress, a radical group that opposed the exclusion of blacks from government. In 1960, police arrested him and his colleagues for mounting an armed struggle against the state.

When Mandela’s case came to trial in 1963, he stood before the court and bared his unrepentant soul. “During my lifetime,” he said, “I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die” — defiant words that led him to serve 20 years in jail.

This long ordeal didn’t kill his belief in consensus, as he showed in 1994, following his inauguration as president. The crowds cheered as he pulled on a Springbok rugby jersey, previously associated with whites-only teams. This symbolic gesture showed blacks and whites alike how strongly Mandela believed in unity. So did his actions following retirement in 1999. As a senior statesman, he traveled the globe, evoking the moral duty we all bear for “the protection of human rights.”

He also called for an end to AIDS after the disease killed his son in 2005. His work on behalf of AIDS victims reflected his ongoing quest for equity and suggests there is some truth, after all, in his claim to be an “ordinary man.” His call for unity against the disease expressed both a father’s grief and the sense of conscience that made him a moral giant for our times.
JULY 19

Charles H. Mayo

The keynote of progress is system and organization — in other words, team work.

In Charles Mayo’s home, medicine was a family affair. His father, a physician, often took Charles; his brother, William; and their mother on house calls. Charles was expected to help in any way he could, and he advanced from rolling bandages to applying plaster casts, and then eventually to helping with his father’s surgeries. After earning his medical degree in 1888, Charles joined his father and brother at their medical practice in Rochester, Minnesota. The “Doctors Mayo,” as they were called, strived to put patients first and help them to stay well. “Prevention of disease today is one of the most important factors in line of human endeavor,” Charles pointed out.

And this belief guided the Mayos when they unwittingly started the first group clinical practice after a tornado hit Rochester in 1883. Victims had to seek treatment in a dance hall because there was no local hospital and nuns from a nearby school helped volunteer doctors care for the patients. After the crisis subsided, the nuns saved enough money to purchase a hospital building and put the Mayos in charge. Charles performed the first surgery at Saint Mary’s and his wife was the hospital’s first nurse anesthetist.

In 1919, the hospital became a nonprofit and throngs of people travelled to seek treatment from the famous Mayo brothers. Many of them were poor patients who received care at no charge, which led to a tremendous patient load. But the quality of care remained high because the Mayos set rigorous standards for their physicians. “There are two objects of medical education,” Charles told them, “to heal the sick and advance the science.”

He and William made headway toward both goals by pioneering aseptic surgery, which lowered mortality rates, and the integrated group practice method, allowing doctors to work together on difficult cases. The legacy they left made the Mayo Clinic a world-renowned institution and showed that Charles downplayed his achievements when he looked back on his life. “Perhaps somebody may run across these lines in fifty or 100 years,” he wrote, “and comment with tolerant pity: ‘Well, he had a glimmering of vision, anyways!’”
Barbara Mikulski

Each one of us can make a difference. Together we make change

In 2012, when NASA discovered an exploding star, they named it “Supernova Mikulski” in honor of the longest-serving woman in Congress. And yes, Maryland Senator Barbara Mikulski has been a forceful proponent of causes she believes in. Her sharp tongue and small stature have led her colleagues to call her “the little general in pearls,” but Mikulski describes herself as “a social worker with power” whose purpose was “to serve people with their day-to-day needs.” As the first woman to chair the Senate Appropriations Committee, she supported paycheck fairness, child care, health care, education, women’s rights, and other issues that matter to working families.

She learned about the challenges they face as the daughter of grocery store owners in Baltimore. She also learned to speak out at the Institute of Notre Dame, a Catholic girls’ school where she was on the debate team. “The nuns were so beautiful,” she recalls, that she considered joining the convent. Instead, she went to work for child protective services and entered public life by organizing neighbors to oppose a plan to plow a 16-lane highway through Baltimore’s old ethnic communities. Her victory led her to seek political office so she could help more people get ahead.

She was elected to the House in 1976 and 10 years later ascended to the Senate, where she built bipartisan ties among the chamber’s women. Mikulski’s female colleagues fondly remember her urging them to “put on our lipstick, square our shoulders, suit up, and fight!” She did during the years she spent pushing for a bill to ensure women receive equal pay for equal work. And she was especially proud of writing a law that helps prevent seniors from going bankrupt while caring for a spouse who’s in a nursing home.

Mikulski was far from ready for a nursing home at 78, when she announced that she wouldn’t seek a sixth term in 2016. “Do I spend my time raising money, or do I spend my time raising hell to meet your day-to-day needs?” she asked at a press conference in March 2015. When it was over, she drove back to the Senate to continue her work.
Robin Williams

*If we’re going to fight a disease, let’s fight one of the most terrible diseases of all, indifference.*

“What’s wrong with death, sir?” Robin Williams asked in the film *Patch Adams* about a doctor who treats patients with humor. “Death is not the enemy, gentlemen. If we’re going to fight a disease, let’s fight one of the most terrible diseases of all, indifference.” And Williams did. Besides making people laugh throughout his film career, he also won their hearts through his charity work. Granted, he couldn’t cure people the way Patch Adams did. But he brought smiles to sick kids on his time off, raised funds for St. Jude’s Children’s Research Hospital, and supported dozens of other causes.

One of them was the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation, dedicated to curing injuries of the spinal cord. Williams had a personal connection with this cause because he and Reeve had roomed together at Julliard. And the comic actor was the first to make Reeve smile after a horseback riding accident left him paralyzed from the neck down. Reeve wanted to die until Williams traipsed into the hospital room in a doctor’s white coat and demanded “turn over” in a deep accent. When Reeve saw that he could still laugh, he realized he could live.

Laughter also gave the homeless a lift after Williams formed Comic Relief, an organization that helps the poorest communities in the United States. In 1986, the year the group was started, Williams, Whoopi Goldberg, and Billy Crystal hosted an event that showcased 47 comics and brought in $2.5 million. The trio went on to raise more then $80 million, but Williams dropped the comic act when he went before Congress to advocate for the Homelessness Prevention and Revitalization Act. “We must provide comprehensive social services in order to help homeless people live dignified, productive lives,” he said.

And the way he used entertainment to power positive change lit up the world, like the memories he left behind. “Life is fleeting,” Williams said in his film, *Jack*, about a boy who dies before his time. So “when a shooting star streaks through the blackness turning night into day, make a wish and think of me. Make your life spectacular. I know I did.”
JULY 22

Robert J. Dole

*My philosophy of life is when you get up the ladder you want to reach back and give someone a hand, just like someone did for you years before.*

Senator Bob Dole has showed how much he cares for his country as a longtime member of Congress and decorated hero of World War II. A war injury left him partly paralyzed, as he related in his 2005 memoir, *One Soldier’s Story*, but it but didn’t stop him from becoming one of our country’s most powerful people.

After recovering from his wounds, he was elected to Congress and served 10 years in the House of Representatives, followed by 27 years in the Senate. He became chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, which has jurisdiction over all tax and trade legislation, along with such issues as Social Security and Medicare. As Senate majority leader, he was one of the four most powerful people in the United States. He helped the White House develop the nation’s domestic and foreign agenda, always with a focus on what was best for the nation.

He also used his enormous influence to work across the aisle on behalf of vulnerable groups, a mission he shares with his wife, Elizabeth, a former U.S. senator and secretary of transportation. He spearheaded the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, fought for the inclusion of hospice in Medicare, and forged a bipartisan compromise that saved Social Security. Much of his success reflected his ability to work with others, and his talents gained him the respect of his Democratic counterparts, Senators George Mitchell and Tom Daschle. It also brought him his party’s nomination for president in 1996. Although he lost to the incumbent, Bill Clinton, the two men remained great friends and Dole continued to serve others in private life.

As chairman of the National World War II Memorial, he raised $190 million to honor those who died for our freedoms. Then he joined Clinton in raising $120 million for the families of 9/11 victims, and he now co-chairs the Caring Institute Board of Trustees, where he embodies the institute’s highest ideals. “It is so easy to care for somebody else, and thankfully most Americans do it,” he says. “America has a big heart, but we need to do a lot more caring for each other.”
JULY 23

Leopold Engleitner

God does not condone man’s bloodthirsty wars, even if they are said to be fought in His name.

In 1939, Leopold Engleitner was handed a piece of paper. It gave him a choice: renounce your faith or face death in a concentration camp. With a flick of a pen, the Jehovah’s Witness and conscientious objector could have saved himself from a fate that saw him starved and forced to labor in three Nazi concentration camps. He didn’t. He refused to succumb to Hitler since he thought it was against God’s will.

Engleitner’s own iron will was forged by a youth filled with illness and want. In the small Austrian village where he grew up, he faced the scorn of other children because he was born with a curved spine that prevented him from standing straight. As a young boy, he also experienced the devastating effects of World War I, which brought even greater poverty and disease. After surviving the flu pandemic of 1918, he worked on a farm and began to question both the inequality around him and the folly of war. The search for meaning inspired him to become a Witness, a step that led the local priest to denounce him and his neighbors to shun him.

Worse was to come when Austria fell under German rule in 1938. As a result of his steadfast refusal to serve in Hitler’s army, Engleitner was interned in the camps of Buchenwald, Niederhagen, and Ravensbrück, where he refused to sign the “Declaration” renouncing his faith. Despite the specter of death he faced in the camps, he kept his principles and hopes to someday go home. In 1943, weighing less than 60 pounds, he was released from Ravensbrück after agreeing to work as a slave laborer on a farm. Later ordered to report to Hitler’s army, he hid in the countryside until the war was over.

And his story remained hidden until film maker and historian Bernhard Rammerstorfer told it in a film and book, Unbroken Will. Together with Rammerstorfer, Engleitner toured the world to talk about his life. At the age of 107, he was still going to Austrian schools and telling children, “You don’t need to go along with peer pressure. You can stick by your conscience.”
JULY 24

Simón Bolívar

*A people that loves freedom will in the end be free.*

Simón Bolívar was born to a life of privilege, but that didn’t stop him from feeling for the poor. As a young man in 18th-century Venezuela, he embraced republican ideals and swore to “never allow my hands to be idle or my soul to rest until I have broken the shackles that bind us to Spain.” At age 28, he rallied the patriot troops by saying, “Let us lay the cornerstones of American freedom without fear. To hesitate is to perish.” It was a battle cry that convinced the national assembly to declare Venezuela’s independence in 1811. When army officers betrayed the new government, Bolívar fled to Colombia, where he enlisted an army of supporters.

In 1813, he again led the patriot forces into battle and established a second independent republic. It fell to Spanish forces a year later, and Bolívar fled to Jamaica but remained convinced that “God grants victory to perseverance.” So he brought 2,500 troops to the Colombia-Venezuela border and took the Spanish by surprise after leading his army through ice-covered mountains and flooded plains. In 1819, he and his men entered Colombia’s capital city, Bogotá, and declared a new republic.

Over the next five years, a series of campaigns swept the Spaniards from their colonies and replaced them with republics. In 1824, Bolívar became president of the Republic of Gran Colombia — now Venezuela, Bolivia, Colombia, Panama, Ecuador, and Peru. His vision of a Pan-American republic had become a reality, and he was hailed as the George Washington of South America.

The Great Liberator, as he was also known, abolished slavery, redistributed land, and stressed the state’s duty to orphans. In his mind, strong constitutional government was the key to freedom, prosperity, and justice. “Unity, unity, unity must be our emblem,” he insisted, but civil war broke out in 1828. Following an attempt on his life, Bolívar resigned from office and planned to leave South America for good. Before he could set sail, he died of tuberculosis in Venezuela, leaving behind this wish: “If my death can contribute anything toward the reconciliation or the unification of the country, I shall go to my death in peace.”
JULY 25

Eric Hoffer

Kindness can become its own motive. We are made kind by being kind.

In 1951, Eric Hoffer burst on the scene with *The True Believer*, a slim tome on communism and fascism. The second paragraph of the preface announced its theme: “All mass movements generate in their adherents a readiness to die and proclivity for united action; all of them, irrespective of the doctrine they preach and the program they project, breed fanaticism, fervent hope, hatred and intolerance; all of them are capable of releasing a powerful flow of activity in certain departments of life; all of them demand blind faith and single-hearted allegiance. All movements, however different in doctrine and aspiration, draw their early adherents from the same type of humanity; they all appeal to the same types of mind.” Unfulfilled with their own lives, true believers search for meaning by filling the ranks of mass movements.

Such zealotry disturbed a man who had followed his own path in life. Hoffer was born in New York City to German immigrant parents and attributed his love of reading to the fact that he was partly blind as a child. His sight returned at age 15 and he spent 23 years as a migratory worker on farms and in mines, before becoming a member of the longshoreman’s union in 1943. When *The True Believer* was published, Hoffer was about 50 and earned his living loading and unloading ships on the docks of San Francisco. He lived by himself in a single room, owned next to nothing except his work clothes, some writing supplies, and, and a library card.

He didn’t change after *The True Believer* made him famous. He kept working on the docks until his retirement at 65. In between work assignments, he wrote nine more books in which he probed mass movements and the essence of human nature. As he aged, Hoffer grew more disenchanted with the world as he lived through the drug culture, Vietnam War, and protest movement of the sixties. Yet he believed there was an answer to the problems society faced. “Compassion is probably the only antitoxin of the soul,” he said. “Compassion alone stands apart from the continuous traffic between good and evil proceeding within us.”
Lowell Bennion

The basic human values are love and integrity. If you have these two values, you have all the ethical virtues of life.

Lowell Bennion became a legend for the way he lived his faith. Although he wrote 20 books and taught thousands of students at the LDS Institute of Religion, he believed acts matter more than words. In an essay, “The Indispensable Central Role of Love,” Bennion drew together passages from the Hebrew prophets showing that God hates religious rites if the people performing them don’t care for the weak. Updating this prophetic language for modern ears, he wrote, “I hate your baptisms and sacrament service. I will not hear your prayers and songs anymore. Amen to your priesthood. Be honest in your dealings, be merciful to the poor and afflicted, be understanding of others. Then my spirit will be with you and you will know me.”

Bennion showed he knew God by putting this biblical counsel into practice. After serving 38 years as a professor and dean at the University of Utah, he became director of the Community Services Council of Salt Lake County. During 16 years with the council, he began food service programs to feed the hungry, had craftsmen build and remodel homes for the disabled, and started a “sister country” relationship between Utah and Mali to provide for the basic needs of the poor African nation. He was the driving force behind the Boys Ranch in Teton Valley, Idaho, where thousands of boys have benefited from programs to prevent juvenile delinquency and use of alcohol and drugs.

He also saw the ranch as a way of getting young men started on the path of service. He knew that Zion only comes about when all people are “partakers of the heavenly gift.” So he kept giving of himself in old age. Bennion spent most of his Saturdays organizing parties to paint the homes of the aged and disadvantaged, and he served at the Utah Food Bank even after Parkinson’s took its toll. Volunteers still remember how he picked up cans with shaking hands then shuffled slowly across the floor to drop them in the right boxes. He sorted as many cans in 60 minutes as the rest did in 60 seconds. Yet his commitment inspired them all.
JULY 27

Audley Moore

You've got to be prepared to lose your life in order to gain your life.

Audley Moore came to be called Queen Mother Moore during a trip to Ghana, where a tribe awarded her the honorary title. In Africa, as she once put it, “I felt the lash on the backs of my people.” Her efforts to lift it made her a hero in Harlem, where she worked with Marcus Garvey, the Jamaican-born black nationalist leader, and his Back-to-Africa movement. She was also an advocate of tenants’ rights, education for the poor, and reparations for slavery. “They not only called us Negros, they made us Negros,” she once said, “things that they don’t even know where they came from and don’t even care that they don’t know. Negro is a state of mind, and they massacred our minds.”

Moore’s family past reflected the racism she opposed. One of her grandfathers was lynched and one of her grandmothers, a slave, was raped by a white man. Her family remained in the South and Moore was born outside New Orleans in 1898. Both her parents died when she was in fourth grade, so she dropped out of school and was a hairdresser at age 15. Largely self-educated, she was inspired by the writings of Frederick Douglass and by Garvey’s rhetoric, which she first heard in New Orleans.

Stirred by his pride in African culture, she moved to Harlem and became prominent in the Universal Negro Improvement Association, the organization Garvey founded in 1914. Beginning in the 1960s, she was among black leaders who demanded justice for their people. In 1994, she addressed a conference in Detroit, where she declared, “Reparations. Reparations. Keep on. Keep on. We’ve got to win.”

She kept waging this fight for justice despite a stroke, two mastectomies, and a broken hip. In her nineties, she appeared at events ranging from Mike Tyson’s homecoming to a meeting between Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan and Betty Shabazz, Malcolm X’s widow. Her refusal to give up reflected her belief that “our purpose in life is to leave a legacy for our children and our children’s children. For this reason, we must correct history that at present denies our humanity and self-respect.”
JULY 28

Jacques d’Amboise

Who am I? I’m a man, an American, a father, a teacher, but most of all, I am a person who knows how the arts can change lives, because they transformed mine. I was a dancer.

Jacques d’Amboise was once known as the “prince of dance.” Audiences swooned when he appeared in ballets like Swan Lake and Apollo. As a star with the New York City Ballet, he was famous for his charisma, chiseled physique, and perfect technique. When he defied gravity in a dazzling leap, his domain seemed to be the air, not the earth. But d’Amboise has his feet planted firmly on the ground as head of the National Dance Institute, or NDI, which brings dance to thousands of lower-income students. And kids like dancing, as he discovered when his son, George, had cancer of the nose at age two. While in the hospital waiting room, d’Amboise met many worried children and comforted them by dancing.

George recovered in 1976, and d’Amboise began teaching boys on his days off. At his first class, six boys showed up dressed to play ball, and NDI was born. After retiring from the stage, d’Amboise spent his days going to inner-city neighborhoods. The kids didn’t realize the slender man in running shoes was an icon. They knew him simply as Jacques, “that man who dances.”

But Amboise knew a lot about them because he, too, grew up in a tough New York City neighborhood. His mother sent him to his sister’s ballet class to distract him from the gangs and at 18 he was a lead dancer. In all those years, he never paid for a class and NDI was his way of giving back. “It’s extraordinary,” he marvels, “to be able to go to children and give them a little of the light that came into my life through the arts.”

D’Amboise says he tries to expose kids to both dance and its byproducts: discipline, hard work, and a sense of achievement. “When a youngster learns to dance,” he explains, “he learns he can control his life.” And while practicing their jetés, the kids also leap across cultural divides. NDI performances bring city children from every walk of life, every race, and every color together. And this heartwarming sight has led many to now hail the prince of dance as a compassionate king of caring.
JULY 29

Alexis de Tocqueville

*America is great because she is good. If America ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.*

“Americans of all ages, all conditions, and all dispositions constantly form associations. They have not only commercial and manufacturing companies but associations of a thousand other kinds: religious, moral, serious, futile, general or restricted, enormous or diminutive.” And Alexis de Tocqueville encountered many of them while touring the U.S. in 1831. The fledgling democracy was a puzzle to the young French civil servant and aristocrat, but he gleaned insights that remain valid today. His experiences, readings, and discussions with Americans formed the basis of *Democracy in America*, a two-volume study published in the late 1830s.

One of Tocqueville’s chief observations was that community involvement is central to democracy. Americans had a civic responsibility to make a difference, he thought, by forming groups in pursuit of common interests. Associations, he explained, were in fact the best safeguard against abuse of power by the central government. The benefits of joining forces with like-minded people led Americans to embrace the idea of associations with a passion unknown in the aristocracies of Europe. By forming and joining associations, he maintained, they cast a sort of ballot around issues that were important to them, their families, and their communities.

Self-interest undoubtedly played a role in the growth of associations, Tocqueville acknowledged. But it coexisted with a willingness to make personal sacrifices for the common good. This generosity, he believed, stemmed from the sense of equality that united all Americans. They can all but “feel the pain” of their fellows and this keen sense of empathy made them eager to help one another. In addition, democratic citizens tended to experience their common humanity as a common sense of need. Hence the compassion they often expressed for the poor, disadvantaged, and aged.

Care for these needy groups would increasingly fall to associations, Tocqueville predicted, as the new country grew and its citizens’ needs came to exceed what government could provide. In this context, he warned, “The only way opinions and ideas can be renewed, hearts enlarged, and human minds developed is through the reciprocal influence of men upon each other.” The growth of empathy, he concluded, is “what associations alone can achieve.”
JULY 30

Patricia Scott Schroeder

_You measure a government by how few people need help._

Former Congresswoman Pat Schroeder has joked that she did “24 years of house work … and the place is still a mess.” Still she did much to change it during 12 terms in Congress. Her career there made her a leader on women’s issues and her campaign for the 1988 presidential election was based on her belief that “America is man enough to back a woman.” This might have been the case by the late ‘80s due to the barriers Schroeder helped break as Colorado’s first congresswoman and one of only 14 female House members when she was elected in 1972.

At the time the women’s movement was gaining strength, and Schroeder empathized deeply with women’s concerns because she was the only congresswoman with young children. She was the only member of the House who came on the floor with diapers in her handbag, the only one with crayons in her office, and the only one to give a birthday party for six-year-olds in the House members’ dining room. Besides facing the challenges of a working mom, Schroeder had an inner strength tempered by several ordeals. She had problems bearing her children and an eye condition that forced her to wear a patch over one eye as a child. Sometimes other kids teased her, an experience that made her a strong foe of discrimination.

She spearheaded women’s rights and reforms that affected the family. Issues that concerned middle-class Americans became the blueprint for her work: women’s health care, child rearing, expansion of Social Security benefits, and gender equity in the workplace. She was a supporter of the Equal Rights Amendment, sponsor of the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, and author of the Family and Medical Leave Act, which provides job protection for the care of a newborn, sick child, or parent. She now heads the Association of American Publishers where she deals with intellectual property rights and helps aspiring women leaders blaze a trail in the media and on Capitol Hill. “Many women have more power than they recognize,” she said, “and they’re very hesitant to use it for fear they won’t be loved.”
JULY 31

Sherry Lansing

My generation has more energy, more drive, and a greater life expectancy than any group of retirees before us. We are going to be here for two decades or more past ‘retirement’ age and we want to do something relevant in the so-called third act of our lives.

Sherry Lansing thinks “the only reason to make a lot of money is to give it all away,” a belief that has made her a star of both philanthropy and business. Lansing learned the golden rule from her mother, who fled the Nazis at age 17 but remained positive and loving. Her death from cancer at 62 made Lansing determined to do everything she could to find a cure for the disease. She would come to write her own script in the world of giving as the first female studio head, a position that prepared her to pursue a life of public service. “Philanthropy is like the movie business,” she says. “If you have a good idea and you’re passionate about it, you just keep going and make it work.”

A strong work ethic allowed the former school teacher and actress to rise on the business side of the silver screen. After starting at the bottom, she became president of 20th Century Fox. She went on to succeed as an independent producer before being named chairman of Paramount Pictures, where she was responsible for hits like Forrest Gump and Titanic. Then at the height of her career, she decided to pull the curtain on her Hollywood ambitions. “I’d had a wonderful career, but I felt as if I was repeating myself,” she recalls. “I started to care more about giving back.” So she began a “third act” that would give her a rewarding new role in life.

At age 60, she created the Sherry Lansing Foundation to advance cancer research and public education. Since then she has raised more than $200 million to find a cure for cancer; founded the Encorps Teachers Program, which recruits retiring math and science professionals to teach in the public school system; and launched Prime Time LAUSD, which connects retirees with volunteer opportunities in Los Angeles public schools. She also urges other seniors to make their third act a prime time in their lives. “Each and every one of you has an idea,” she tells them. “Each and every one of you can give of your time and show up and change lives.”
AUGUST
AUGUST 1

Lance Secretan

People are motivated by fear, but they are not inspired by it. Everything that inspires us comes from love.

Oneness...divinity...spirit...and loving kindness: they’re the kind of words you’d expect from a religious leader like Buddha. They’re not words you’re accustomed to hearing in the board room, though management guru Lance Secretan uses them often when talking to business, government, and association executives.

Secretan looks like a mystic — lean build, shaved head, wire-rim glasses, and pajama-like clothes. But he knows the corporate world better than most of the leaders he advises. As head of Manpower Limited, he built a $100 million dollar business with 72,000 employees. Then he retired at 40, ditched the business suit, and devoted himself to “reawakening spirit and values in the workplace.” This new path took him to the Canadian wilderness where he founded the Secretan Center, a consulting firm that helps corporations in all aspects of their business. Since then, he’s counseled many of the world’s largest companies while writing a number of bestselling books, including his latest, The Spark, The Flame and The Torch.

The message that emerges in Secretan’s books challenges the mantra that MBA programs drill into CEOs. Modern leaders are trained to motivate their employees, but “motivation is greedy and self-serving,” he complains. “Inspiration,” meanwhile, “comes from within; it comes from love. It is something that is selfless. Inspiration has to do with doing things for other people.”

History, Secretan tells us, reveals that the greatest leaders were servant leaders. “They were the ones who asked the question: how can I serve you? They developed skills needed for personal growth and learned the best means of attracting disciples. Then they created a nurturing climate that spurred followers to help and inspire them in return.”

Many employers haven’t got the message, so Secretan found ways to help them create sharing, loving organizations. His “Higher Ground Leadership” program exposes leaders to ancient wisdom adapted to modern times and urges them to “love, honor, and serve,” a phrase that guides Secretan’s own life. Like a true guru, he acts each day in a way that shows love. You can tell it from the Hindi expression with which he meets people, signs letters, and ends speeches: “Namaste.” It means “there’s only one of us.”
AUGUST 2

James Baldwin

*I am what time, circumstance, and history have made of me, certainly, but I am also much more than that. So are we all.*

James Baldwin was known as “God’s black revolutionary mouth” and a believer in brotherhood for all. His writing broke new ground by exploring racial and social issues in the 1950s and ‘60s. Although he spent much of his life abroad, he never stopped reflecting on his struggles as a black man in white America. “Any writer,” he said, “feels that the world into which he was born is nothing less than a conspiracy against the cultivation of his talent.”

The world did seem to be against Baldwin after he was born to a single mom in Harlem and grew up poor. He looked for escape in libraries, where he discovered his passion for books. As a young man he moved to Greenwich Village and then to Paris, where he sought enough distance from the society he grew up in to write about it. “Once I found myself on the other side of the ocean, I saw where I came from,” he explained. “I am the grandson of a slave and I am a writer. I must deal with both.”

He did through explosive works like *Another Country*, *Notes of a Native Son*, and *The Fire Next Time*, an incendiary bestseller that got him on the cover of *Time*. Thousands read his urgent plea: “If we — and I mean the relatively conscious whites and the relatively conscious blacks, who must, like lovers, insist on, or create, the consciousness of others — do not falter in our duty now, we may be able, handful that we are, to end the racial nightmare, and achieve our country, and change the history of the world.”

Baldwin advanced this mission by returning home after nine years in Paris and joining leaders like Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X in the struggle for civil rights. To the end of his life, he used his gifts to convince blacks and whites that they were “brothers” who could bridge the racial divide through love. “The world is before you,” he told them, “and you need not take it or leave it as it was when you came in.”
AUGUST 3

Maggie Kuhn

*We can only survive when we have a goal — a passionate purpose which bears upon public interest.*

Most people look forward to quiet years when they reach the age of 65. Instead Maggie Kuhn began the most important work of her life after being forced to retire from her career. Kuhn growled back by founding the Grey Panthers, a name derived from the radical Black Panthers. Despite its stress on aging issues, Kuhn’s organization brought young and old together to end injustice, oppression, and discrimination. The group opposed the war in Vietnam, lobbied against the mandatory retirement age, pushed for nursing home reform, and championed a government-paid health insurance program.

Kuhn advanced these causes using the protest tactics of the civil rights and antiwar movements of the ‘60s, demanding an equal voice for America’s elders. In 1971, for instance, she led a column of 1,000 protesters who surrounded the White House to demand access to a presidential conference on aging. When the police arrived, the tiny, frail-looking Kuhn was knocked down in the melee but she got right back up. After seeing her resolve, public officials often found it easier to back down when facing the intense, white-haired crusader. And one time, she pressured public transit authorities in Pennsylvania into cutting off-peak fares for older people by threatening to block trolley cars with wheelchairs and canes.

She left no stone unturned because she believed “there must be a goal at every stage of life.” And her goal was to knock down myths about aging that depicted elders as weak and unproductive. “Old age is not a disease,” she firmly insisted. “It is strength and survivorship, triumphs over all kinds of vicissitudes and disappointments, trials and illnesses.”

Kuhn made this point in TV interviews with Johnny Carson, on the picket line, and on Capitol Hill. Until her death at age 89, she remained on the prowl: travelling 100,000 miles a year, producing a monthly newspaper column, and showing how seniors could improve life for all. “We are the tribe’s elders,” she explained, “concerned about the tribe’s survival. Our job is to secure the future for the young. To that end, we are the ones who can afford to take risks. We have nothing to lose.”
AUGUST 4

Raoul Wallenberg

You cannot take these people away, they are all Swedish citizens. Show your papers, people!

Raoul Wallenberg was the lost hero of the Holocaust. A businessman and member of a wealthy Swedish family, Wallenberg was 32 when he volunteered to go to Budapest and save Hungarian Jews. Although his formal role was as a diplomat, he actually served the U.S. Refugee Board, formed to rescue European Jews. He promptly advanced that goal after leaving neutral Sweden and reaching Budapest in July 1944. Within a month, he opened a Swedish embassy office close to the city’s major Jewish ghetto and hired 400 people, many of them Jews who had been granted diplomatic immunity to operate the office. By January of 1945, he had distributed Swedish passports to 20,000 Jews and hidden 13,000 of them in buildings that flew the Swedish flag.

This unending work helped him cope with the horrors he saw as the Nazis seized Jewish homes, confiscated Jewish businesses, barred Jews from parks, and attacked them in the street. “Everywhere you see tragedies of the greatest proportions,” he wrote to his mother in Sweden. “But the days and nights are so full of work that one seldom has time to react.”

Jews were in danger throughout the city, and Wallenberg often risked his life to save them. One time, the Nazis began seizing Jews in one of the buildings with a Swedish flag. When Wallenberg arrived on the scene, he shouted, “This is Swedish territory. If you want to take them, you’ll have to shoot me first.” At other times, he would board deportation trains and hand out Swedish papers to all those he could reach. Then he demanded that those holding the papers should be let off the trains.

His actions made him a target for the Nazis, yet he refused to go home. “I will never be able to go back to Sweden,” he said, “without knowing inside myself that I’d done all a man could do to save as many Jews as possible.” Hopefully he took comfort in what he’d done after Stalin’s forces took Budapest and arrested him as a suspected spy. The man who saved some 100,000 lives was put on a train to Moscow and never seen again.
AUGUST 5

Neil Armstrong

_I think we’re going to the moon because it’s in the nature of the human being to face challenges._

Neil Armstrong touched the stars but had no use for the trappings of stardom. He made history on July 20, 1969, as commander of the Apollo 11 spacecraft on a mission that culminated the Soviet-American space race and fulfilled JFK’s goal of “landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to earth.” Once back, the reluctant hero shunned the spotlight and gave all the credit to the thousands of people who had helped him punch a hole in the sky. “The important achievement of Apollo,” he said, “was demonstrating that humanity is not forever chained to this planet and our visions go rather further than that and our opportunities are unlimited.”

The freedom of flight attracted Armstrong all his life. As a teenager in rural Ohio, he had dreams of soaring in which he could stay aloft just by holding his breath, and he performed his first solo flight at age 15. As a navy pilot, he flew 78 combat missions during the Korean War. Peace time found him earning a degree in aeronautical engineering before working as a test pilot for NASA and being chosen as one of the second wave of astronauts in 1962. As command pilot of the first mission in which two spacecraft docked together in space, Armstrong stayed composed when his spacecraft malfunctioned. As it tumbled through space, he made decisions that saved his life, his co-pilot’s life, and perhaps the whole American space program. His talents led NASA to decide he would be the first man to walk on the moon.

Millions of TV viewers saw him plant his feet on a rock-strewn plain, and he had his choice of any future after leaving NASA in 1971. Yet he chose to return to Ohio, where he taught engineering in college, and seldom spoke in public except to express his grief as America’s space program wound down. At age 82, he suffered complications after surgery and ventured into the unknown for good. Despite the passage of years, the world still remembered his words upon stepping off the lunar module: “That’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.”
AUGUST 6

Wright Patman

*The Federal Reserve System must be reformed, so that it is answerable to the elected representatives of the people.*

Wright Patman was a crusader for the common man. During 45 years in the U.S. House, he consistently stood up for Main Street against Wall Street. The Texas Democrat became known for his anti-banking investigations and reports, along with his resolve to end the inequities of the federal banking system. He had seen first hand how they hurt humble folk because he was the son of a cotton farmer in the rural part of his state. After being elected to Congress in 1929, he rose to become chairman of the House Banking and Currency Committee yet remained a controversial figure all his life.

From his earliest days in office, he had a vision of how to preserve the American dream. In the midst of the Depression, he sought payment of a bonus for World War I veterans and supported reforms that would expand the currency of the nation. He attacked chain stores as being harmful to traditional American values and lobbied for programs that would benefit the small businesses he considered victims of federal policies that favored large multinational corporations.

In the 1960s and 1970s, he added new prongs to his attack on the privileges of the elite. He maintained that most large foundations existed mainly as tax dodges for the wealthy, and he became concerned about low-cost housing. During the Nixon years, he charged the Federal Housing Authority with fraudulent speculation in its federal home ownership program and providing pork barrels to speculators in slum housing. His long-term crusade against the Federal Reserve intensified as interest rates and inflation grew. In 1972, he made a failed attempt to investigate Nixon’s activities before Watergate broke out.

Shortly afterward, he faced the last fight of his career as he struggled to remain chairman of the Banking and Currency Committee. His defeat in 1975 was testimony to the changes liberalism had undergone during his career. A new generation of reformers no longer embraced the populism that led Patman to say, “I’m here to help people. I’ve always had that attitude. Sometimes I’ve been alone in the position I’ve taken, but somebody has to stand up for the little man.”
Ralph Bunche

Hearts are the strongest when they beat in response to noble ideals.

Ralph Bunche was a man of firsts. He was the first African American to be awarded a Nobel Peace Prize and to serve as a desk officer at the State Department. He was also part of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), predecessor to the CIA, where he became an authority on African issues. He would go on to become a peacemaker and one of the most prominent diplomats in U.S. history.

These were dazzling achievements for the son of barber and amateur musician, who both died when Bunche was 12. After he went to live with his grandmother, he worked odd jobs to keep the household afloat. But this did not prevent him from excelling in school and ultimately earning a doctorate from Harvard where he later went on to teach. His dissertation focused on French colonial rule in Africa and led to the next phase of his career.

Beginning in the 1940s, he played a role on the world stage as he served the U.S. government and the United Nations. In 1944, he joined the State Department, where he supported independence for colonial regimes worldwide. He also advised the U.S. delegation that helped draft the charter of the United Nations. After the U.S. joined the UN in 1946, he played an important role in the creation and adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

He would go on to become a mediator for the UN, where he acted on the belief that “there are no warlike people — just war-like leaders.” This conviction guided him as he obtained signatures on an armistice agreement that ended the Arab-Israeli conflict. Upon his return home, the achievement earned him a hero’s welcome and the Nobel Peace Prize in 1950. But he continued to press on for the next 20 years, directing operations in Suez, the Congo, and Cyprus, as well as joining Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on his march for justice. “To make our way,” he once said, “we must have firm resolve, persistence, and tenacity. We must gear ourselves up to work hard all the way. We can never let up.”
AUGUST 8

Robert Holbrook Smith

Let us also remember to guard that erring member the tongue, and if we must use it, let’s use it with kindness and consideration and tolerance.

Heavy drinking was once viewed as a moral failing. Organizations like the Women’s Temperance Union spread the notion that “drunks” and “sots” were sinners who couldn’t stand up to “demon rum,” beer, and other alcoholic drinks. The treatment for drinkers was to embrace both abstinence and evangelical Christianity. This pious approach gave way to Prohibition in 1919 with the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment banning the production, sale, and transport of “intoxicating” beverages. But the triumph of the “Dry’s” didn’t endure. By 1933, the Twenty-First Amendment repealed Prohibition and alcoholics once again began suffering high rates of liver disease, withdrawal, delirium tremens, and other complications of their pasttime. The ranks of steady drinkers included Bob Smith, an Akron surgeon who’d struggled with drinking since his college days.

In 1935, Dr. Bob met Bill Wilson, a New York businessman and entrepreneur, who faced similar problems. The two quickly became close friends and Bill told Dr. Bob how he had recovered from his alcoholism with spiritual help. Dr. Bob had his last drink on June 10, 1935, and joined Bill in launching a “chain reaction to reach all the drunks in the world.” In 1939, Dr. Bob and Bill published a book, Alcoholics Anonymous, and formed the fellowship that came to be known as Alcoholics Anonymous. In time, Dr. Bob came to be known as the “Prince of Twelve Steppers” because he had personally treated more than 500 alcoholics without charge.

What made A.A. unique was its emphasis on alcoholics helping one another stay sober. Granted there was also a religious component to A.A. because Dr. Bob always said that his basic ideas came from study of the Bible. Five of the original “12 Steps” mention God, yet the Steps in their deepest essence mean “love and service,” and call for a nondenominational rebirth in which alcoholics admit they are powerless as the first step to abstinence and recovery. “Try it some time,” he urged recalcitrant alcoholics. “You don’t need to wait until you’re down and out before you ask for help. There’s help waiting for you right now if you just ask God to help you.”
Mildred Robbins Leet

Never stop caring about what’s happening next and what’s going to be. Make a conscious choice to help others.

Mildred Robbins Leet co-founded Trickle Up in 1979 when “trickle-down” economics was all the rage. The wisdom of the time was that if you invest in big business the benefits would trickle down to everyone else. Even foreign aid distribution operated from the same perspective, yet the poor were getting poorer while the rich just increased their wealth. It wasn’t working as Leet and her husband, Glenn, knew when they travelled to Dominica, one of the world’s poorest nations. While there they saw first hand that huge sums of money allocated for foreign aid never reached the island’s poor.

So the couple spent $1,000 of their own funds to come up with a grassroots model to help people lift themselves up. They used local aid organizations to find the neediest people, many of them women, and helped them create a basic business plan. If the plan was deemed feasible, the program granted petitioners a first installment of $50, basic business instructions, and financial advice. The second installment was paid in six months if the participant and enterprise were meeting their goals.

The first year, the Leets gave 10 people grants of $100 each to start their own enterprises, which ranged from building blocks to selling eggs, jams, and school uniforms. In doing so, they launched the microfinance movement that is now so acclaimed. But at the time, critics were wary of Trickle Up’s approach. “A lot of people thought we were kidding ourselves,” Leet recalled. “They said we’d be giving money away and we’d never see a return on our investment.”

They were wrong because the 10 original grantees returned Leet’s generosity with hard work and success. Since then, the charity has helped start more than 200,000 businesses, anything from making dolls to cooking plantain chips, in dozens of countries, including the United States. This achievement showed that poor people, even those with little education, can be trusted to handle money and that women can be a force for economic change. “Everybody, no matter how poor, dreams of a better life and will fight for it if given an opportunity,” Leet said. She gave many their chance.
AUGUST 10

Robert L. Thornton

I’m getting goddam tired of dealing with “maybe” men. We need a group of “yes” men because I don’t have time to keep calling these guys.

R.L. Thornton’s motto was “Keep the dirt flying” as he made Dallas a metropolitan hub. And Thornton knew all about dirt from growing up poor on a farm. Although he was mayor of Dallas from 1953 to 1961, he picked cotton as a boy and only completed eighth grade before going to work as a clerk. He went on to become a traveling salesman and partner in a bookstore, then an officer in a mortgage business over a Dallas cigar store. The business grew into the Mercantile National Bank, and he served as its president from 1916 to 1947.

He was acknowledged as a successful businessman, but it was Thornton’s civic involvement that earned him a reputation as “Mr. Dallas.” Using his skills as a salesman, he made Dallas the star of the Lone Star State. “Everybody’s got to sell,” he said. “Preacher’s got to sell his sermon. Butcher’s got to sell his beefsteak.” And Thornton sold Dallas to the nation as a Southwestern center of entertainment. In 1935, as president of the Chamber of Commerce, he convinced the state legislature that Dallas was the right site for the Texas centennial. In the drive to get the centennial celebration for Dallas, he managed to get the city’s 50 top businessmen — men who could say “yes” without asking anyone else — to come up with the financial backing. Their support turned the centennial drive into such a success that the Dallas Citizens Council became a permanent organization which went on to support the peaceful integration of the city’s schools in 1961.

Though Thornton never had much schooling, he helped bring Southern Methodist University to Dallas when the school was founded in 1915. In one of his last speeches, he said he had gone to school at C. C. &M. instead of S.M.U. The initials, Thornton explained, stood for “cotton, corn, and mule,” parts of his humble past he never forgot despite how far he’d come. “Success,” he said, “is made of two things. Hard work — love your job and stay with it. The other is to treat every man, rich or poor, high or low, absolutely honestly.”
AUGUST 11

Alex Haley

*Tying the little folks with the older folks is a great and powerful tool to preserve and to protect the family and the individual.*

Alex Haley was a master storyteller whose roots ran deep. He’s famed for writing two landmark books on the black experience in our country. *Malcolm X,* which the black radical never lived to read, has been hailed by critics as a classic account of black alienation. But readers loved Haley for *Roots,* the massive family saga that began with his mother’s ancestors being sold into slavery in West Africa and ended 150 years later in Tennessee. The Haley family story became a bestseller and a miniseries in 1977 with one of the largest TV audiences ever. As Haley observed the frenzy over his book, he expressed the hope that “*Roots* may start black, white, brown, and yellow people digging back for their own roots.”

Haley certainly dug deep in the past after embarking on his project to tell about his ancestors’ journey from slavery to freedom. During a decade of research on three continents, he examined slave ship records at archives in the U.S. and England and traveled to Gambia, his ancestors’ home. In the village of Juffure, Haley listened to a tribal historian recount how Kunte Kinte, the book’s protagonist, became a slave.

Still he often despaired that he could never truly describe the horror of life on a slave ship while writing in the comfort of a carpeted, high-rise apartment. He wanted to imagine what it was like “to lie there in chains, in filth, hearing the cries of 139 other men screaming, babbling, praying and dying around you.” To find an answer, he booked passage on a ship from Liberia to America and spent his nights lying in the ship’s hold, wearing nothing but his underwear.

The shattering view of slavery he produced opened up the minds of Americans of all colors and creeds to a painful part of America’s past and fostered a cultural dialogue that hadn’t been seen since the publication of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin.* Americans took a fresh view of the black experience and blacks and whites alike found they shared something after learning Haley’s family story. It inspired millions to explore their past and take new pride in their roots.
AUGUST 12

George Soros

_A full and fair discussion is essential to democracy._

“When I had more money than I needed for myself and my family,” George Soros has said, “I set up a foundation to promote the values and principles of a free and open society.” This commitment to democratic ideals has led to unprecedented philanthropic endeavors. Since 1979, Soros has given over $8 billion to support human rights, freedom of expression, and access to public health and education in over 70 countries. His philanthropy focuses on building vibrant, tolerant democracies because “reality is extremely complex, infinitely complex,” he once wrote. “We all face life with an imperfect understanding. Anybody who claims perfect knowledge is basically mistaken,” and “communism and Nazism were ideologies of this kind.”

Soros had first-hand experience of both as the child of a Jewish family in Budapest, Hungary. He lived through the Nazi occupation and postwar imposition of Stalinism before fleeing to England at age 17. Once there, he attended the London School of Economics, where he read Karl Popper’s _The Open Society and its Enemies_. Popper’s critique of totalitarian ideas would remain on Soros’ mind after 1956 when he moved to New York, where he worked as a financial analyst and trader. In 1973, he founded Soros Fund Management and went on to create the Open Society Foundation, which promotes rule of law and respect for minority rights.

Soros’ memories of anti-Semitism in Hungary prompted him in 1979 to give financial support to black students in apartheid South Africa. In the 1980s, he helped undermine Communism in the Eastern Bloc by providing Xerox machines to copy banned texts and supporting cultural exchanges with the West. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, he created Central European University to promote critical thinking. He expanded his philanthropy worldwide by supporting lawyers to represent thousands of individuals who were unlawfully held, and he underwrote history’s largest effort to bring the Roma people of Europe into the mainstream. His outspoken opinions have offended some, but his financial success has lent him a tremendous degree of independence. “This allows me to take a stand on controversial issues,” he says. “In fact, it obliges me to do so because others cannot.”
Lucy Stone

_I do believe that a woman’s truest place is in a home, with a husband and with children, and with large freedom, pecuniary freedom, personal freedom, and the right to vote._

“The idea of equal rights was in the air,” said Lucy Stone. It infected Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, and Susan B. Anthony as they fought to get women the vote. Their struggle is memorialized in a statue in the Capitol Building in Washington, DC. But Stone is missing from that Mt. Rushmore of 19th-century icons though she was one of the forward-thinking women of her time. She was among the nation’s first women to earn a college degree. She began speaking on women’s suffrage before the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848, and she was the first American woman to keep her name after marriage.

Yet Stone made a vow in college that she would never wed. Her years at Oberlin turned her into a reformer as she heard stirring debates about abolition and women’s rights. While there she learned about laws that nearly stripped married women of their rights and became incensed as she saw that Oberlin paid female students less than males for the same work. When she graduated, she was forbidden to read her senior essay aloud because school policy prohibited women from speaking in public.

In response, she decided to make her living as a public speaker for the American Anti-Slavery Society. When she embarked on this work, she said, “I expect to plead not for the slave only, but for suffering humanity everywhere. Especially do I mean to labor for the elevation of my sex.” And the words she spoke for this cause so impressed Stanton that she suggested Stone be retained to speak on women’s rights throughout the country. Stone added organizing to her plate and became a co-leader of the first national women’s rights convention in 1850 and many conventions thereafter.

Despite her radical beliefs, she ultimately broke her pledge by marrying Henry Blackwell, a man who shared her political convictions. But contrary to the end, she used the wedding ceremony to voice her protest against marital law by keeping her last name. “A wife should no more take her husband’s name than he should hers,” she explained. “My name is my identity and should not be lost.”
AUGUST 14

Magic Johnson

*All kids need is a little help, a little hope, and somebody who believes in them.*

Everyone talked about death in 1991 when Magic Johnson was diagnosed with HIV. But Magic is still on the move, and he’s running faster than he ever did on the basketball court. Since leaving the NBA he has built a business empire that works with major corporations to bring commerce, housing, and jobs to inner cities. He’s most noted for his Starbucks partnership, which served as the catalyst for redevelopment in urban communities, and remains the blueprint for corporate America’s engagement with urban consumers.

Now his sprawling interests include SodexMAGIC, Magic Airport Holdings, 24-Hour Magic Sports Centers, T.G.I.F. Friday’s restaurants, Best Buy, and ASPiRe TV network, along with a number of real estate ventures. The enterprises, which are spread across the country, have created over 10,000 jobs, mostly for minorities. This win-win situation lets Magic make a profit — and give back to the community. “If you look at most of my businesses,” he explains, “they’re in inner cities, and that’s where they need to be. People in these communities deserve to have them, and they supply jobs for the people who live there. And it makes good business sense. So when you have this combination of things, then it’s just the right thing to do.”

Magic’s yen to do the right thing led him to found the Magic Johnson Foundation, which raises funds for HIV/AIDS education, sponsors basketball fundraisers for college scholarships, and helps high school dropouts get diplomas. Despite a full schedule, Magic makes time to speak to students about the value of staying in school and avoiding AIDS. Inner-city kids see him as a role model, and he doesn’t let them down. “Kids,” he says “have to know they have someone they can look up to in the business community, so that’s why I want to be the best and the biggest.” The strides he’s made toward this goal have showed him that the magic of winning doesn’t compare with the magic of caring. “There will always be great basketball players,” he explains, “who bounce that little round ball, but my proudest moments are affecting people’s lives, effecting change, being a role model in the community.”
Melinda Gates

*Philanthropy is not about the money. It’s about using whatever resources you have at your fingertips and applying them to improving the world.*

What makes some men more generous than others? What has led Bill Gates to give billions away while many of his fellow tycoons hold tightly onto their personal fortunes? Social scientists have suggested that the presence of female family members nudge men in the right direction, and this may be the case with Gates. In 1993, when he was on his way to becoming the world’s richest man, he said he planned to wait 25 years before starting to give his money away. But three years later he ranked third on *Fortune’s* list of the top philanthropists in America. In between he married Melinda French, and together they made an ambitious plan. “We decided we would use our money to help give everyone, no matter where they live, the opportunity to live a healthy, productive life,” Melinda Gates says.

She, too, had been a high flyer at Microsoft, holding an MBA from Duke. She had also been raised in a family given to service. Though Gates attended private school, she volunteered at a struggling public school down the road where she learned that “sometimes things weren’t equal for everyone.” Now Gates is righting the wrongs she saw as a girl.

As co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Gates acts on the belief that “all lives have an equal value.” Her role is to help shape and approve strategies, review results, advocate for foundation issues, and set the overall direction. Under her guidance, the foundation has given some $33 billion to development, education, and health in the U.S. and more than 100 nations.

Most recently, Gates pledged $560 million toward improving access to contraception for women in third-world countries. She got involved in this issue because millions of women were saying they wanted contraceptives. Preventing unwanted pregnancies leads to more opportunities for girls, prevents disease, and helps break the cycle of poverty, Gates explains. Yet politics stopped the U.S. from providing contraceptives “To me that was just a crime,” she says. “I kept looking around trying to find a person to get this back on the global stage. I realized I just had to do it.”
AUGUST 16

Kathie Lee Gifford

*I think sometimes the very reason we go through something is so that we can be empathetic with another person later on.*

As a longtime TV host, Kathie Lee Gifford has interviewed many stars and two of them stand out. The first was Paul Newman, founder of the Hole in the Wall Gang Camp for kids who are seriously ill. “I remember being deeply touched,” Gifford says, “by this guy who could be home counting his awards, chasing women, eating foie gras out in the Caribbean or Riviera on a yacht. But he never — to the day he died — stopped thinking about the people he could help.” Neither did Audrey Hepburn, who spent the last years of her life raising funds for children in the developing world. “I met her right before she died,” Gifford says. Like Newman, she “understood the power of celebrity to make the world a better place.”

Gifford started following their example when she was eight and had a carnival in her backyard to benefit muscular dystrophy. She wound up winning a contest for who could raise the most money that week and going on channel 5 in Washington, DC. She found herself sitting on the lap of Today show veteran Willard Scott, who was dressed up as a clown. It was the start of a lifelong friendship and a career on TV that would lead to a 15-year run on Live with Regis and Kathie Lee and her current role as co-host on Today.

It was also the inspiration for her work with children’s charities. She’s a celebrity ambassador for Childhelp, which battles child abuse, and International Justice Mission, which protects the poor from violence around the world. She also supports the Association to Benefit Children, which provides comprehensive services to disadvantaged children and their family members. ABC has two homes in New York City, Cody’s House and Cassidy’s Place, where they serve hundreds of orphaned and homeless children, many of them with serious medical conditions. The homes are named for Gifford’s own two kids and that’s made her even more determined to help kids in need. “I don’t slap my name on something and walk away,” she says. “If I believe in it, chances are I’m going to continue to believe in it.”
AUGUST 17

Margaret Wheatley

When we can lay down our fear and anger and choose responses other than aggression, we create the conditions for bringing out the best in us humans.

“For me,” Margaret Wheatley says, “this is a familiar image: people in an organization ready and willing to do good work, wanting to contribute their ideas, ready to take responsibility, and leaders holding them back, insisting that they wait for decisions or instructions.” Leaders like this are pervasive, Wheatley has learned as a renowned management consultant. Since 1973, she has worked throughout the world with a wide range of organizations. Her clients range from the head of the U.S. Army to 12-year-old Girl Scouts, from CEOs to small town ministers. The diverse list includes large corporations, government agencies, health care institutions, public schools, colleges, and major church denominations. They’re all wrestling with a common dilemma: how to maintain their integrity and effectiveness as they cope with rapid change. They also share a common human desire to live together more harmoniously and humanely.

Wheatley is helping them reach this goal as co-founder of the Berkana Institute, a global charitable foundation dedicated to helping leaders manage through values rather than fear. Since launching the institute in 1992, Wheatley has worked in dozens of countries, mainly in the developing world, supporting initiatives that reinforce leadership through the wisdom already present in local people and traditions. In all these nations, she pioneers a new model of leaders who have the commitment and skills to help their community learn to care for itself.

Her innovative management practices are summed up in a number of thoughtful books, including Leadership and the New Science, Walk Out Walk On, and Perseverance, written for people who are committed to organizational change. “Perseverance is important right now because many innovative leaders are struggling to do good, meaningful work in a time of overbearing bureaucracy and failing solutions,” she explains. Sadly, the challenge of managing high-performance enterprises in the face of intense competition and rising uncertainty leads us to lose the one resource that really matters. “In most situations, community is the only thing that gets us through.” Wheatley says. “Every organization needs leaders who can help people regain their capacity, energy, and desire to contribute. And this is only accomplished when people work in community, not isolation.”
AUGUST 18

Robert Redford

*I think that people should be paying a lot more attention to other issues, rather than who’s the top 10 this or who’s the sexiest or the most beautiful.*

The environment has long played a co-starring role in many of Robert Redford’s films. In *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, he rides across the Wild West. In *Out of Africa*, he hunts game in the savannahs of Kenya. The big screen has reflected Redford’s commitment to our planet and search for ways to protect it. As a conservationist and environmental leader, Redford has spent over 40 years focusing public attention on the importance of preserving the wilderness, developing renewable energy, and safeguarding clean water.

These are now popular causes but Redford was part of the green movement before it was really a movement at all. His love of the great outdoors took root when he was 15 and went to work at Yosemite National Park. “That was a transformative experience for me,” he recalls, “because I could actually be in the environment — in particular, one that was so overwhelmingly beautiful.” He also enjoyed the natural beauty he grew up with in Los Angeles but that began to disappear after World War II when rampant development replaced grass with cement and good air with bad. “There were so many changes,” he recalls, “that it had a pretty profound effect on me. I felt like I was losing a place that was my home.”

That sense of loss stayed with him after he became a star. So he donated money, produced documentaries, gave land and time. The list of places he’s saved and pieces of legislation he’s helped along is taller than an old-growth redwood, but his greatest achievement is saving the Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument in Utah from commercial hands until 1996 when President Clinton effectively closed it to redevelopment. He’s still campaigning for the Artic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska and against global warming, which he talked about as early as 1989. But his greatest gift to the environment is the enduring example he’s set as he urges us to go green. “I think the environment should be put in the category of our national security,” he says. “Defense of our resources is just as important as defense abroad. Otherwise what is there to defend?”
Bill Clinton

Let us all take more responsibility, not only for ourselves and our families but for our communities and our country.

As president, Bill Clinton was known for feeling people's pain and acting to ease it. When he left office in 2001, he had the highest approval rating of any departing president since Harry Truman. So he decided to use his remaining clout to do all the good he could. The result was a foundation that addresses global problems, touching everything from climate change to children’s health. Clinton’s goal was to help people reach their potential, and in doing so, he didn’t just reinvent himself, he reinvented philanthropy.

The Clinton Global Initiative, as he once said, is a bit like the eBay of philanthropy, bringing together buyers and sellers in the world of giving. Unlike most other foundations, it doesn’t hand out grants. Instead it defines an agenda at its yearly meeting in New York and invites world leaders, CEOs, and celebrities to share the stage with innovators of the nonprofit world. The Davos-style gathering has drawn A-listers ranging from Mick Jagger and Angelina Jolie to GE Chairman Jeff Immelt and President Barack Obama. Action is promised and commitments are made, according to a philanthropic model that works because of Clinton’s charisma and connections.

As a result of its work, 20,000 American schools are giving children healthy food to end childhood obesity; 21,000 African farmers have boosted their crops to feed 30,000 people; 248 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions are being reduced in cities worldwide; $20 million is being invested in small- and medium-sized businesses in Colombia; and 8.2 million people have benefited from lifesaving HIV/AIDS medication. After Superstorm Sandy hit the East Coast, Clinton also announced a partnership with former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg to take on climate change, an issue that may shape the world’s future for decades to come.

Looking ahead, Clinton remains hopeful that we can make good things happen if we realize we’re all in this together. And he’s set an example by partnering with both Bush presidents on disaster relief after the South Asian tsunami, the earthquake in Haiti, and Hurricane Katrina. Clinton casts politics aside to do good because he knows “what works in the real world is cooperation.”
AUGUST 20

George T. Mitchell

*For most human beings, life is in essence a never-ending search for respect. First, self-respect, then the respect of others. There are many roads to respect, none more certain or meaningful than service to others.*

It has been said that “there is not a man, woman, or child in the Capitol who does not trust George Mitchell.” Over 14 years in the Senate, he advocated for environmental protection laws, championed legislation for both children and the aged, and shepherded in civil rights for the disabled. During his last six years in office, he was voted “the most respected member of the Senate” by a bipartisan group of senior congressional aides. Perhaps this reflected his belief that politics and religion are a bad mix. “Although he’s regularly asked to, God does not take sides in American politics,” Mitchell has explained.

His own reputation for fairness placed him in great demand as a broker of peace after finishing his last Senate term in 1995. He answered the request of the British and Irish governments to serve as chairman of the International Commission on Disarmament in Northern Ireland and as chairman of the subsequent peace negotiations, culminating in the Good Friday agreement. In an island-wide referendum, the agreement was approved on both sides of the border between the Republic of Ireland and the British-controlled North. This success so impressed President Clinton, Prime Minister Barak of Israel, and Chairman Arafat of the Palestinian Authority that they asked Mitchell to chair an international fact-finding committee on the crisis between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

He would later serve as special envoy for Middle East peace after the simmering conflict between Israel and the Palestinian faction, Hamas, boiled over in the last days of 2008. In response to rocket fire from Hamas-controlled Gaza, Israel launched a full-scale invasion of the territory, leading civilian casualties to mount. Israel and Hamas made an uneasy truce on the eve of Barack Obama’s inauguration and the new president vowed to renew American peacemaking efforts in the region. On his second day in office, he called on Mitchell to bring lasting peace to the region, and for two years the renowned peacemaker labored in vain to end the dispute. Yet he didn’t give up hope. “Conflicts are created and sustained by human beings,” he said. “They can be ended by human beings.”
AUGUST 21

Sergey Brin

*Obviously everyone wants to be successful, but I want to be looked back on as being very innovative, very trusted and ethical and ultimately making a big difference in the world.*

In 1979, a six-year-old Soviet boy, with an uncertain future, arrived in the United States. Now Sergey Brin, who co-founded Google, is trying to change the world. “I want to make the world a better place,” Brin says, a pretty generic goal, but he means it in several ways. “One is by giving people access to information through Google. The second is just through philanthropy,” he says, because “I don’t think my quality of life is really going to improve that much with more money.” But the money he gives as co-director of the Brin Wojcicki Foundation is changing many other lives for the better.

Much of the money he’s given away has gone to Parkinson’s research, a cause that strikes a personal chord. Brin’s mother has Parkinson’s, as did his great aunt, and he, too, carries a gene that has been linked with higher rates of the disease. His experience with Parkinson’s has inspired him to donate over $160 million to Parkinson’s research, the bulk of it to the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson’s Research. Those with other conditions can also look to him for hope since he’s a sponsor of the Breakthrough Prize in Life Sciences given to researchers who make discoveries that extend human life.

Their discoveries will someday benefit us all, but Brin has a special fondness for San Francisco, where he launched Google in 1998. So his foundation has provided significant support to the Tipping Point Community, which is trying to eliminate poverty in the bay area, as well as smaller donations to other local groups trying to help those in need. And despite all his current wealth he remembers where he came from so he has donated generously to the Hebrew Immigration Aid Society, which helped him and his parents escape prejudice in the former Soviet Union. He’s still grateful to them for the chances he’s had to achieve the dream expressed in his company’s motto. “We have tried to define precisely what it means to be a force for good — always do the right, ethical thing,” he has explained. “Ultimately, ‘Don’t be evil’ seems the easiest way to summarize it.”
AUGUST 22

David Dellinger

_Every act we perform today must reflect the kind of relationships we are fighting to establish tomorrow._

David Dellinger lost track of the number of times he was arrested or jailed for protests, including demonstrations against the Vietnam War. Over the decades, Dellinger was a stalwart in nonviolent protest alongside Martin Luther King, Jr., Daniel Ellsberg, and other left-wing leaders. In 1968, he was one of the “Chicago Seven” who faced prison in 1968 after the anti-war protests they staged during the Democratic National Convention erupted into riots. Among the bearded, beaded, and wild-haired defendants, 54-year-old Dellinger stood out in tweed coat and tie. He resembled an off-duty scoutmaster but was a leading organizer of huge anti-war demonstrations, including the encirclement of the Pentagon in 1967. The Chicago Seven trial was one event in a long life of fighting for what he thought was right.

A child of patrician privilege, Dellinger went to Yale, where a football game inspired his commitment to nonviolence. During a brawl, he punched a New Haven “townie” and knocked him unconscious. “When my victim fell, I dropped to my knees, lifted his head, and cradled him until he came to,” Dellinger recalled. Afterward he foreswore all violence.

His principled stand led him from Yale to jail after World War II broke out. When the draft was established, Dellinger refused to serve in the army, resulting in the first of his terms in jail. By the time the war was over, he had spent three years there for refusing to enlist and found many avenues closed to him. So he opened a printing cooperative and became involved in a variety of causes, including nuclear disarmament, prison reform, and civil liberties. As the Vietnam War gained momentum, he helped produce a declaration of conscience for draft resisters, led the first anti-war-demonstration, and organized the release of American airmen held as prisoners in Hanoi.

After the Chicago Seven trial, he was less in the public eye but wrote several books that expressed his commitment to justice and peace. “The war for total brotherhood must be a nonviolent war carried on by methods worthy of the ideals we seek to serve,” he explained. “We must fight against institutions but not against people.”
AUGUST 23

Queen Noor

Today, there is no excuse for any one of us to sit back and go, “Ugh! There’s nothing I can do about it.” Because there’s always something that can be done.

When Lisa Halaby was a young girl, she dreamed of serving in the Peace Corps, not being a princess. She had learned the value of public service from her father, a former venture capitalist who headed the Federal Aviation Bureau under JFK. After Lisa’s family moved to DC, her father told her how much more fulfilled he was at the FAA than in the corporate world. His words stirred her and so did JFK’s exhortation, “Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country.” Lisa did, though her country changed after she graduated Princeton and went to work on urban planning projects throughout the world. One of them brought her to Jordan where she married King Hussein in 1978 and became Queen Noor.

The couple, despite their different backgrounds, shared the belief that the well-being of any one person depends on the well-being of all. “We came together,” Noor recalls, “because of a shared sense of idealism, of the value of service to a community far greater than ourselves, and the conviction that each and every one of us can meaningfully contribute to solving even the most intractable problems.” In Jordan, these problems included gaps in education, conservation of natural resources, cross-cultural dialogue, and women’s rights, all of which became Noor’s focus as she joined Hussein in developing the nation.

After her husband’s death in 1999, Noor set up the King Hussein Foundation to build on his legacy in Jordan and abroad. The foundation runs programs that promote education and leadership, tolerance, and economic empowerment of women entrepreneurs. There’s also a media program that fosters reconciliation among different cultures, especially those in the Middle East.

These peace-building efforts seem especially urgent because an apocalyptic civil war in Syria has led to a refugee crisis in neighboring countries. The destruction of lives deeply disturbs Noor. Yet she believes “a more just world is possible” because of idealistic, young people like the girl she once was. They’re using the tools they have, Noor says, “for issues far larger than their immediate personal benefits and concerns. That’s what gives me hope.”
AUGUST 24

William Wilberforce

*Let everyone regulate his conduct by the golden rule of doing to others as in similar circumstances we would have them do to us, and the path of duty will be clear before him.*

March 2007 marked 200 years since Britain outlawed the slave trade, and Hollywood honored the occasion by releasing *Amazing Grace*. The film told the story of William Wilberforce, who waged a 20-year crusade against slavery. Albert Finney played John Newton, an Anglican clergyman and former slave trader who penned the hymn Amazing Grace. In the starring role, Welsh actor Ioan Gruffudd reminded viewers why Wilberforce was once known as the “nightingale of the Commons.”

The enormous sense of conviction that came across in his speeches stemmed from a spiritual rebirth that he underwent in his twenties. By then, Wilberforce had already spent several years in the House of Commons and had a good shot at becoming the next prime minister despite leading a somewhat dissolute life. This all changed in 1784 when he embraced evangelical Christianity. Afterward, he considered quitting politics, but Newton urged him to fulfill his spiritual quest via action instead of reflection.

His decision to do God’s work through politics and his opposition to a very lucrative institution quickly dimmed his political star. But he knew he had “to appear at the bar of God,” so he began to preach the gospel of freedom. His fervor was apparent in 1789 when he came before the house and described the sufferings of slaves on ships where they were “chained two-by two” and “struggling under every kind of wretchedness.” He concluded that “a trade founded in iniquity and carried on as this was, must be abolished, let the policy be what it might — let the consequences be what they would, I from this moment would never rest till I had effected its abolition.”

This wouldn’t be soon since he spent the next two decades introducing failed motions to abolish the slave trade. Finally, on February 24, 1807, it carried by a vote of 283 to 16 and nearly the entire house rose to cheer the small man who had long been ignored for making the new law his life’s work. Wilberforce sat in their midst with tears streaming down his face. This overwhelming triumph was the measure of his courage, conviction, and amazing sense of grace.
AUGUST 25

Gene Simmons

_You can’t go through life and leave things the way they are. We can all make a difference, and if I die today, I know I made a difference._

Gene Simmons puts on his trademark makeup, dons seven-inch heels, spits fire, and flies across the stage while touring the world with KISS. Behind his onstage persona, “The Demon,” is a man who deserves a kiss for his commitment to caring and sharing. “Philanthropy is a big word and people don’t understand, really, what it means,” the rock star says. “It means giving back. It means you don’t really need all the money you have. Those of us who are in the West are doing okay.”

But many people aren’t so lucky, Simmons realized one day when he happened to watch a TV commercial for ChildFund. “The imagery was so stark,” he recalls. “The children did not have enough to eat — there was no infrastructure. I wanted to make a difference.” And he did. Today he sponsors more than 140 children worldwide through ChildFund. He’s also a major donor to Mending Kids International, an organization that provides quality surgical care to needy children, and he supports microfinance lending programs like Kiva and Heifer International.

Simmons appreciates the value of giving back because he knows what it’s like to go without. Born in Israel, he was raised in a bullet-speckled, one-bedroom home by his mother, a Holocaust survivor. When they immigrated to the U.S., Simmons was eight and his world was rocked by the strange new sights around him. “We came from nothing,” he recalls. “My mother was making $35 a week. Rent was $37.50 a month. But I didn’t know anything. I had never seen a television set, or Kleenex, or toilet paper. We just didn’t have those things.”

Neither do the kids he helps. And he met some of them on a visit to Zambia in 2012. While there he provided books and school supplies to several schools and gave one of his sponsored children a bike so the boy could get to school. He also witnessed poverty and starvation that made him realize he had to give these kids a chance. “It’s our responsibility to take care of each other,” he says. “You don’t need to be a star. You don’t need to be rich.”
AUGUST 26

Mother Teresa

*There is joy in transcending self to serve others.*

Pope Francis met Mother Teresa in the 1990s when he was still Archbishop Jorge Mario Bergoglio in Argentina. At the time, he admitted being awed by her concern for society’s outcasts. “I would have been afraid to have had her as my superior since she was so tough,” he joked. And it’s true that she asked much from her sisters and herself because she believed “love demands sacrifice.” When she started her Missionaries of Charity in Calcutta, her sisters would go out at night and pick the dying off the streets, then care for them at the convent. These were people nobody wanted, but Teresa instructed the nuns to treat them with compassion. “Let them see the kindness in your face,” she said, “in your eyes, and in your friendly greeting,” words based on her conviction that “my community is the poor.”

Teresa, too, had known poverty as a girl in Macedonia after her father’s death. Though her mother faced financial crisis, she raised Teresa with care and instilled her with faith in God. In 1928, Teresa joined the Loreto Order, which sent her to teach school in Calcutta. Nearly 20 years later, during a train ride in India, she felt called to establish her order to serve the poorest of the poor. In 1948, she put on her famous white sari with blue trim for the first time and began her mission. The Vatican was impressed with her work and encouraged her to expand it in other parts of the world. The media also noticed the demure nun in blue and white after she received a Nobel Prize in 1979. When she died in 1997, there were 4,000 of her sisters in 123 countries.

By then, Teresa had earned renown as the “saint of the gutter,” and in 2016, her old colleague, Francis, announced that she was to become a bona fide saint. The honor was recognition of two life-and-death miracles of healing she worked from the great beyond. Yet Teresa put more stock in the little acts of kindness we do every day. “We can do no great things,” she once explained, “only small things with great love.”
We have the opportunity to move not only toward the rich society and the powerful society, but upward to the Great Society.

What makes a president great? Washington, Lincoln, and FDR tend to set the standard due to their pragmatism and sense of vision. Then there are presidents like Woodrow Wilson, a great leader in domestic affairs who fell short in his foreign policy goals and dreams of lasting peace after World War I. Lyndon Baines Johnson suffered a similar fate after succeeding the martyred John F. Kennedy in 1963. His legacy is tainted by the Vietnam War, but Johnson did not want to be “the president who built empires, or sought grandeur.” Instead, as he once said, “I want to be the president who helped feed the hungry and prepare them to be taxpayers instead of tax eaters. I want to be the president who helped the poor find their own way and who protected the right of every citizen to vote in every election.”

He seized on the occasion of Kennedy’s murder to win passage of JFK’s unrealized legislative initiatives: an $11 billion tax cut and the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Over the next five years, he went on to push through a bold set of programs known as the Great Society, which championed urban renewal, education, the arts, environmental beautification and conservation, and development of depressed regions. Great Society legislation also included the passage of the Medicare and Medicaid Acts, the Voting Rights Act, and the Civil Rights Act in 1968.

By then the escalating war in Vietnam was consuming Johnson’s presidency. More than 500,000 U.S. troops were there, anti-war protests were mounting, and Johnson’s approval rating plummeted to 36 percent. On March 31, 1968, he announced that he would not seek election.

By 1972, he knew he didn’t have long to live, so he called civil rights leaders to his new presidential library in Austin to commemorate his Civil Rights, Voting Rights, and Fair Housing Acts. Suffering severe heart pains, he lamented that he hadn’t “done enough” to advance equal rights and quoted from his famous 1965 speech to Congress, “We Shall Overcome!” But his regrets notwithstanding, he had overcome many of our country’s problems. That made him a great president in the end.
Mike Vance

Success and all good things in life start with a genuine concern for others.

Mike Vance popularized the phrase “think outside the box.” A close associate of Walt Disney and Steve Jobs, Vance was known for his pioneering work in management by values and creative thinking. “Creativity is the thrust that keeps us alive. It is the making of the new and the rearranging of the old in a new way,” Vance explained. And it can be learned, especially if managers do all they can to enrich the workplace and empower their staff. “People tend to stay in environments where they are learning and leave environments where they are not.”

People also grow when someone shows they care, as Vance did while still a young man. After graduating college in Ohio, he served as an infantry officer in the Korean War and was decorated several times. During his tour of duty, he helped start several orphanages for displaced Korean children, and his work with kids continued when he returned home and entered the ministry. He started a church for children in Columbus, Ohio; founded a youth camp in California; and directed several year-round camps. In 1959, these endeavors led to a position as youth minister in LA. While there he appeared in his own TV talk show, Men at the Top, and this public exposure led to an invitation in 1964 to give a talk at a father-daughter luncheon in Burbank. Walt Disney was there with his daughters, said he had liked Vance’s speech, and hired him to head HR at Disney World Resort.

Vance eventually became dean of Disney University, where he developed creative thinking and staff training methods that other companies still embrace. Among them was an emphasis on values. “Life is too long not to do it right,” he told Disney staff. “The more you know what your values are, the easier it is to make decisions.”

Gentle wisdom like this reached a wider audience in 1990 when Vance co-founded the Creative Thinking Association of America. In announcing his new venture, Vance predicted the major trends of the century to come: caring for people, cooperating with people, and empowering people. They’re his formula for breaking out of the box.
AUGUST 29

Justin Dart. Jr.

I won’t change history single-handedly, but maybe I can plant a few seeds. I reach out to you with passion, with love. I cry out to you. Lead! Lead!

The “father of the Americans with Disabilities Act” contracted polio at 18 and spent the rest of his life in a wheelchair. This didn’t stop Justin Dart from building successful companies in Mexico and Japan, where he provided work for women and the disabled. The turning point in Dart’s life came in 1966 when he went to war-torn Vietnam to investigate the status of rehabilitation. During a visit to a “rehabilitation center” for kids with polio, he was shocked at the sight of disabled children left on concrete floors to starve. One young girl took his hand and looked into his eyes in a way he couldn’t forget. “For the first time in my life,” he said, “I understood the reality of evil and that I was part of that reality.”

This insight led Dart to devote himself to the cause of civil and human rights. After returning home, he engaged in tireless grassroots activity on behalf of the disabled. He spoke for millions as he issued an adamant battle cry, “We are Americans and we will be part of the American dream.” His voice reached the nation after he became chair of the Congressional Task Force on the Rights of Americans with Disabilities. At his own expense, he collected 5,000 documents supporting the ADA and held 63 public forums. Over 30,000 people attended the forums where Dart addressed the crowds while sitting in his wheelchair and sporting his trademark cowboy hat. Everywhere he went Dart touted the ADA as “the civil rights act of the future.” He also met with members of Congress, Vice President Dan Quayle, and President H.W. Bush, who introduced him as “the ADA man.”

Dart didn’t agree with this description since he always stressed the help he received from others. But his contributions were recognized in a momentous occasion on the White House Lawn. On July 26, 1990, with Dart on the stage beside him, Bush signed the ADA into law and knocked down the walls of exclusion. “With the ADA as support,” Dart noted afterward, “individuals with disabilities can and will continue to take strides to improve their lives and their communities.”
AUGUST 30

Warren Buffett

The more you give love away, the more you get.

Warren Buffet made a name for himself making money. But he wants to be remembered for his ability to give it all — $58 billion in Berkshire Hathaway stock — away. “Money has given me the independence to do what I love daily,” the investment guru explains. “Beyond that it has no real utility for me but enormous utility for others. That is why I’m giving it away.” But that doesn’t mean he’s throwing it away since he’s careful to give only to organizations that will use the money well. “You can have the greatest goals in the world,” he says, “but if you have the wrong people running it, it isn’t going to work. On the other hand, if you’ve got the right person running it, almost anything is possible.”

He found that person in 2006, when he donated over $30 billion to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for improving health and education, especially in the developing world. Bill Gates shares Buffet’s belief in getting concrete results from investments in giving and using most of his fortune to improve life for others. Together they launched the Giving Pledge, which has convinced some of the world’s richest people — including Mark Zuckerberg and Michael Bloomberg — to donate at least half their fortunes to charity while they’re still alive.

Other wealthy folk fork over substantial sums each year when Buffet auctions off a lunch date to benefit GLIDE, Reverend Cecil Williams’ foundation to help San Francisco’s homeless and poor. The high-ticket lunch sells for anywhere from $1 million to $3.5 million, and has raised more than $20 million for GLIDE.

But Buffet does more than hand out large wads of cash to organizations ranging from Make-a-Wish to the Animal Rescue Foundation. He has inspired young people by contributing to a free online course that gave students a chance to donate $100,000 of the Buffet family fortune. He has also appeared as a guest speaker for the class, where he urged students to give with a sense of purpose. “The obligation of a society as prosperous as ours,” he told them, “is to figure out how nobody gets left too far behind.”
AUGUST 31

Maria Montessori

The greatest crime that society commits is that of wasting the money which it should use for children on things that will destroy them and society itself.

“Supposing I said there was a planet without schools or teachers,” Maria Montessori once remarked. “Study was unknown, and yet the inhabitants — doing nothing but living and walking about — came to know all things, to carry in their minds the whole of learning. Would you not think I was romancing? Well, just this, which seems so fanciful as to be nothing but the invention of a fertile imagination, is a reality. It is the child’s way of learning. This is the path he follows. He learns everything without knowing he is learning it, and in doing so passes little by little from the unconscious to the conscious, treading always in the paths of joy and love.”

It was bold vision in the early 1900s when schooling was highly regimented and children were seen as empty vessels waiting to be filled. But Montessori was always ahead of her time. At age 13, she defied her father by attending a boys’ technical school, where she studied science and math. She went on to graduate with high honors from the medical school of the University of Rome and become Italy’s first female doctor. In her work at the school’s psychiatric clinic, she developed an interest in special needs children and for several years, she worked, wrote, and spoke on their behalf.

In 1907, she had the chance to study normal children when she took charge of 50 poor, unruly youngsters in the desolate San Lorenzo slum on the outskirts of Rome. As she used them to test her ideas, the children started to demonstrate astonishing changes in their behavior. It seemed the more the children were allowed the freedom to choose their own activities within an exciting, structured environment, the happier and more motivated they became. Watching them, Montessori became increasingly convinced she had uncovered the key to transforming the world and should devote her life to fighting for the rights of the child.

Many people agreed with her that “one test of the correctness of educational procedure is the happiness of the child.” They established Montessori schools and today her vision continues to “follow the child” throughout the globe.
SEPTEMBER
Liz Carpenter

We stand taller because we stand on the shoulders of others.

Liz Carpenter had three basic rules for writing a speech: “Start with a laugh, put the meat in the middle, and wave the flag at the end.” She followed them as a women’s rights crusader, journalist, and trusted aide to Lyndon and Lady Bird Johnson. At the same time, she admitted that “sometimes all the speechwriting rules in the world don’t matter.” One of those times was November 22, 1963, the day JFK was assassinated in Dallas.

Carpenter was there as Johnson’s executive assistant, and she found herself in a Dallas police car being driven to Love Field. Once there, she would board Air Force One with the body of the slain president, his widow, and the Texan who would take the oath of office aboard the plane. Soon Johnson would face the press, so Carpenter quickly scribbled the statement he would deliver to the nation upon stepping off the plane in Washington, DC. It concluded with the promise, “I will do my best. That is all I can do. I ask for your help and God’s.”

The words “just came out and they were right,” Carpenter recalled. So were the speeches she wrote as Lady Bird’s press secretary from 1963 to 1969. Afterward she would serve as Carter’s assistant secretary of education, on the International Women’s Year Commission under Ford, and on the White House Conference on Aging under Clinton.

She later became active in women’s rights issues. She was a co-founder of the National Women’s Political Caucus and co-chaired ERAmerica, which fought for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. When her tireless campaigning failed, she railed, “I personally am going to the Great Precinct Meeting in the Sky kicking and screaming if I’m not in the Constitution of the country that I worked for, paid taxes to, tried to be a total thinking citizen in.”

Her sense of humor and flair made her an icon for feminists like Gloria Steinem and Betty Friedan. But she’s best remembered for the moving words Johnson spoke the day Kennedy died. Despite coming through at a trying time, she didn’t take credit for Johnson’s speech. “God was my ghostwriter,” she said.
SEPTEMBER 2

Salma Hayek

*Don’t let a year go by knowing you didn’t make an effort to do something — no matter how small — outside your own problems and drama.*

In the 2015 film, *Everly*, Salma Hayek plays a victim of sex slavery held against her will by mobsters. Hayek fights back by shooting her captors, and she’s also fierce in real life as she fights violence against women. Though the Mexican-born star has never been a victim of abuse, she believes “we are all connected.” They’re not just words because she’s acted on her conviction as an advocate for immigrants and women. “Everybody thinks they believe in justice, but how can we justify being silent,” she wonders. “With conviction and compassion comes commitment. Each person must take the power.”

So she’s used her clout as a celebrity to get involved in social causes. In 2005, she came before Congress and urged lawmakers to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act. In 2006, she opposed legislation that would make felons out of illegal immigrants, and in 2010, she contested a controversial Arizona law permitting police officers to pull over people based on the suspicion that they are illegally in the country. She has also sought vaccines for pregnant women, raised awareness of AIDS, and advocated for breastfeeding. Shortly after giving birth to her daughter in 2009, she went with UNICEF to Africa, where she breastfed a starving baby whose mother couldn’t produce milk.

It’s rare for a star to give so much of the milk of human kindness, but Hayek says she has “always thought you had to do all you can,” a lesson she learned growing up. “We lived in a small town,” she recalls. “My family was always helping people, and that does rub off.” So does the example of some amazing women she has known, including Mother Teresa, who Hayek met when she volunteered at her hospice in Calcutta.

She has also drawn inspiration from the writer Kahlil Gibran, and in 2015, she produced an animated film adapted from *The Prophet*. It’s the story of Mustafa, a political prisoner who shares philosophical thoughts on themes like death, equality, and love. “I thought it was a great opportunity to make a film about connection,” Hayek says. Mustafa tries to make “people embrace each other.” And she does, too.
Robert Pamplin, Jr.

You don’t see a need and get other people to fill it. You see the need and whatever it is, you fill it.

Robert Pamplin, Jr. is a fervent philanthropist and big proponent of physical fitness. In 1992, his twin passions led him to hold his first “Beat Bob” event at Lewis & Clark College, where he served as chairman of the board. Students lined up to join in after he offered to donate $25,000 to the college library in the name of anyone who beat him in a physical challenge. As an added inducement, he promised to have the winners’ names engraved on the library walls so they could one day go there with their kids and say, “Look, I helped.” It wasn’t easy since Pamplin could do 625 sit-ups, 116 push-ups, 24 pull-ups, and a 16-foot rope climb. Only five students bested him in all categories, but enough rose to the challenge to raise one million dollars.

The fundraising campaign was part of his “Next Generation” model of giving, based on helping people to help themselves. He came up with it in his late thirties after a brush with cancer led him to rethink his life. Until then he had joined in a lot of fundraisers in Oregon, where he heads his own corporation. But the illness led him to search for new notions of success and earn a Doctorate of Ministry in 1982.

Afterward, he came to believe that “success is that person who accumulates the most values, not the most money,” and he founded Christ Community Church to distribute food to the poor. The organization fed more then 1,000 people each day and hooked them up with programs that would help them be more self-sufficient. “We’ll continue to feed them,” Pamplin explained, “as long as they make an effort to get out of the loop.”

This proviso didn’t express a reluctance to give since Pamplin has donated over $150 million to various causes, especially higher education. His scholarship program sends hundred of students to college each year in the hope that they will achieve exceptional goals. One of them is to be servant leaders who empower those in need. And the way Pamplin’s done this himself makes it hard to beat Bob when it comes to giving back.
SEPTEMBER 4

Lewis Howard Latimer

*We create our future by well improving present opportunities, however few and small they may be.*

Lewis Latimer used his talents to invent a better life for all. He worked with Alexander Graham Bell to develop a patent for the telephone. He also came up with ideas for air conditioning units and water closets for trains. Working under Thomas Edison, he developed a filament that allowed light bulbs to last longer and led to widespread use of electric lights. In 1890, he wrote *Incandescent Electric Lighting*, which showed how the new technology could bring electricity to the poor. “Like the light of the sun,” he wrote, “it beautifies all things on which it shines and is no less welcome in the palace than in the humblest home.” And he knew both sides of life. As the son of runaway slaves, he strived to be a shining example of what blacks could achieve.

He made this point during an era of great social and scientific change. The Civil War broke out when he was 12, and at 16 he volunteered to fight for the Union army. After returning home in 1865, he worked at a patent law firm where he learned to draw blueprints for inventions. Within seven years he became the head draftsman, then went on to work for Edison and Bell. His achievements stemmed from hard work, he explained, because “the habit of eternal vigilance and diligence rarely fails to bring a substantial reward.”

And he used his own rewards to buy a house in Queens, New York, assemble a library of books, and spend time changing lives. He supported job training for young black women, taught mechanical drawing to immigrants at the Henry Street Settlement House, and helped found the Unitarian Church. He supported civil rights and corresponded with leading black thinkers, including Frederick Douglass and Richard Greener, the first black graduate of Harvard. In a letter to Greener from 1895, he laid out a blueprint for social change based on the conviction that blacks deserved “equality before the law, security under the law” and the chance to enjoy “the blessings guaranteed us under the Constitution.” As full-fledged citizens of the nation, they, too, could help invent a better future for all.
SEPTEMBER 5

Arthur Koestler

*If the Creator had a purpose in equipping us with a neck, he surely meant us to stick it out.*

Arthur Koestler had a recurring dream in which he cried out in the dark. “I am being murdered in some kind of thicket or brushwood,” he recalled. “There is a busy road at no more than ten yards distance; I scream for help but nobody hears me; the crowd walks past laughing and chatting.” But in real life, many listened as Koestler urged them to make moral choices during the Holocaust and Cold War. Human rights mattered, he stressed in numerous essays and books. The most famous of them was *Darkness at Noon*, a bullet fired at Stalin’s Russia. When his novel appeared in 1940, it revealed travesties that the West largely ignored: show trials, forced confessions, brutal prison conditions, and oppression. These were horrors Koestler endured first-hand because he believed “courage is never to let your actions be influenced by your fears.”

He’d faced his own fears as a young communist who turned against Stalin after the first show trials, an inmate of a French detainment camp, and a prisoner during the Spanish Civil War. He was covering the war for the British press when he was arrested by Franco’s forces and spent three months in solitary confinement. At night he heard men crying for their mothers as they were taken out to be shot, and he expected to die until the British government intervened.

His ordeal fueled *Darkness at Noon*, about a man confined, interrogated, and executed in a communist prison. It led millions to turn against communism by convincing them that individuals shouldn’t be sacrificed for the collective. It also made Koestler famous, and people heard him in 1944 when he wrote about the Holocaust after a poll showed that most Americans didn’t believe Nazis were murdering Jews.

In an essay for the *New York Times*, he divided the world into “dreamers” and “screamers” who bore witness to the darkness of men’s souls. As a screamer, he felt compelled to wake the conscience of those who walked past laughing and chatting. If they’d paid attention, he screamed in despair, “this war would have been avoided, and those within sight of your daydreaming eyes would still be alive.”
Jane Addams

_The good we secure for ourselves is precarious and uncertain, is floating in midair, until it is secured for all of us and incorporated into our common life._

As a young woman, Jane Addams longed for a life with a moral purpose. And she succeeded despite the roadblocks that deterred a woman from making her mark on the world. In the late nineteenth century, the “frailer sex” had few options besides marriage. Moreover, Addams suffered from lifelong chronic ailments. Yet she still managed to be one of the first middle-class women to attend college. Afterward, she wondered what to do next and found an answer at age 29. In 1889, she brought a woman’s touch to civic life by founding Hull House in Chicago.

The new settlement house ministered to impoverished immigrants at a time when government welfare didn’t exist. It offered nurseries, kindergarten, playgrounds, and clubs. It provided a boarding house, theater workshops, language classes, music schools, and reading groups based on Addams’ mission to “raise life to the highest.”

Addams was ensconced in these activities since she lived and worked among the poor. Her lifestyle raised questions, but Addams had found herself by serving others. Besides, Hull House embodied her agenda “to work towards the betterment not of one kind of people or class of people, but for the common good.”

Her commitment to “universal brotherhood” drove her crusade for peace following the outbreak of World War I. In 1915, she visited 10 nations where she implored government heads to end the bloodshed, and in 1919, she was elected lifelong president of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom. Her outspoken pacifism led the Justice Department to place her under surveillance, yet she kept protesting the heedless deaths of young men. Following the war, she raised money to feed starving German children and argued for a cooperative response to the problem of world hunger.

Addams’ own role on the world stage sprang from the same motherly spirit that inspired her social work. “Peace,” she maintained, demanded “the nurture of human life,” and her devotion to this ideal earned her the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931. As she stood before the cheering throngs, she knew she’d fulfilled her quest for a moral purpose and truly showed the world what a woman could do.
SEPTEMBER 7

Daniel Inouye

Vigilance abroad does not require us to abandon our ideals or the rule of law at home. On the contrary, without our principles or our ideals, we have little that is special or worthy to defend.

The Germans blew Daniel Inouye’s arm off in World War II but didn’t touch his heart or soul. He went on to earn fame as the first Japanese American to serve in Congress and the quiet voice of conscience in the Senate. Senator Inouye supported the social and civil rights programs of Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson. He defended the territorial rights of Native Americans. He was instrumental in securing full benefits for Filipino veterans who had served with the U.S. Army in World War II but had long been denied the pensions and medical benefits they deserved.

Inouye was also an enduring advocate for health centers and affordable health care in his home state of Hawaii. He believed that no Hawaiian should be denied quality health care because they couldn’t pay for it or lived in a rural part of the state. “The mission of Community Health Centers is to make sure that anyone needing medical attention receives it in a timely fashion and we in government must do all we can to support such a benevolent endeavor,” he urged.

And generally the soft-spoken senator was content to champion Hawaii’s interests and defer to his more outspoken colleagues. But as crises rose, he was called upon to take center stage. He drew national attention for his quiet but courageous leadership on Senate committees investigating the Watergate Scandal and Iran-Contra Affair. During the hearings on the affair, he castigated high-ranking U.S. officials who defied President Reagan and Congress by secretly selling weapons to Iran and using the profits to support rebels fighting the left-wing Sandinista government in Nicaragua.

This ethical stance earned him public recognition and a long political career. After the Watergate hearings, a Gallup poll found that Inouye had an 84 percent favorable rating, even higher than Sam Ervin, chairman of the Senate Watergate committee. At the time of his death, 88-year-old Inouye was the longest-serving U.S. senator, having been elected to nine consecutive terms over 49 years. Hundreds flocked to his memorial service so they could pay their respects to the quiet man who always spoke out for what is right.
SEPTMBER 8

Claude Pepper

*Make it better. Do all that you can to make life better for others.*

Claude Pepper earned a reputation as “Red Pepper” for his red hair and fiery liberal rhetoric. Many of his speeches were about elderly rights because he believed “ageism is as odious as racism and sexism.” From 1929 when he first entered politics as a young lawyer until his death 60 years later, Pepper introduced laws to benefit seniors. One of his first acts in the Florida House of Representatives was to allow the state’s older residents to fish without a license. And as his star rose, he cast his net wide to catch those who would try to take advantage of the aged.

After being elected to the U.S. Senate in 1937, he was named chair of the Select Committee on Aging, where he became known for defending Social Security and Medicare. Many people also branded him as a radical after he sponsored bills for national health care and equal pay for women. He co-authored legislation that established the National Cancer Institute, the first of many National Institutes of Health, and defended the interests of labor against big business.

His liberal ideas cost him his Senate seat in 1950, and he returned to Florida to practice law. But he made a comeback when he successfully ran for the U.S. House in 1962. As chair of the Special Committee on Aging, he sponsored the Medicare home care and hospice benefits. His other legislative initiatives led to benefits like hearing aids, dentures, and eyeglasses under Medicare and Medicaid; the Older Americans Act with its many community-based programs; a crackdown on abuses in nursing homes; the establishment of Alzheimer’s research centers; and increased funding of jobs earmarked for seniors.

Toward the end of his life, he championed the 1986 federal law barring mandatory retirement based on age. He believed older people were among the world’s “treasures” and served as a model of what they could do. As an octogenarian congressman with a pacemaker, trifocals, and two hearing aids, Pepper still worked long hours and remained a force to be reckoned with on Capitol Hill. He never lost his burning sense of mission since anything that hurt the aged made him see red.
SEPTEMBER 9

Leo Tolstoy

The vocation of every man and every woman is to serve other people.

Leo Tolstoy believed you had to step into the shoes of people who were different from you. You might learn something, as Count Pierre Bezukhov does in Tolstoy’s War and Peace. Toward the novel’s end, Pierre, who closely resembles the author, has the wild idea of killing Napoleon, who invaded Russia in 1812. Long before he gets near his target, he’s arrested and thrown in jail with Platon, a fat, dimwitted peasant. The two are completely unlike, but Platon bridges the gap by giving the starving count a baked potato sprinkled with salt. When Platon says kindly, “Real treat they is, you try ‘em like that,” Pierre has an insight into the virtues of common folk. Until then, he had been impressed by education and social status as he searched in vain for the meaning of life. Suddenly, he realizes that Platon can help by teaching him about patience, happiness, and acceptance.

Tolstoy had a similar revelation in his fifties when he underwent a depression. His soul was at war as he debated whether to kill himself, and like Pierre he found relief in the simple life. In 1861, the blue-blooded count began to adopt peasant dress and work in the fields alongside the laborers on his estate. He also founded a school for peasant children and gave time and money to relieve famine among the poor. After the crop failure of 1873, he stopped writing Anna Karenina for a year to organize aid for the starving. “I cannot tear myself away from living creatures to bother about imaginary ones,” he told friends who thought he was crazy for putting his masterpiece on hold.

But all his humanitarian work did not end his inner war as he kept searching for life’s meaning. So he adopted a radical brand of pacifist Christianity and supported civil disobedience to improve the lot of the oppressed. In 1894, he summed up his thoughts when he wrote that “the sole meaning of life is to serve humanity” by building heaven on earth. “The kingdom of God is within you,” he told his readers. By practicing empathy, you could find a sense of peace.
Catherine Coffin ran an efficient railroad. “The roads were always in running order,” Levi recalled, “the connections were good, the conductors active and zealous, and there was no lack of passengers.” What made it unique is that the passengers were all slaves. From 1826 to 1863, the Coffins were active in the Underground Railroad, a network of more than 3,000 homes and other stations that helped runaway slaves travel from southern states to freedom in northern states and Canada. This was dangerous work since federal law authorized local governments to return escaped slaves to their owners and punished anyone who aided in their flights. Yet the Coffins helped about 2,000 slaves escape because Catherine believed “the Bible in bidding us to feed the hungry and clothe the naked said nothing about color, and I should try to follow the teachings of that good book.”

Catherine learned this humane lesson from her Quaker family who is thought to have helped runaway slaves. It is likely she met Levi while taking part in these activities. After giving birth to the first of their six children, Catherine and Levi moved to the free state of Indiana, where Levi opened a successful general store in Newport. Once there, Levi contacted the black community and made it known that he would be willing to hide runaway slaves in his home.

In 1826, the Coffins began providing runaways with transportation, shelter, food, and clothing. “Aunt Katy,” as the fugitives called her, was the heart of their welcoming home. “There never was a night too cold, or dark, or rainy for her to get up at any hour, and prepare a meal for the poor fugitives,” Levi recalled. Many nights as many as 17 people sat down, and Catherine cared for them, though she often had her hands full with her own kids.

One of the slaves they helped was Eliza Harris, whose story was retold by Harriet Beecher Stowe in Uncle Tom’s Cabin. Eliza reached freedom thanks to Indiana Quakers named Simeon and Rachel Halliday. They’re based on the Coffins, so the couple known for their secrecy achieved public renown.
The whole point of muckraking, apart from all the jokes, is to try to do something about what you’ve been writing about.

Death became Jessica Mitford as she exposed the American way of death. In 1963, she portrayed the funeral industry as “a huge, macabre, and expensive practical joke on the American public.” In the business of death, she pointed out, undertakers had come to call themselves “funeral directors” and “morticians,” coffins had become “caskets,” and hearses had become “professional cars.” The changing lexicon of death also described flowers as “floral tributes” and corpses as “loved ones,” with a disturbing result: the cost of dying was rising faster then the cost of living. The American Way of Death also led to congressional hearings, an FTC investigation, and rave reviews that established Mitford as the queen of muckrakers — not bad for a woman who never went to school.

The child of British aristocrats who embraced fascism in the 1930s, she rebelled by becoming a pacifist and a socialist later on. At age 12, she opened her own bank account, groundwork for the escape that came when she was 19. In 1937, she met her second cousin, Esmond Rommily, the nephew of Winston Churchill, who shared her radical beliefs, and the two joined anti-Fascist forces in the Spanish Civil War. After returning home, they married and had a daughter who died of measles at five months. Between the couple’s grief and growing disappointment with British politics, they decided to move to the United States. After Rommily died fighting in World War II, Mitford worked as a union organizer, bartender, and clerk before deciding at 38 to become a writer.

Spurred by a sense of social justice and skewering sense of wit, she revealed unfair trade practices: everything from the “Famous Writers School,” a forebear of today’s college degree mills, to fat farms for wealthy wives. None of her other books achieved the fame of The American Way of Death, but her writing always attracted attention and often caused a scandal — to her delight. “You may not be able to change the world,” she once joked, “but at least you can embarrass the guilty.”
SEPTEMBER 12

Jesse Owens

*Find the good. It’s all around you. Find it, showcase it, and you’ll start believing in it.*

Jesse Owens’ four gold medals at the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin made him a legend in the history of track and field. His triumph was both athletic and political since Adolf Hitler had intended the Berlin Games to be a showcase for Aryan supremacy. The son of a sharecropper, as well as a member of what the Nazis called America’s “black auxiliaries,” Owens had both dazzling talent — and determination. The year before, with a wrenched back so painful he could not dress or undress without help, he broke five world records and equaled a sixth, all within 45 minutes. When he went to Berlin, he “wasn’t there to compete against any one athlete,” he explained. He was there to do his best because “the only victory that counts is the one over yourself.”

He needed this inner strength after coming home to a country still riven by segregation. Because he was black he was not offered any lucrative endorsement deals and the man who flew through the air during the long jump event soon fell from the Olympic heights. Owens became a playground janitor because he could not find a better job. He went on to become an amateur runner and accepted money to race against cars, trucks, motorcycles, dogs, and horses. “People say that it was degrading for an Olympic champion to run against a horse,” he said, “but what was I supposed to do? I had four gold medals, but you can’t eat gold medals.”

Fortunately, those medals did make a difference in time as Owens became a celebrated speaker and head of his own PR firm. As he crisscrossed the country, he spoke about the importance of patriotism, clean living, and fair play for organizations like the Ford Motor Company and U.S. Olympic Committee. He also spent time working with underprivileged youngsters at the Boys Clubs of America, and he had a lot to teach them because he knew what it takes to succeed. “We all have dreams,” he pointed out. “But in order to make dreams come into reality, it takes an awful lot of determination, dedication, self-discipline, and effort.”
SEPTEMBER 13

Walter Reed

*It has been permitted to me and my assistants to lift the impenetrable veil that has surrounded the causation of this most dreadful pest of humanity, and to put it on a rational and scientific basis.*

“Yellow Jack” is what U.S. soldiers called the deadly virus that killed many of their comrades during the Spanish-American War. The nickname referred to the yellow quarantine flag that flew over the hospital at Camp Columbia near Havana, Cuba. It also describes the appearance of yellow fever victims. After several days of headache, backache, soaring fever, nausea, and vomiting, some people have yellow eyes and skin as the virus kills cells in the liver. In this second toxic phase, bleeding in the mouth, eyes, and gastrointestinal tract produce black vomit containing blood — all caused by the bite of a small mosquito, as an army doctor discovered in 1900.

Walter Reed was well suited for the job of medical detective. He had been a brilliant student at the University of Virginia, which he entered when he was 16. By age 18, he had earned a medical degree from UVA and three years later acquired a second medical degree from Bellevue Medical College in New York City. Finding himself “unable to discover the great advantages of living in metropolitan cities,” as he complained, he escaped by joining the army.

Research had always been his passion, and he embraced the new science of bacteriology. In 1893, he became a professor of bacteriology at the Army Medical School in Washington, DC, where he studied the role of bacteria in transmitting diphtheria and typhoid fever. When an epidemic of yellow fever broke out among U.S. troops during the Spanish-American War, Reed set sail for Havana.

After arriving there in June 1900, Reed and fellow members of the U.S. Army Yellow Fever Board conducted experiments on human subjects, the only creatures that get yellow fever, to find the cause of the disease. Within six months, Reed had lost a close colleague to the disease and discovered that the mosquito was the culprit. Thrilled with this life-saving finding, Reed wrote his wife a jubilant letter on New Year’s Eve 1901. “The prayer that has been mine for twenty years,” he told her, “that I might be permitted in some way or at some time to do something to alleviate human suffering, has been granted.”
SEPTEMBER 14

Margaret Sanger

_No woman can call herself free until she can choose consciously whether she will or will not be a mother._

On a hot day in July 1912, Nurse Margaret Sanger made her way through pushcarts to a tenement flat on New York’s Lower East Side. Sadie Sachs, a truck driver’s young wife and mother of three, was near death as the result of a self-induced abortion. She pleaded with Sanger and the doctor: “Another baby will finish me. What can I do to prevent it?” The doctor’s gruff reply was “Tell Jake to sleep on the roof.” Three months later Sadie was dead of another self-induced abortion, and Sanger had found a cause based on the belief that “every child should be a wanted child.”

When Sanger launched her crusade for family planning by contraception, she was branded as a “lascivious monster” bent on “murdering” unborn children. Birth control, a phrase she invented, was unmentionable, immoral, and illegal. The Comstock Act made it a federal crime to send information about birth control in the mail and Sanger was arrested eight times for violating the law. Despite facing numerous lawsuits, she remained convinced that birth control was essential for a woman’s health and “the first important step woman must take toward the goal of her freedom.”

She helped women take that step “to be man’s equal” by fighting to make contraception freely available. In 1915, she was indicted for illegally distributing diaphragms through the mail and in 1916 she was arrested for opening the country’s first birth control clinic. But Sanger would not recant. In 1921, she founded the American Birth Control League, the precursor to Planned Parenthood, and spent the next three decades campaigning to bring safe, effective birth control into the American mainstream.

By the 1950s, she’d won many legal battles, but she was frustrated with the limited birth control options available to women. Tired of waiting for science or industry to address the problem, she found a medical expert in reproduction who was willing to take on the problem and a sponsor for the research. Their collaboration would lead to FDA approval of Enovid, the first oral contraceptive. With the advent of the Pill, Sanger lived to achieve her dream of making every child a wanted child.
SEPTEMBER 15

Sara O’Meara

*I believe every child deserves the right to be free from abuse and neglect in order to reach his or her ultimate potential.*

Sara O’Meara and Yvonne Federson followed God’s plan by founding Childhelp USA, the nation’s largest child abuse prevention group. But who could have predicted this path in the 1950s when the two women met on the set of *Ozzie and Harriet?* They were rising stars in a hit TV show about the perfect American family and never dreamt they would come to serve children worldwide.

Their mission began after they joined a USO goodwill tour of Japan, where they stumbled on a situation that changed their lives forever. “Divine intervention,” as O’Meara called it, came in the form of a typhoon that hit Tokyo in 1959. When the women went out to see the damage, they found 11 Japanese-American orphans shivering in the street. Using their few words of Japanese, they learned the waifs had been turned out of an orphanage to make room for full-blooded Japanese children. They took them to their hotel room, gave them a warm bath, fed them, and approached the colonel overseeing their tour.

They were incensed when he admitted knowing about the problems facing half-American children. Since both governments refused to acknowledge the issue, the women knew they couldn’t walk away. They went on to found nine orphanages in Japan and Vietnam, hospitals, and a school. During the Vietnam War, they arranged for thousands of abandoned Amerasian children to be airlifted to the U.S. for adoption.

The war over, they found a new direction when Nancy Reagan suggested they look into child abuse. Some research into the problem inspired them to set up a treatment center for abused children in California and campaign for laws that required professionals to report suspected cases of child abuse. In 1983, they formed Childhelp USA and by 2015, nine million children had been touched by Childhelp’s 24-hour hotline, advocacy centers, and residential treatment homes.

Their story inspired a TV movie, *For the Love of a Child*, and as O’Meara watched her TV self on the screen she had no regrets about quitting show biz to help children heal. “Giving to others, doing for others, that’s where your real happiness comes from,” she says.
SEPTEMBER 16

Robert H. Schuller

*Anybody who succeeds is helping people. The secret to success is find a need and fill it; find a hurt and heal it; find a problem and solve it.*

Reverend Robert Schuller preached self-belief to millions of people from his Crystal Cathedral in California. For more than 40 years, he was an apostle of positive thinking and a symbol of success. A charismatic shepherd, he was one of television’s first preachers to reach audiences around the world with a message of self-empowerment and self-healing. His ministry represented a new wave in mainstream American faith by holding out hope for finding both personal salvation and solving personal problems. “It takes guts to get out of the ruts,” he admitted, but it’s worth the work because you can make your dreams come true, impossible as it may seem. “Failure doesn’t mean you are a failure,” he explained. “It just means you haven’t succeeded yet.”

Schuller knew what it meant when he said, “Today’s accomplishments were yesterday’s impossibilities.” When he started his Orange County ministry in 1955, he took out ads proclaiming a new way to attend church: “Come as you are in the family car.” One Sunday morning in March, a few dozen cars showed up at a drive-in movie theater off a highway. Schuller strode upon the snack bar’s tar-paper roof, microphone in hand, while his wife, Arvella, played an organ the couple had towed behind their station wagon. Worshippers listened on drive-in speakers, clamped to their windows, as the young preacher urged them to believe anything is possible with God.

The collection that week totaled $83.75, an inauspicious start. But by 1961, the church had a brick-and-mortar home, and Schuller began broadcasting his *Hour of Power* television show in 1970. In 1980, he built the glass-and-steel Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove to house his booming TV ministry, which was broadcast live each week from the 2,800-seat sanctuary. At its peak in the 1990s, the program had 20 million viewers in about 180 countries.

Schuller’s popularity rested on his amiable public manner, ability to think big, and unique approach to faith, which blended pop psychology and the Gospel. Unlike other televangelists, his message lacked fire-and-brimstone condemnations. Instead he taught that belief in Christ — along with positive thinking—gave you the power to “turn your scars into stars.”
SEPTEMBER 17

Edgar Wayburn

*Medicine is concerned with the short-term survival of the human species, conservation with the long-term survival of the human and other species as well. We are all related.*

One day in the late 1940s, a doctor named Edgar Wayburn gazed across San Francisco Bay at the Marin Headlands and Mount Tamalpais, two of his favorite places to hike. “It seemed incredible to me,” he recalled, “that there were no cities or suburbs built on those Marin Hills, so close to San Francisco. I wondered how long that miracle would last.” Green spaces like that were under siege in the postwar era by suburban sprawl. But the Marin Headlands are still there because Wayburn devoted his life to preserving such natural wonders, a pursuit that led him to serve five terms as president of the Sierra Club and honorary president until his death.

Over the years, Wayburn saved more wilderness than any person before him. He led a campaign that expanded Mount Tamalpais State Park from 870 acres in 1948 to 6,300 acres by 1972. He went on to establish and enlarge Redwood National Park and Point Reyes National Seashore, as well as start the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. And working with his wife, Peggy, he won passage of a 1980 law preserving millions of acres of parklands in Alaska. Along the way, he helped transform the Sierra Club from a 3,000-member outing and skiing club into an environmental powerhouse with over two million members.

Even after he’d achieved so much, Wayburn remained the consummate volunteer activist. As a full-time physician, he devoted nights, weekends, and vacations to his mission. What inspired him was the conviction that “we should pass on to future generations the opportunity to enjoy these places and not have them transformed into ordinary places.”

He had seen how special Alaska was when he and Peggy took a plane trip there in the 1960s. As they flew over the Alatna River, “the clouds cleared,” he said, “so we could see the startling color of the blue-green river. This was one of the things that got us started trying to protect it.” Another was the belief that nature was an essential part of us all. “In destroying wilderness,” he explained, “we deny ourselves the full extent of what it means to be alive.”
SEPTEMBER 18

Ben Carson

*Think big. Remember the key to happiness and success lies in service to others.*

Dr. Ben Carson is known for his gifted hands. They helped him gain world fame in 1987 when he led the first successful operation to separate Siamese twins attached at the back of the head. He has since performed similar operations on other sets of twins and become a star in his field. His specialty is hemispherectomies — operations in which half of the brain is removed to manage seizures. To his colleagues’ amazement, most of his patients have gone on to regain their speech and live productive lives.

His achievements are all the more amazing when you consider that he began life as a violent, inner-city youth. Faith became his strongest instrument the day he tried to shove a knife in a friend’s stomach. Shocked by what he had done, he locked himself in the school bathroom. “I prayed,” he remembers. “I picked up my Bible and read all the verses in Proverbs that dealt with anger. When I came out three hours later I had a different view of the world.” This new outlook allowed him to graduate medical school and at just 33 to become director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins, a position he held until retiring in 2013.

In nearly 40 years as a surgeon, he has performed medical miracles, but he doesn’t just want to heal bodies. He’s also trying to build the future as a civic leader and philanthropist. “To me giving means using the gifts and talents that God has given you to elevate other people, mentally, physically and spiritually,” he says. So he founded a medical endowment fund, Angels of the OR, to pay the medical expenses of needy families that are not covered by insurance, and established the Carson Scholars Fund to honor students for outstanding academic and humanitarian achievements.

It’s one of the ways he has inspired young people to develop “a can-do — as opposed to a what can you do for me? — attitude.” Another has been through his autobiography, *Gifted Hands*, and the speeches he makes to students nationwide. “Think big,” he tells them. “Remember the key to happiness and success lies in service to others.”
SEPTEMBER 19

Joan Lunden

A heart filled with anger has no room for love.

In 2014, Joan Lunden heard the words that changed her life: “You have cancer.” Nine months later, the veteran Good Morning America host had finished treatment and undertaken a new mission in life. “You go in one person, and you do really come out another,” she says as she recalls her battle with an aggressive form of breast cancer, which included 16 rounds of chemotherapy followed by a lumpectomy and six weeks of radiation. Her ordeal is public knowledge because the mom of seven has shared every step of her fight with cancer in hopes of helping other women suffering from the disease. Despite initially wanting to keep her diagnosis a secret, she made the brave decision to announce the news on TV and appear on the cover of PEOPLE without her wig.

Lunden admits that she tortured herself about posing without her hair. “I didn’t run around with my wig off because I didn’t want to worry my kids,” she explains. “I didn’t know if I’d have the guts to stand up in front of that camera and take my wig off.” But once the camera started clicking, she says she found a new purpose. “The focus went from fighting for my life to fighting for everyone’s life. It lights a fire in you that says, ‘You can go out there and make a really big difference.’”

This insight has led her to crisscross the country, speaking at breast cancer events, lobbying Congress for better preventive measures, and announcing ALIVE with Joan Lunden, an online TV network that features interviews with breast cancer doctors, survivor stories, community video chats, and more. All the travel is hard since Lunden often finds herself “insanely exhausted” while she’s on the road. But she overcomes it because her own experience has shown her “how important the power of support is to a patient.”

She hears from women all the time who don’t have a close circle of support and her heart goes out to them. Meeting them has taken her from being a survivor to an educator and advocate, who says. “This is my mission now: to try to save lives.”
SEPTEMBER 20

Upton Sinclair

*Remember that every human being is a unique phenomenon, and worth developing.*

Novelist Upton Sinclair shocked readers in 1906 with a hellish vision of Chicago’s meatpacking industry. Like a Dante of the stockyards, Sinclair showed them an inferno of blood and bone, arctic chill, and tropic heat. His bestseller, *The Jungle*, sparked public concern over food safety and showed the horrific plight of East European workers in meat plants.

“This is no fairy tale and no joke,” Sinclair wrote, describing the ingredients that make their way into sausage: diseased animals, floor sweepings, dead rats, and things “in comparison with which a poisoned rat was a tidbit.” As for the workers, “it was to be counted as a wonder that there were not more men slaughtered than cattle.” Some suffered so many knife wounds that they could not use their thumbs. Others had their fingers slowly burned off. A few even fell into vats of lard and were “overlooked for days, till all but the bones of them had gone out to the world as Durham’s Pure Leaf Lard!”

Who’d want to eat this muck? Not the U.S. public, which flooded Theodore Roosevelt with letters and led him to send investigators to Chicago. Their report reinforced the claims Sinclair had made in *The Jungle*. In 1906, Congress passed the Pure Food and Drug Act, which industry had long blocked. The new law made it a federal crime to sell adulterated food or drugs and set up a system of federal inspections.

After passage of the law, Sinclair said, “I aimed at the public’s heart and by accident I hit it in the stomach.” Though important, the law was not the response Sinclair hoped for. A fervent socialist, he dedicated *The Jungle* “To the Workingmen of America” and the defeat of a system that abused them. “The source and fountainhead of genuine reform is an enlightened public opinion,” he claimed. “If men in the course of their dealings have made a hell on earth, it has been because they first had a hell in their hearts; and if they are to make a paradise on earth, they first have to change their hearts, and then no economic laws will stand in their way.”
SEPTEMBER 21

Ewing Kauffman

*Share rewards with those who make them possible, and give back to society.*

Ewing Kauffman had a prescription for success. It allowed him to go from farm boy to entrepreneur and Kansas City civic leader. Known for his generous donations to human services and education, Kauffman went on to discover a new field for philanthropy: the promotion of entrepreneurship. Today the Ewing Kauffman Foundation is the largest foundation focused on fostering economic growth by supporting entrepreneurs.

What does it take to succeed in business? — Ethics, energy, and salesmanship. Ewing showed he had all three as a boy when he went door to door selling magazines and eggs to help his family in making ends meet. When he was 11, a year of forced bed rest turned him into a lifelong speed reader, a skill that would come in handy as he worked his way through junior college. After serving in the Navy during World War II, he found a job in sales at the pharmaceutical firm, Lincoln Laboratories. In 1950, he took what he had learned and started Marion Laboratories in his basement.

The first year was tough, but the company grew rapidly as Kauffman hired mavericks and encouraged them to bring in innovations that revolutionized the field. His success also reflected his practice of treating his employees well by offering a profit-sharing plan, education benefits, and stock options. In 1983, when Marion went public, hundreds of employees became millionaires and Kauffman began engaging in serious giving.

He brought the same entrepreneurial spirit to building the Ewing Kauffman Foundation as he had to building his business. He launched STAR, a drug abuse prevention program in Kansas City schools, and Project Choice, which offered scholarships to get students to finish high school. When these programs were well established, he focused on advancing entrepreneurship to help dreamers become the next generation of Ewing Kauffmans. Hopefully, they’ll also share his commitment to giving and sharing. “I think the greatest satisfaction I have had,” he said, “is helping others, doing something that either inspires them or aids them to develop themselves in their future lives, so they’ll not only be a better person, but be a better productive citizen of the United States.”
SEPTEMBER 22

Cecil Williams

*Everyone can come here, everybody is our kind. That’s the church it seems to me.*

What happens when you combine a pastor with a political activist? You get Cecil Williams, a San Francisco minister who thinks “the true church is on the edge of life where the moans and groans are.” The desire to help others propelled him into the ministry. But once on the pulpit, he came to believe organized religion had lost touch with those who needed it most. So out went many of the rituals. In came a new church founded on a rock of relevance and diversity. Williams replaced the choir with a jazz ensemble. He took down the cross to attract people of all races and creeds. And he urged them to seek salvation by serving others.

Knowing justice and peace were signposts on the road to righteousness, he held anti-war rallies and marched with Martin Luther King, Jr. His pulpit was open to all viewpoints — ranging from the mainstream to the Black Panthers — and his heart was open to all those who had fallen. In the sixties, he decided to help them by establishing a food program that’s grown into a charitable powerhouse with 87 programs and 10,000 volunteers. The Glide Foundation serves over 2,000 meals a day, gives basic health care, provides day care for low-income moms, and trains unemployed adults to use computers. Additional programs address HIV, domestic violence, and substance abuse, all problems that Williams approaches with a message of “unconditional love and acceptance.”

This network of services embodies Williams’ goal to heal the whole person, and his dream is at work at the Cecil Williams Glide Community House, a $12 million housing project that provides a home for some of the city’s poorest residents. The house exists thanks to Williams’ years of fundraising and a passion for the poor that equals his commitment to change.

Philanthropist and firebrand, these two sides of the good reverend lead many to call him a radical. And he admits it’s an image he likes: “I think that to be radical is to put your life on the line for the poor, to be able to say, ‘I stand with the poor, and that’s my emphasis, that’s my agenda.’”
SEPTEMBER 23

Frank E. Moss

Whether for the individual or for the nation, self is best served by transcending self.

In 1958, Frank Moss was running for the Senate in Utah when he got an offer that seemed hard to refuse. An emissary of an oil company came from Washington, DC, to offer him $10,000 for his campaign. Moss was thrilled as he envisioned all the radio and TV time he could buy. But then he was told that there was one small condition if he was to get this campaign donation. He would have to sign a letter saying he had studied the 27 ½ per cent oil depletion allowance — giving Big Oil a tremendous tax break — and concluded that it should be sustained. Moss refused to be bought and didn’t get the dough. But he was still elected to the Senate, where he was known for his sense of compassion and conscience.

His legislative achievements were vast as he strived to serve the nation. He sponsored legislation to foster nuclear disarmament and world peace. He was a defender of the environment and led the fight against pollution. He was a conservationist whose legislation created more national parks than anyone else. He was also a champion of the consumer and authored most of the consumer rights laws enacted in the last half of the 20th century.

He was an equally fierce advocate for the nation’s most vulnerable citizens, especially seniors. He spearheaded investigations into care of the aged in nursing and retirement homes and into physicians’ abuses of the Medicaid program. He fought to protect the nation’s health and won approval of a law barring cigarette advertising on TV. His legislation created the Office of Inspector General in the Department of Health and Human Services, and he gave the space program renewed vigor as chairman of the Senate Committee on Aeronautics and Space.

He still had energy left to keep serving the nation after retiring from the Senate. He was president of the U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress, chairman of the Foundation for Hospice & Home Care, and a co-founder of the Caring Institute dedicated to the promotion of caring, integrity, and public service. They were the ideals Moss stood for all his life.
SEPTEMBER 24

Noreena Hertz

I really believe in a globalist agenda, but globalization isn’t just allowing companies to trade freely all over the world. It’s about what types of rights and responsibilities come with that.

“I’ve wanted to do something to help nurses ever since I was young,” says UK economist Noreena Hertz. “When I was a teenager, my mum was really sick and the nurses were fantastic. They were kind and supportive, not only to my mum but to me and my sister. After having that first-hand experience, you realize how much they do and they get a really rough ride.” They’re not alone in a world where multinationals usurp the role of government, Hertz contended in The Silent Takeover.

Her 2001 bestseller anticipated that unregulated markets and massive financial institutions would have global repercussions. Companies would pay a steep price, she warned, if they continued to ignore social needs. “We must embrace a new agenda based on inclusiveness; a commitment to reconnecting the social and the economic; a rethinking of the latter to a plausible redistributive system; and a determination to ensure that everyone has access to justice. All these things are within our reach.”

The solution, Hertz suggested, was for corporations to right some of the evils that capitalism had imposed. She advised businesses to take the lead in sustainability and told consumers they should let companies know they’d boycott a product associated with destroying the environment or exploiting workers, an ideal of ethical capitalism that earned jeers at the time.

Now it’s mainstream and Hertz is a player on the world stage, where she hobnobs with Bill Clinton, George Soros, and Jeffry Sachs. Bono counts her as a pal and says her writings inspired him to develop RED, an innovative commercial model to raise money for AIDS victims in Africa.

Hertz has also taken steps to right social wrongs by launching May Day for Nurses, which asks soccer stars to donate one day’s pay to a fund for the UK’s poorest nurses. Her campaign, which raised nearly two million dollars, went to the heart of a debate about how we value work, Hertz pointed out. “Do we really want to live in a society in which those who have gambled with our livelihoods end up driving Porsches, while those who save our lives can’t afford to get to work?”
Christopher Reeve

A hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles.

Christopher Reeve portrayed a hero in the “Superman” films and embodied one as an advocate for the disabled. Tall, intelligent, athletic, and handsome, Reeve was a natural for the super hero who fought for truth, justice, and the American way. As a star of the silver screen, he drew crowds to the theaters. But he made an even greater social impact after being thrown from his horse and damaging his spinal column.

Doctors told him he would be a paraplegic till his death, but Reeve believed we should “never accept ultimatum, conventional wisdom, or absolutes.” As an actor, he refused to be typecast and managed to “escape the cape” in other films and plays. Following the accident, he turned his personal tragedy into public service with his family’s loving support.

“Your body is not who you are,” he said as he attacked his own physical therapy. “The mind and spirit transcend the body,” he maintained through a grueling regimen to awaken dormant neurological pathways. By using electric shocks to stir his nervous system and exercising to exhaustion, he slowly began to recapture use of his body.

As a former star, Reeve could afford round-the-clock nursing at home, but he knew everyone didn’t have his means. So he created a foundation to find treatments for spinal cord injuries and other neurological disorders, urged Congress to support funding for stem cell research, and lobbied to raise lifetime caps on health insurance that confine severely disabled patients to nursing homes. All people, he asserted, have the right to care in the least restrictive environment possible — the home.

It certainly worked for Reeve, who astounded his physicians by regaining sensation in over 70 percent of his body and breathing without his ventilator for hours at a time. By showing how intense physical exercise can help restore the brain and spinal cord, Reeve taught the words hope and cure to policymakers, scientists, and disabled. “What I do is based on powers we all have inside us,” he explained, “the ability to love, to carry on, to make the best of what we have — and you don’t have to be a ‘Superman’ to do it.”
SEPTEMBER 26

T.S. Eliot

The desert is not remote in southern tropics/ The desert is squeezed in the tube train next to you/ The desert is in the heart of your brother.

“This is the way the world ends/This is the way the world ends/This is the way the world ends/Not with a bang but a whimper.” The bang of battle was over in 1925 when T. S. Eliot wrote these lines. But a civilization was indeed dead. By then the First World War had wiped out a generation of young men and robbed the West of its spiritual core. All that remained, Elliot mourned, was an urban society that lacked beliefs beyond those in money and accumulation.

How to express the anguish of living in an era without order, meaning, or beauty? The modern world demanded a modern language, Eliot thought. He set out to take the stuff of everyday life — feelings, phrases, images — and merge them into a new form of poetic speech.

The result was groundbreaking verse that spoke for a lost generation of “hollow men.” It described life in the “unreal city” and captured the inner void of urban dwellers. “The desert is not remote in southern tropics,” he explained. “The desert is squeezed in the tube train next to you/The desert is in the heart of your brother.”

The quintessential modern man speaks to us in “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock.” Elliot’s 1917 poem centers on a balding, middle-aged man whose existence is a series of “decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse.” His inability to seize chances or take risks dooms him to a stagnant life. “Do I dare to eat a peach?” he wonders. “Shall I part my hair behind?” And will I ever find love? Probably not, he admits. “I have heard the mermaids singing each to each/I do not think that they will sing to me.”

So was there hope for modern man? No, Elliot thought, as communism and fascism took hold. In the 1930s, he rejected modern life by converting to Christianity and becoming a defender of tradition. Only a Christian system, he claimed would keep society free by making a place for those “values which I maintain or perish, the belief for instance in holy living and holy dying, in sanctity, chastity, humility, and charity.”
SEPTEMBER 27

Charles Percy

In our democracy we must have a partnership of labor, of business, and of government.

A liberal Republican was once a star. Former Senator Charles H. Percy, a successful Chicago businessman, described himself as “a conservative on money issues but a liberal on people issues.” That commitment to moderate values often put the former Foreign Relations Committee chairman at odds with conservatives in the Republican party, but that didn’t deter him in the nearly 20 years that he served Illinois in the Senate. His insistence on a balanced perspective in public life showed it was possible and preferable to live in a world without partisan bias.

His differences with conservative Republicans became clear in 1967 shortly after he arrived in Washington, DC. He staked out dovish positions on the Vietnam War, voted against the draft, and urged colleagues to think about the “diplomatic, psychological, and economic” effect of their votes on military expenditures. Public money, he believed, was better used to improve life for America’s people. So he won approval of a program in which ownership of rehabilitated slum property could be passed to those who invested “sweat equity.” He voted to use highway trust funds for mass transit, increase federal aid to education, and expand the availability of food stamps. He voted for consumer-protection measures, increases in Social Security, and equal opportunity in housing, education, employment, and voting. He supported national health insurance since he believed health care was a basic right of all Americans.

This conviction led him to play a strong role on the Senate Aging Committee, where he called attention to substandard medical care for seniors. Together with Senator Frank Moss, he worked to expose fraud and abuse in the Medicare and Medicaid programs, end age discrimination in employment, and expand housing for the aged — efforts that culminated in his 1974 book, Growing Old in the Country of the Young. Whatever our age, we all have something to contribute, he explained. “Once we recognize the fact that every individual is a treasury of hidden and unsuspected qualities, our lives become richer, our judgment better, and our world more right. It is not love that is blind; it is only the unnoticing eye that cannot see the real qualities of people.”
SEPTEMBER 28

Confucius

What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others.

“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” is a basic precept nearly every schoolchild learns. What they don’t know is that the golden rule came out of China with Confucius more than 2,500 years ago. And those who follow his philosophy today know it extends way beyond the golden rule. His principles of fair government influenced writers and thinkers who thousands of years later on would develop the ideals of democratic government. Among the values he espoused were loyalty, wisdom, benevolence, simplicity, and respect for others in both the personal and public spheres. These are mainstream ideas today, but they were radical during the feudal times when Confucius lived.

In the sixth century BC, competing Chinese states challenged the authority of the Chou Empire, which had held sway for over 500 years. It was an era of war, corruption, and moral decline, in which Confucius lacked the connections to realize his goal of becoming a government bureaucrat since he had grown up poor. Still, he was gifted scholar, so he offered to teach students of every social class.

He used the opportunity to reinforce the values of compassion and tradition. His teachings were based largely on the principle of “loving others” while exercising self-discipline, a rule that was very important for rulers since Confucius thought they needed to control themselves in order to remain humble. By treating their subjects kindly, he explained, rulers could serve as models of virtue and inspire people to follow the law.

Confucius put this vision of moral leadership to work in his late 40s when he finally earned a government post in the state of Lu. But his reforms threatened other officials, and he left Lu to find another feudal state where he could serve. After 13 years of wandering, he returned home to his books and died in his seventies, convinced he was a failure. Yet he left behind 72 disciples who gathered his teachings in a book called The Analects and continued to spread his words, including this golden piece of advice: “Do not impose on others what you do not wish for yourself.”
SEPTEMBER 29

Lech Walesa

*Everyone wants a voice in human freedom. There’s a fire burning inside all of us.*

Lech Walesa made history when he jumped over a fence. In 1980, he was working as an electrician at the Gdansk, Poland shipyard when protests broke out over an increase in the price of food. Though he had previously been fired over union agitation, he climbed the shipyard fence and joined thousands of workers inside. He was elected leader of the strike committee and three days later the authorities met the workers’ demands. Their triumph gave rise to strikes across communist Poland as workers demanded that the government allow the free formation of trade unions and recognize the right to strike. Once the government conceded to these demands, millions of Polish workers and farmers joined to form Solidarity with Walesa as its chair. Solidarity was the first independent trade union in the communist countries and it grew into a force for change that could not be denied by threats of prison or the arms of the state.

Walesa faced both in December 1981 when the government, fearing Soviet armed intervention, imposed martial law. It suspended Solidarity, arresting its leaders and interning Walesa. When he was released a year later, he remained under surveillance but managed to maintain contact with Solidarity leaders in the underground. In 1983, the announcement of his Nobel Prize raised his comrades’ spirits, and as economic conditions declined through the ‘80s, the government was forced to negotiate with Walesa and his colleagues. The result was parliamentary elections that led to Poland’s first non-communist government.

In 1990, Walesa became the country’s first democratically elected president. Though his years in office witnessed economic travails, he deserves credit for several major achievements: the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Poland, a substantial reduction of foreign debt, and commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the 1944 Warsaw uprising.

After five years in office, he founded the Lech Walesa Institute, dedicated to supporting independence, ethics, and state decentralization. As he travels the world, he continues his mission to build solidarity through tolerance, cooperation, and sacrifice. “The thing that lies at the foundation of positive change, the way I see it,” he says, “is service to a fellow human being.”
SEPTMBER 30

Elie Wiesel

*Human suffering anywhere concerns men and women everywhere.*

“Indifference can be tempting — more than that seductive,” Elie Wiesel told an audience at the White House in 1999. “It is so much easier to look away from victims,” he said, “to avoid such rude interruptions to our work, our dreams, and our hopes.” By choosing to ignore the pain and despair of another, we can save ourselves much trouble and anguish, he explained. “Indifference reduces the other to an abstraction.

As a Jew and Holocaust survivor, Wiesel understood indifference and had seen it unleash the hidden demons of human nature. It was indifference, he reminded us, which led the world to stand idly by as the Nazis slaughtered six million people. It was indifference that explained the five years he spent as a teen in the death camps where he witnessed his father’s painful demise in a cold, filthy bunker. His best-seller *Night* recounts his time in the camps and the horrors that made him lose faith that we can count on God to check injustice and hate. We must do it ourselves because “peace is not God’s gift to his creatures. It is our gift to each other.”

In the face of a silent, inscrutable God, Wiesel devoted himself to preserving the lessons of the Holocaust and traveling the globe to speak out for human rights. Everywhere he went, he pleaded with audiences not to isolate themselves in the face of suffering, whether it involves an AIDS victim in Africa or a mass killing in Darfur. By speaking out for all victims, Wiesel did what the world failed to do for the Jews.

The humanitarian work that drove him around the globe was just part of Wiesel’s mission to remind the world of its moral duty to the oppressed. He was also a professor at Boston University, where he taught students to respect all human beings. He continued this lesson in 57 books and at the Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity, devoted to saving the ties that bind us. In an increasingly intertwined world, he knew that “our lives no longer belong to us alone; they belong to all those who need us desperately.”
OCTOBER
JIMMY CARTER

America did not invent human rights. In a very real sense, it is the other way around. Human rights invented America.

“War may sometimes be a necessary evil,” Jimmy Carter admits. “But no matter how necessary, it is always an evil, never a good. We will not learn to live together in peace by killing each other’s children,” he warned when he accepted the Nobel Prize in 2002. He also tried to promote peace as president of the United States. His achievements in office included the signing of the historic Camp David Agreements, the Panama Canal Treaties, and the establishment of diplomatic relations with China — all geared to defending human rights worldwide. “Human rights is the soul of our foreign policy,” he said, “because human rights is the very soul of our sense of nationhood.”

He kept his belief in American values in 1980 after failing to win a second term in the White House, but he made a dazzling comeback by becoming an admired humanitarian and statesman. Though he no longer held office, he believed “every American has a right and duty to help shape the future course of the United States,” so he founded the Jimmy Carter Center to address vital world issues through nonpartisan study and consultation. The center has raised money to carry out a host of projects, including fighting river blindness in Uganda, helping small farmers triple corn yields in Ghana and Zambia, and pressing for democracy and peace in the Middle East and Latin America.

Besides promoting global justice, Carter leads the Jimmy Carter Work Project for Habitat for Humanity International, which has built over 100,000 houses. Each year, he and his wife, Rosalyn, give a week of their time to build homes and raise awareness of the need for affordable housing. The project is held in a different location each year, but one thing remains the same. “The people who will live in the houses work side by side with the volunteers, so they feel very much that they are on an equal level,” Carter explains. By bringing together rich and poor, helpers and the helped, Carter fulfills his vision of our country as “a beautiful mosaic” of “different people, different beliefs, different hopes, different dreams,” where all live together in peace.
OCTOBER 2

Mahatma Gandhi

*The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.*

On October 11, 1906, a young Indian barrister addressed 3,000 of his countrymen at the Empire Theatre in Johannesburg. In his speech, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi asked them to take an oath to resist white colonial rule without violence. It was the birth of the modern nonviolent resistance movement, and it hasn’t been forgotten since Gandhi’s sayings are all over India. The sunshades across the rear windows of cars proclaim “There is no way to peace; peace is the way.” Young Indians wander around in T-shirts that say “Be the change you want to see in the world.” Like millions worldwide, they know him as a “mahatma,” meaning “great soul.”

Gandhi encountered another great soul when he left India at 19 to study law in London, where he read Henry David Thoreau’s “Civil Disobedience.” It guided him when he went to South Africa, where he agitated for Indian rights and developed his politics of peaceful protests. In 1906, he announced he would go to jail before obeying an anti-Asian law and thousands joined him in a civil disobedience campaign.

He expanded on this approach when he returned to India in 1914 and began crusading for an end to British rule. After becoming leader of the Indian National Congress, he launched a campaign urging Indians to boycott British courts and spin their own fabrics to replace British goods. As a result, he was jailed for two years, but undeterred he led a 200-mile march to the sea to collect salt in defiance of the government monopoly. Then at the beginning of World War II, he demanded independence as India’s price for helping Britain during the war.

In 1947, India did win independence, but Gandhi’s triumph was mixed with disappointment over the division of the country into India and Pakistan. His efforts to stop Hindu-Muslim conflict in Bengal led to his assassination by a Hindu fanatic who felt Gandhi had betrayed the Hindu cause. But his ideas lived on as they inspired Martin Luther King, Jr. and Nelson Mandela in their own nonviolent protests. Their successes proved Gandhi was right when he said, “In a gentle way, you can shake the world.”
OCTOBER 3

Carl von Ossietzky

*The hellish instruments of war must be smoked out while there is still peace.*

Carl von Ossietzky was in prison when he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Why did the Nobel Committee recognize a man who was reviled by his countrymen and convicted of treason? It was because he sounded a clarion call about the rise of Nazism and the resurgence of German militarism. Nothing contributed more to world peace at this dangerous time than his wake-up call to leaders in Whitehall and Washington, who dismissed the dangers of “Herr Hitler.”

The Nazis began their rise to power during the Weimar Republic when life was a cabaret for many people — though not for Ossietzky. A committed pacifist, he helped found the Nie Wieder Krieg, or No More War, organization and in 1922 became editor of *Die Weltbühne*, a liberal political weekly. In 1927, he began publishing a series of articles unmasking the German army’s secret preparations for rearmament. Accused of treason in November 1931, he was sentenced to 18 months in prison. Many dissidents in his position fled, but Ossietzky embraced his prison sentence as an act of protest. “Deprived of freedom for a year and a half? That’s not so bad,” he said, “since freedom won’t be around in Germany much longer. Bit by bit, the line between prisoners and non-prisoners is fading away.”

That line was fainter in January 1933 when Hitler became chancellor of Germany. By then Ossietzky had resumed his attacks on the Nazis and in February 1933, he was sent to Esterwegen-Papenburg concentration camp. After enduring three years of incarceration and torture, he was battling tuberculosis in a prison hospital under the Gestapo’s watch. While there he was visited by Carl Jacob Burckhardt, a Swedish diplomat who reported his encounter with a “trembling, deadly pale, broken creature who seemed to be without feeling, one eye swollen over, and his teeth bashed in.”

He was also a hero, as the Nobel Committee acknowledged in 1935. Ossietzky was warned to decline the honor but ignored concerns for his safety and accepted the award. When explaining all the sacrifices he’d made, he said, “We cannot look to the conscience of the world when our own conscience is asleep.”
OCTOBER 4

Alvin Toffler

Our moral responsibility is not to stop the future, but to shape it — to channel our destiny in humane directions and to ease the trauma of transition.

In 1970, Future Shock made its author, Alvin Toffler, a household name and single-handedly invented futurism. The Third Wave followed a decade later and Powershift, another dispatch from the future, came a decade after that. The goal of Toffler’s predictions was to help us deal with the side effects and potential hazards of the post-industrial age. “Our modern technologies,” he explained, “have changed the degree of sophistication beyond our wildest dreams. But this technology has exacted a pretty heavy price. We live in an age of anxiety and time of stress. And with all our sophistication, we are in fact the victims of our own technological strengths — we are the victims of shock … a future shock.”

And it’s shocking how prescient Toffler was when he wrote these words. The changes he predicted included the “electronic frontier” of the Internet, Prozac, YouTube, cloning, home-schooling, the self-induced paralysis of too many choices, instant celebrities “swiftly fabricated and ruthlessly destroyed,” and the end of blue-collar, “second-wave” manufacturing to be replaced by a “third wave” of knowledge workers.

Confusing as these changes were, Toffler had learned first-hand after college that they promised a better way of life. “My wife and I,” he said, “unlike many intellectuals, spent five years working on assembly lines. We came to fully understand the criticisms of the industrial age, in which you are an appendage of a machine that sets the pace.” And Toffler didn’t forget the results. “I helped lift a 65-year-old woman out of a bloody machine that had just torn four fingers off her hand, and I still hear her cries — ’Jesus and Mary, I won’t be able to work again!’”

Experiences like this led Toffler to have hope as he watched the death of the industrial age. And disorienting as technological change might be, one thing will never change. “Society needs people who take care of the elderly and who know how to be compassionate and honest,” Toffler explained. “Society needs people who work in hospitals. Society needs all kinds of skills that are not just cognitive; they’re emotional, they’re affectional. You can’t run the society on data and computers alone.”
OCTOBER 5

Stetson Kennedy

The struggle for human rights is a continuum with no beginning and no end.

At one time, Stetson Kennedy was the most hated man in America. He was also a hero. The courageous writer and activist for racial justice is best known for infiltrating the Ku Klux Klan in the 1940s. He took the risk because he was denied the chance to fight in World War II. “All my classmates were overseas fighting Nazism, which is a form of racism,” he once recalled, “and I had a back injury and was not with them. But in our own back yard, we had our own racist terrorist, the Ku Klux Klan.”

He decided “to do a number on them” by impersonating an encyclopedia salesman and joined a “Klavern,” where he swore to “uphold the principles of White Supremacy and the purity of White Womanhood.” Then he funneled information on Klan rituals and whatever violence they were planning to the police, Anti-Defamation League, and Washington Post. He gave Klan passwords to writers of the Superman radio show, who used them in a story line in which the Man of Steel battles the hateful forces of the Grand Dragon.

But his words fell on deaf ears in 1946 when he wore his white robe and hood to crash a meeting of the House Un-American Activities Committee. They had him thrown out of the Capitol when he asked them to investigate the Klan. “After all,” one Mississippi congressman said, “the KKK is an old American institution.” And more people knew about it after Kennedy published two books, which inspired Grand Dragon Sam Green to offer a reward for his murder.

Kennedy also put his life at risk by infiltrating the Columbians, a neo-Nazi group. And in 1947 he finally had a chance to confront the enemy of his youth when he stood in a courtroom surrounded by a bunch of Columbians he knew. “Would you let your daughter marry a Negro?” demanded one. “I regard it as an individual right for anyone to marry whoever he pleases,” Kennedy replied. “Would you entertain a nigger in your home?” another asked. And Kennedy’s reply was yes. “I choose my friends on the basis of character and not complexion.”
OCTOBER 6

Paul Popham

*It may be that an equal measure of fear and hope has brought us together, but the great thing is we are together.*

In 2014, HBO’s *The Normal Heart* broke people’s hearts as it portrayed the rise of AIDS during the 1980s in New York. Based on the autobiographical play by Larry Kramer, it offered an unflinching look at the physical effects of the disease, as well as the government’s lack of response to the growing epidemic. In the movie’s most harrowing scene, Bruce Niles, president of the Gay Men’s Health Crisis, tells the story of his boyfriend, Albert’s, death. Since Albert wanted to visit his mother in Arizona one last time, Bruce and Albert made the flight. But Albert never saw her because he became sick on the plane and died before they even reached a hospital. Then none of the hospital staff wanted to handle Albert’s body, so an orderly put him in a garbage bag and gave him to his mother and Bruce in the back of the hospital — where the rest of the trash was taken out.

This callous indifference led Paul Popham, the inspiration for Bruce, to fight back. Yet his history was unlike that of the typical gay activist. After growing up in Idaho and attending Portland State College, he fought in Vietnam, where he earned a Bronze Star for valor. When he retired in 1969, he became a Special Forces major in the Army Reserve and worked as a banker on Wall Street for the Irving Trust Company, leaving as vice president in 1980. Then he joined McGraw Hill as the general manager of a division.

He didn’t take an active political role until 1981, when he read a newspaper article about the disease that became known as AIDS. At that point, he realized “people were dying and nobody cared. Suddenly silence was a luxury I couldn’t afford.” So he joined Kramer in founding the Gay Men’s Health Crisis and served as its president until 1985, when he was diagnosed with AIDS.

By then Kramer had left GMHC because he and Popham had often fought about how the group should take action. But they reconciled as Popham became ill. On his deathbed in 1987, he urged Kramer to “keep fighting, keep fighting, keep fighting.”
OCTOBER 7

Desmond Tutu

Do your little bit of good where you are; it’s those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.

On the eve of the UN Climate Summit in 2014, Desmond Tutu argued that tactics used against firms that did business with South Africa must now be applied to fossil fuels to prevent human suffering. “Never before in history have human beings been called upon to act collectively in defense of the earth,” he said. “As a species, we have endured world wars, epidemics, famine, slavery, apartheid, and many other hideous consequences of religious, class, race, gender, and ideological intolerance. People are extraordinarily resilient,” and Tutu has helped them face challenges as a moral voice to end poverty and human rights abuses.

As general secretary of the South African Council of Churches, he became a spokesman for the rights of black South Africans, and in the 1980s, he drew attention to the inequities of apartheid. He encouraged nonviolent means of protest and urged other countries to apply economic pressure on South Africa. His crusade against apartheid became a truly international force when he received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985. The award also elevated him to the status of a world leader, though he took the acclaim with a grain of salt. “You get the Nobel Prize,” he quipped, “and you say the same thing you said before and now everybody thinks, ‘Oh dear, the oracle has spoken.’”

But he did have a more prominent platform from which to speak when he was appointed the Bishop of Johannesburg in 1985, Archbishop of Cape Town the following year, and then president of the All-Africa Council of Churches, a position he held until 1997. By then apartheid had come to an end and South Africa had elected its first black president, Nelson Mandela, who tasked Tutu with investigating the atrocities committed by both sides in the struggle over apartheid.

Tutu is still looking to right wrongs in retirement. Hence his concern with climate change, a new enemy we can defeat if “we walk together in pursuit of a righteous cause,” he explains. “My success and my failures are bound up in yours. We are made for each other, for interdependence. Together, we can change the world for the better.”
John William Gardner

You have within you more resources of energy than have ever been tapped, more talent than has ever been exploited, more strength than has ever been tested, more to give than you have ever given.

“The cynic says, ‘One man can’t do anything.’ I say, ‘Only one man can do anything,’” John W. Gardner once explained. And he did show the power of one person to have a positive impact on society. In a career that spanned more than half a century, Gardner was a college teacher, a military intelligence officer, a philanthropic foundation executive, an author, a cabinet official, and an advisor to presidents. As President Lyndon B. Johnson’s secretary of health, education, and welfare, he played an important role in enforcing the 1964 Civil Rights Act, launching Medicare, passing the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and creating the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. At one point he supervised programs that affected 195 million Americans.

Many of them came to see him as the embodiment of political reform and volunteerism after 1970 when he founded Common Cause, a citizens’ advocacy group. The organization was his answer to people who felt government was unresponsive and prey to special interests. “Everybody’s organized but the people,” he said. “Now it’s the citizens’ turn.” And under his leadership, the organization’s members fought for many congressional changes like challenging the stranglehold of the seniority system and seeking full disclosure of presidential and congressional campaign contributions. It opposed funds for the war in Vietnam, advocated greater oversight of defense spending and the influence of political action committees, and supported the 18-year-old voting age.

Common Cause proved to be a powerful lobbying force for individual citizens, and so did Independent Sector, the coalition Gardner founded in 1978 after retiring from Common Cause. Now composed of 600 nonprofits, foundations, and corporate philanthropy programs, it provides a force for advancing community work.

Following in Gardner’s steps, the groups make a point of training young people to be leaders who foster positive change. “We all need to work together to seek more effective solutions to the problems facing youth,” he explained. So in the end, the man who once talked about the power of one acknowledged the role all citizens must play in building the future. “It’s a simple, easily forgotten truth,” he said, “that we need one another.”
Aimee Semple McPherson

*With God, I can do all things! But with God and you, and the people who you can interest, by the grace of God, we’re gonna cover the world.*

Aimee Semple McPherson used her fervor and flamboyance to spread a message of faith. As an evangelist who preached the gospel across the world, she turned to the use of radio, the cutting-edge communications tool of her day. But then McPherson was always a woman ahead of her time. She crossed the United States with two young children in an era when women were not permitted to vote. She established an evangelistic ministry and built a large evangelistic center at a time when women were expected to marry, have children, and then leave religion and other important pursuits to men. Her success was God’s gift, as she told the millions who joined her Foursquare Gospel Church.

The sermons she preached to them didn’t threaten fire and brimstone. Instead they showed the face of a loving God with outstretched arms, and McPherson, too, reached out to both wealthy and poor. She evangelized to groups of both blacks and whites in the South at a time when segregation was rampant. She broke down racial barriers everywhere she went and established many Hispanic ministries in Los Angeles. She recognized no lines of gender, race, or class.

But she did recognize injustice and need, so she developed a church organization that could provide for both the spiritual and physical needs of the distressed. She mobilized her congregation and everyone she could reach through radio, telephone, and word of mouth to get involved in substantial amounts of charity and social work. Her Charity and Beneficiary Department collected donations for all types of humanitarian relief around the world. A “brotherhood” found jobs for men released from prison, and a “sisterhood” sewed baby clothes for impoverished mothers. Even unbelievers joined in because they saw her church as the best way to assist their community.

And McPherson proved her mettle during the Great Depression when she opened a commissary that served 1.5 million people. It was open 24 hours a day and staffed by volunteers who filled baskets with food, clothing, and blankets for anyone in need. They had learned from McPherson that “true Christianity is not only to do good but to be good.”
Helen Hayes

*We relish news of our heroes, forgetting that we are extraordinary to somebody, too.*

Helen Hayes was a tiny actress whose portrayals of queens and other regal women helped make her one of America’s best-loved stars. The poise and technique she brought to her craft earned her many triumphs in a long career that spanned over 50 years. Her greatest stage success was the 1935 drama *Victoria Regina* in which she played the long-lived British monarch from girlhood to widowhood, aging visibly from act to act, thanks to the makeup artist’s skill and her own. But beneath the glitter and guises of her profession, she was a warm person who believed in the power of love. “What is important,” she once pointed out, “is that one be capable of love. It is perhaps the only glimpse we have of eternity.”

Her own capacity for love inspired her efforts to advance health care and made her a hero to millions. During World War II, she promoted the nursing profession and helped recruit nurses for the war effort on her radio program, *This is Helen Hayes*. After polio took her daughter’s life in 1949, she served as chair of the National Foundation for Infant Paralysis, which helped bring about the development of the Salk vaccine and a cure for the dreaded disease.

She also reached to the other end of the age spectrum in *The Best Years*, a radio show for seniors, and in the 1982 TV film, *No Place Like Home*. The film contrasted the lives of older Americans who were placed in nursing homes with those who remained at home having their needs met by visiting nurses, therapists, and aides. “Older people deserve choices that let us live out our lives as we wish,” she told the film’s viewers, and “we realize what we might have known from the start. For most of us, there really is no place like home.”

The credit she deserves for turning the tide toward home care and giving seniors the choices they deserve can be summed up in a scene from *Victoria Regina*. In it, a tough-looking man bursts through a police line at the queen’s 90th-birthday celebration and yells, “Go it, old girl. You’ve done well.”
OCTOBER 11

Eleanor Roosevelt

*Nothing we do ever stands by itself. If it is good, it will serve some good purpose in the future. If it is evil, it may haunt us and handicap our efforts in unimagined ways.*

On Dec. 10, 1948, the United Nations General Assembly meeting in Paris adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which remains the most widely recognized statement of the rights to which every person on our planet is entitled. Then something happened that has never happened in the UN before or since. The delegates rose to give a standing ovation to a single one of their members, a shy, elderly lady with a formal demeanor but a very warm smile. Her name was Eleanor Roosevelt.

As FDR’s wife, she dramatically changed the first lady’s role. Not content to stay in the background and handle domestic matters, she showed the world that the first lady was an important part of American politics. She gave press conferences and spoke out for human rights, children’s causes, and women’s issues. She even had her own newspaper column, “My Day,” in which she reached millions of Americans with her views on social and political affairs. Chief among them was the value of serving those in need. “You get more joy out of the giving to others,” she pointed out, “and should put a good deal of thought into the happiness you are able to give.”

Her own thoughtful concern for others helped the country get through the Depression. Rather than simply jump behind New Deal programs, she made suggestions for improvements and pushed to have oversights addressed, such as the plight of unemployed women and youth. Throughout her husband’s presidency, she traveled extensively, visiting relief projects, observing working and living conditions, and providing FDR with her findings. She stood against racial discrimination and flew abroad to visit U.S. troops during World War II.

After the war her husband died, but her sense of mission didn’t, so in 1945, she accepted Harry Truman’s appointment to the U.S. delegation to the UN, where she helped draft the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and addressed the repatriation of displaced people. She became chairman of the Human Rights Commission and during seven years as a delegate, traveled the world investigating social, political, and economic conditions. These endeavors would earn her well-deserved acclaim as “first lady of the world.”
OCTOBER 12

Dick Gregory

Everything we do we should look at in terms of millions of people who can’t afford it.

“I never believed in Santa Claus,” Dick Gregory once said, “because I knew no white dude would come into my neighborhood after dark.” The street where he grew up in St. Louis was run down, and he and his single mom were poor. Still it was a warm, loving household, Gregory recalls. “I never learned hate at home or shame. I had to go to school for that.” Bullying during his early school days became a daily routine for the poor, uncool black kid who lived on the wrong side of the tracks. But his old, ragged clothes belied his brilliant wit. When the kids teased him, he fired back a few lines of “shut—em-up” comedy that left his enemies thinking twice. And he didn’t just crack jokes. As a high school student, Gregory led protests against segregated schools.

And he had the last laugh by the 1960s when he was appearing in important Chicago clubs. Unlike most black comedians of the time, he made race a major part of his act. In one of his routines, a waitress in the South tells him, “We don’t serve colored people here,” to which Gregory responds, “That’s all right, I don’t eat colored people. Bring me a whole fried chicken.” When three members of the Ku Klux Klan say, “Anything you do to that chicken, we’re going to do to you,” he puts down his knife and fork and kisses the chicken.

Everyone laughed, but Gregory had a serious social mission. After making his breakthrough in 1961, he spent much of his time addressing racism and various social issues. He marched with Martin Luther King, Jr. and took up his verbal foil against world hunger, dictatorships, drug abuse, and the Vietnam War. He became emaciated while fasting in protest over 65 times. He even traveled to Iran to fast in an attempt to coax the Ayatollah Khomeini into releasing American embassy hostages. And despite all the injustice he saw, he always knew how to make himself smile. “One of the things I keep learning,” he explained, “is that the secret of being happy is doing things for other people.”
OCTOBER 13

Herblock

_In a choice between right or wrong, I think something better than a middle-of-the-road policy is needed._

Herbert Block showed the might of pen and paper as a _Washington Post_ cartoonist. In a career spanning nine decades, his wit and bite made him a leading journalist of his time and a powerful one-man army enlisted in the cause of civil rights. His cartoons chronicled people and politics, including the atomic bomb, which he dubbed the “atomic bum;” the missile defense system informally called “Star Wars;” and former President Richard Nixon. His woodcut-like drawings were filled with scoundrels on a landscape strewn with broken promises and empty slogans. They made people laugh — and think — as Herblock cut to heart of the follies, foibles, and criminal conduct of world leaders.

The duty of the press is to “use its freedom to protect the rights and liberties of all individuals” he said as he went after the high and mighty. In 1954, he did a drawing of Stalin, who was being accompanied to his grave by the robed figure of death. The caption read, “You were always a great friend of mine, Joseph,” and Stalin wasn’t the only Joe who became the target of Herblock’s rapier-sharp pen. Herblock coined the term “McCarthyism” as he skewered the Communist witch hunt mounted by Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin.

He depicted the senator emerging from a sewer, an idea he also used on Richard Nixon, who featured in more of his cartoons than any other figure, especially as he became mired in the Watergate scandal. But Herblock said he took no pleasure from the fact that the disgraced president was a cartoonist’s dream with his heavy jowls, fleshy wattles, and five o’clock shadow. “I didn’t enjoy it,” he said. “I really wanted him out.”

He had the same attitude toward handguns, cigarettes, drunken drivers, segregationists, and cuts in social services. They remain targets of the Herb Block Foundation, which he launched with $50 million in 2001. Since his death that year, the foundation has defended the freedoms guaranteed all Americans, fought prejudice, and improved conditions for the underprivileged. It also promotes editorial cartooning based on Herblock’s belief that “the press must speak out and if the occasion arises, raise bloody hell.”
You can do more good by being good than any other way.

Legendary basketball coach John Wooden liked to start every practice season with a lesson on how to put on ... socks. He had a reason, but you can imagine the thoughts that raced through the minds of the UCLA team. Superstar recruits, like Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Bill Walton, rolled their eyes when their mighty coach walked onto the court and said, “Men, you will now take off your shoes and socks.” The point was to avoid blisters, and it was just one of many details that caught Wooden’s eye. He knew this caused smirks, but he was convinced you should “think small, work hard, get good” — homely wisdom that brought UCLA to an unrivalled peak of performance. Wooden won 10 national championships, the last in 1975. He won 88 straight games between 1971 and 1974 in a winning streak that led folks to call him a “wizard” who worked magic with teams.

Yet Wooden insisted he was “just a teacher” who helped players be better men based on his Pyramid of Success. Wooden worked on the pyramid for 14 years and discussed it with his teams before each season. Its 15 blocks show values Wooden believed would help people reach their potential. They include friendship, loyalty, cooperation, and enthusiasm. At the top is personal best, and it’s not just about winning, as Wooden knew early on. He was only a boy when his dad taught him a vital lesson: “You should never try to be better than anyone else, you should keep learning from others, and you should always try to be the best you can be.”

Wooden passed it on to his players and then to the world after retiring from coaching. Over 33 years, he brought the Pyramid of Success from the basketball court to the boardroom as he made 20 to 30 speeches a year. He also conveyed his values in winning books about life, layups, leadership and the importance doing small things with love. “When you derive pleasure and pride,” he said, “from perfecting seemingly minor details — and teach those you lead to do the same — big things eventually fall into place.”
OCTOBER 15

John Kenneth Galbraith

In all life one should comfort the afflicted, but verily, also, one should afflict the comfortable, and especially when they are comfortably, contentedly, even happily wrong.

The Affluent Society appeared in 1958, making John Kenneth Galbraith a household name. In his prescient study, the Harvard economist portrayed a consumer culture gone wild, rich in goods but poor in the social services that make communities strong. America, he argued, had become obsessed with overproducing consumer goods. The consequence was to increase the perils of both inflation and recession, create artificial demand for frivolous products, encourage overextension of consumer credit, and emphasize the private sector at the expense of the public one. Our overconsumption also posed a threat to nature, as Galbraith warned nearly a decade before the environmental movement. “Is the added production or the added efficiency in production worth its effect on ambient air, water, and space — the countryside?” His answer was clear as he called for a change in values that would shun the allures of advertising and champion clean air, good housing, and aid for the arts.

He would use these ideas to help define our nation’s political debate. From the 1930s to the 1990s, he influenced both the direction of the Democratic Party and the thinking of its leaders. He worked in the Roosevelt and Truman administrations, wrote speeches for Adlai Stevenson, and served as ambassador to India during the Kennedy administration. After Kennedy died, he advised President Johnson, meeting with him often to talk about what Great Society programs could achieve. After Galbraith wrote the final draft of the president’s speech on the Great Society, Johnson said, “I’m not going to change a word. That’s great.”

The relationship between the two men broke apart as Galbraith opposed the Vietnam War. Yet he continued to work for the greater good by pouring out magazine articles, books, and essays that brought his thoughts to the public. As he approached his 90th year he wrote The Good Society in which he stressed government’s duty to help those in need and lambasted Republicans for trying to roll back the welfare state. “Let there be a coalition of the concerned,” he urged. “The affluent would still be affluent, the comfortable still comfortable, but the poor would be part of the political system.”
OCTOBER 16

Howard Behar

*Do it because it’s right, not because it’s right for your resume.*

What makes a business compassionate? Is it office parties, free coffee and tea, or free parking for the employee of the month? Howard Behar thinks it’s all about hiring people “who want to serve other human beings.” Do that and you will succeed in business and lead a happier life to boot, says Starbucks’ former chairman of the board. And he has summed up the Starbucks philosophy in *It’s Not About the Coffee.* His best-selling book lays out the 10 principles that guided his leadership and success, and not one of them is about the coffee.

Instead, Behar stressed the value of having a cause and putting people over profits. So he gave health insurance to part-time workers and stock options to all workers, despite opposition from investors. “I have seen that values and actions, showing that you care, building trust, holding yourself accountable, knowing who you are and what you stand for — of putting people first — can provide stability and a lifeline on a personal level and for a whole organization or community,” Behar explains. “When the cause is bigger than any individual or than any one little thing in an organization, it draws you to it and this is ours: to become one of the most well-known and respected organizations in the world, known for nurturing the human spirit.”

This goal springs from the belief that “we’re in the people business serving coffee, not the coffee business serving people,” as he wrote with the warmth that helped his book brew up tremendous sales. But it’s not about the profits for Behar because all proceeds from his book go to the Robert Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership and the Caring Unites Partners (CUP) Fund, which helps Starbucks employees in need. Employees in turn are encouraged to join in the company’s Global Service Month and make positive changes in the communities where they live. This is all part of what Behar calls “leading with compassion” whether you’re heading a business or just going about your daily routine. “It’s impossible to lead in business — or in life,” he says, “unless you genuinely care about people. That’s what matters. Period.”
OCTOBER 17

Mae Jemison

*Never limit yourself because of others’ limited imagination; never limit others because of your own limited imagination.*

Mae Jemison, the first black woman astronaut, has always had a dream. As a young girl growing up on Chicago’s South Side, she watched telecasts of the Gemini and Apollo space flights and knew that was her fate. No matter that all the astronauts were male and white and that she was female and black. “I always knew that I’d go into space,” she recalls, and that goal led her to spend many hours reading about astronomy, science and space flight.

She also learned to conquer fear at age 12, when there were civil rights demonstrations near her neighborhood and Chicago’s mayor called in the National Guard. As they marched through the street with rifles, she watched scared, angry, and confused. Then she promised herself she would never feel that frightened again. “I reminded myself,” Jemison recalls, “that I was as much a part of this United States as the Guardsmen.”

This vow empowered her as she attended Stanford and earned a medical degree at Cornell. Then she spent several years as a doctor with the Peace Corps, an experience that prepared her for what lie ahead in space. “Sometimes people ask me how difficult the astronaut program was,” she says, “but being in Sierra Leone, being responsible for the health of 200 people, seven days a week, 24 hours a day, 365 hours a week at age 26 — that prepared me to take on a lot of different challenges.”

NASA agreed, and they accepted her into the space program in 1987. When the space shuttle Endeavor launched into orbit in 1992, Jemison felt she belonged in space. “I realized I would be comfortable anywhere in the universe,” she says. And the sense of empowerment this gave her made her think of a great man who also dared to dream big. But “Martin Luther King, Jr. didn’t just have a dream.” she explains. “He got things done,” as can we all, she says in the talks she gives to empower young people nationwide. “It’s your life,” she tells them. “Go on and do all you can with it and make it the life you want to live.”
OCTOBER 18

Martina Navratilova

Life is about challenges and how we face up to them and the attitude we take into every day life so hopefully we’ll be able to motivate people to do more with their life.

In 2010, Martina Navratilova was forced to abandon a charity climb. Navratilova had to be carried down Mount Kilimanjaro after her lungs filled up with liquid and she could no longer maintain the assault on the 19,340 foot peak. The tennis legend, who’d recently had a bout with breast cancer, reached nearly 14,800 feet when a doctor told her she needed to descend. Quitting was not in her vocabulary, Navratilova said, “but when the doctor said you’re going down, you’re going down.” She was crying as she gave up because the goal of her climb was to raise funds for the Lareus Sport for Good Foundation, which uses sport to effect social change around the globe.

For a long time, sports have been breaking down barriers with color, gender, and social orientation Navratilova explains. And she has been at the forefront of that change. As one of the first openly gay sports figures, she spent much of her career overcoming prejudices, giving up millions of dollars in endorsements and sponsorships as a result of her insistence on living an open, honest life. Since coming out in 1981, she has been a vocal advocate for equal rights off the court and on. “The tennis ball doesn’t know how old I am,” she says. “The ball doesn’t know if I’m a man or a woman or if I come from a communist country or not. Sports have always broken down these barriers.”

Now Navratilova is trying to break down some barriers for high-risk kids by raising funds for Camp Interactive, a sports camp run by the Lareus Foundation. “We want to put them in a safe environment,” she says, “help them if they need it and maybe they will get a scholarship to a school because of the skills they learn.”

The desire to assist kids spurred her arduous climb, and she was philosophical about her failure to reach the top. “I always said the only failure is when you fail to try,” she said. “I guess the other failure is not giving your best effort. I did both: I tried and I gave my best effort.”
OCTOBER 19

Patricia Ireland

*I don’t think you lead by pessimism and cynicism. I think you lead by optimism and enthusiasm and energy.*

Patricia Ireland knows what women want. “For most women equality is a bread and butter issue. Women are still paid less on the job and charged more for everything from dry cleaning to insurance,” Ireland says. And she can identify with the ordeals average women face because she once worked as a flight attendant, a job in which she saw human rights violations in different countries. She went on to challenge gender-based discrepancies in the treatment of insurance coverage for employees’ spouses, and victory came when the U.S. Department of Labor ruled in her favor, inspiring her to begin a new career in 1975. “When I started law school,” she recalls, “I was shocked to learn that our legal system traditionally had the man as the head and master of the family,” a realization that led her to volunteer with the National Organization for Women.

After becoming NOW’s president in 1991, she pursued four priority issues: protecting abortion rights, electing women to political leadership positions, forming coalitions with other civil rights groups, and advocating for international women’s rights. She vowed to stir things up and she did by implementing a number of new programs. Project Stand Up for Women was an international program that protected women who sought abortion services and combatted anti-abortion clinic blockades. Elect Women for a Change provided experienced campaign support for feminist candidates. And the Global Feminist Program gave women a forum around the world to discuss relevant women’s issues. Many women also came together when Ireland organized major events such as the March on Washington for Gay, Lesbian, and Bi Civil Rights in 1993. In addition, she served as legal counsel on several NOW landmark cases before retiring from the organization in 2003.

Her tenure in office led to an increase in women’s power as the presence of women in Congress doubled from 5 to 10 percent and the representation of minority women increased from six seats to 14. Despite the progress these numbers revealed, Ireland urges women to push ahead. “We must hold out a vision, put forth a positive agenda of what women need and want and move forward toward that dream.”
Art Buchwald

The irony of our culture is that people are constantly telling other people to go to hell, but no one tells them to go to heaven.

Art Buchwald made people laugh, even after his kidneys went kaput. In 2006, the long-running columnist took himself off dialysis and went into hospice, expecting to die within weeks. “For some reason that even the doctors can’t explain, my kidneys kept working and what started as a three-week death watch turned into four months,” Buchwald would recall. By then he was known in hospice as “The Man Who Wouldn’t Die,” and after five months he took himself off to Martha’s Vineyard. “Heaven can wait,” he quipped as spent his remaining year writing a book, Too Soon to Say Goodbye.

Perhaps his will to live sprang from his talent for finding the light side in every situation. There was little in his youth that seemed very funny. His father went broke in the Depression. His mother was institutionalized shortly after his birth. And he and his sisters were shuttled between an orphanage and separate foster homes. Along the way, he discovered he could make people laugh. “That’s what changed my life,” he said, “because as long as I could make them laugh, I could get a lot of love.”

And he did after become a columnist at the Herald Tribune in Paris and then at the Washington Post for 50 years. Politics became his focus and he found Washington rich with targets, including poets, pundits, and presidents. “As a humor columnist, I need President Nixon more than he needs me. I worship the quicksand he walks on,” Buchwald said in 1974.

He also managed to find humor in his own bouts with clinical depression, and two hospital stays for depression led him to predict, “I will be inducted in the Bipolar Hall of Fame.” After discussing his disorder on TV, people stopped him on the street to thank him for spreading a message of hope. And he remained upbeat in that precious time before he made his final joke. “I never realized dying was so much fun,” he said about his months in hospice with family, friends, and delicious food. Buchwald knew that “whether it’s the best of times or the worst of times, it’s the only time we’ve got.”
OCTOBER 21

Alfred Nobel

*Good wishes alone will not ensure peace.*

Since 1901, the Nobel Prizes have recognized the finest in human achievements, from literature and science to the pursuit of peace. The Nobel Peace Prize goes “to the person who shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding and promotion of peace conferences,” according to the last will and testament of founder Alfred Nobel. Oddly, his life was tainted by destruction and the death of untold thousands.

Born in Stockholm in 1883, Nobel worked in his father’s arms factories as a young man. At the time, nitroglycerine was considered too unsafe to have any practical use. Yet the Nobel family continued to investigate its potential for commercial and industrial uses — leading to tragic results. In 1864, Alfred’s younger brother, Emil, and several other people were killed in a deadly explosion, so Nobel, who was stricken by the event, set out to develop a more stable explosive. In 1867, he hit on a mixture of nitroglycerine and an absorbent substance that could be shaped into short sticks for mining companies to use when blasting through rock.

“Dynamite,” as he called it after the Greek word for power, revolutionized the mining, construction, and demolition industries. Railroad companies could now safely blast through mountains, and Nobel — who eventually garnered 355 patents on his many inventions — grew fantastically rich. But his satisfaction was mixed with feelings of regret as military authorities began using it in wars. And he learned how others felt about his invention when his brother, Ludvig, died in 1888. A French newspaper erroneously printed Alfred’s obituary instead and condemned him as a “merchant of death” who “became rich by finding ways to kill more people faster than ever before.”

Stunned by what he’d read, Nobel resolved to do something to improve his legacy and left the bulk of his vast estate to establish the five Nobel prizes. When he founded the peace prize, he was uncertain as to its results, he would admit, but he couldn’t give up his dream of a disarmed world. “Hope is nature’s veil for hiding truth’s nakedness,” he said.
OCTOBER 22

Franz Liszt

*Music is the heart of life.*

Franz Liszt was the rock star of his day. The virtuoso pianist and composer dominated the concert world for 10 years of the mid-1800s. Travelling by carriage, he performed more than 1,000 concerts at leading halls from Ireland to Russia. Besides being extremely handsome, Liszt was very theatrical, wearing white gloves that he would ceremoniously remove at the start of concerts. He employed a second piano on stage so audiences could see him from two different angles. His features shifted between torment and rapture as he showed his tremendous talent on the keyboard.

After 1842, “Lisztomania” swept across Europe, and the reception Liszt enjoyed can only be described as hysterical. Women threw themselves at his feet, collected dregs from his coffee cup, fought over his silk handkerchiefs and gloves. One woman even picked up his discarded cigar butt from a street corner and put it in a locket that she wore close to her heart.

And the composer’s own great heart only added to his reputation. Way before Bono, Liszt regularly performed in charity concerts and by 1857 was giving virtually all his fees away, despite his often precarious financial situation. He gave generously to establish the Beethoven Monument, Hungarian National School of Music, Cologne Cathedral, and Leopold Church in Pest. There were also private donations to hospitals, schools, and charitable organizations, such as the Leipzig Musicians Pensions Fund. When he found out about the Great Fire of Hamburg, which raged for three weeks in May 1842, he gave concerts to aid the city’s thousands of homeless victims.

After one of these concerts, a concert director congratulated himself on the revenues he had raised, to Liszt’s distress. “I left with a lowered head,” he recalled “when I thought about the families who hardly had enough to eat or enough bushels of wood to keep warm. Eighteen centuries have passed since Christ preached the brotherhood of man and his word is still not understood.” So in troubled times, artists had a duty to remind the rich that “now the hour has come to restore courage to the weak and relieve the oppressed’s suffering.” It was a duty he fulfilled.
OCTOBER 23

Mary Jo Copeland

Make the world better. Be good and be kind and do your best to make the world better for others.

Mary Jo Copeland knows that great love comes from great hardships. She grew up in a filthy home where her parents fought constantly and her emotionally disturbed father often beat her mother. She was a socially dysfunc- tional child who other kids teased. She barely graduated from high school and never attended college. Yet the director of Sharing and Caring Hands in Minneapolis has raised $100 million to assist thousands of poor and homeless folks who need a caring hand.

She witnessed their plight in the late 1970s and early 1980s when she vol-unteered at Catholic Charities, while also raising 12 kids. After seeing all the red tape the needy faced, she felt compelled to hand out food and clothes from the trunk of her car. Then in 1985, she received a $2,200 grant from a local TV station and began Sharing and Caring Hands.

Her organization doesn’t accept funds from government or third-party payers since Copeland believes “paperwork dehumanizes the poor.” And run-ning the organization her way has let her act on her unconditional love for the poor. She doesn’t ask why they are poor; she feeds them. She doesn’t ask what happened to their clothes; she gives them clean ones. She soaks their sore feet and puts new shoes on them. She ministers to the needy in a way that restores their dignity and self-esteem.

With limited paid staff and hundreds of volunteers, Sharing and Caring Hands serves an ever-changing population out of two buildings adjacent to the Minnesota Twins Stadium. The center offers a vast array of services: hot lunches, groceries, showers, foot care, hair cuts and personal hygiene, clothing, gloves and shoes, shelter, emergency relief, travel expenses, legal services, advocacy and referrals, telephone and communication services, a medical clinic, and respite care.

By giving so much help, Copeland also helps herself forget about the pain in her life. “I live with a lot of suffering, a lot of memories, but never once do I get up and not run and be grateful that I can make a difference in the life of someone else,” she says. “It’s a gift from God.”
Stephen Richard Covey

*Trust is the glue of life. It’s the most essential ingredient in effective communication.*

“‘Begin with the end in mind’ was one of the bits of advice Stephen Covey gave the world. The herald of good habits won a global following by fusing the genres of self-help and business literature in *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. His 1989 book sold over 25 million copies, more than two-thirds of Fortune 500 companies flocked to use a consulting company he founded, and national leaders hailed him as a prophet of productivity. But the acclaim left Covey a bit befuddled. He said he was simply reminding people what he thought they already knew: the value of empathy and good behavior. “One of the best ways to educate our hearts,” he told readers, “is to look at our interaction with other people because our relationships with others are fundamentally a reflection of our relationship with ourselves.”

His message was old-fashioned, so old-fashioned it seemed fresh and exciting when *7 Habits* first appeared. At a time when most management gurus were obsessed with how to build better organizations, Covey argued that personal character, purpose, and discipline were what mattered for both individuals and corporations. “Organizational behavior is individual behavior collectivized,” he explained as he taught that employees were not just cogs in a machine powered by punishments and rewards.

What appeared to be cutting-edge was in some ways a blast of common sense from the past. Covey drew inspiration from 150 years of American self-help books that emphasized character before World War II and he was also guided by his Mormon faith. The 7 habits are largely a secular distillation of Mormon teaching, written for anyone regardless of whether or not they believe in God. This gave it broad appeal, and so did the sense of conviction Covey conveyed because he lived the life he wrote about.

It was based on putting family first since Covey was a father of nine and knew the importance of balancing work with life. “Live, love, laugh, and leave a legacy,” was his advice. “If you consider what you want said of you in the funeral experience, you will find your definition of success.”
Henry Steele Commager

*Free society must fertilize the soil in which nonconformity and dissent and individualism can grow.*

Henry Steele Commager believed the greatest danger that threatens our country is the absence of thought. So he committed himself to making people think as a historian, teacher, and defender of the Constitution. Starting in the 1930s, he published a flood of biographies, textbooks, anthologies, and inquiries into the nature of democracy and the American mind. But his work was by no means confined to the academy. His essays in newspapers, journals, and magazines were an important part of any dialogue on the issues of the day.

His lodestar was the Constitution, which Commager claimed was the “greatest monument to political science in literature.” The Constitution was the standard by which he judged all statesmen and events. And its violation was the offense he hated most, especially when it concerned the rights all were due. “The Bill of Rights,” he maintained, “was not written to protect governments from trouble. It was written precisely to give people the constitutional means to cause trouble for governments they no longer trusted.”

This conviction lay behind his forays into the political arena, where he would describe himself as an “independent Democrat.” He was a sharp, early opponent of McCarthyism, and he came down equally hard on Richard Nixon for abusing his oath of office during the Watergate scandal. Never before, he fumed, had an administration practiced such “deception, duplicity, chicanery and mendacity.” Never before, in other words, had a president so violated the Constitution.

But he went beyond words when he opposed the Vietnam War, appealing to Congress on constitutional grounds to reassert its authority over the waging of war. In 1970, he galvanized an anti-war rally at Amherst with the force of his convictions. “Having the United States in Vietnam is like having the Chinese invade the shores of Long Island,” he thundered at the campus where he taught until well into his eighties.

Commager couldn’t imagine not teaching since he was committed to showing students “the spectacle of greatness” and giving them the knowledge to serve the common good. “Education is essential to change,” he explained, “for education creates both new wants and the ability to satisfy them.”
Hillary Clinton

*Let’s continue to stand up for those who are vulnerable to being left out or marginalized.*

“Women are the largest untapped reservoir of talent in the world,” Hillary Clinton says. And she’s living proof of what women can do. She has achieved many firsts in her roles as first lady of the United States, U.S. senator, presidential candidate, and secretary of state. As she put it in her 2003 memoir, *Living History*, “My mother and my grandmother could never have imagined my life; my father and my grandfathers could never have imagined it. But they bestowed on me the promise of America, which made my life and my choices possible.”

As first lady, she exercised her power of choice by taking on a prominent role in health and welfare issues, especially those involving children. She supported the passage and rollout of the State Children’s Health Insurance Program and was instrumental in the enactment of the Adoption and Safe Families Act. She also helped create the Office on Violence Against Women in the Justice Department, and during her travels to more than 80 countries she was a forceful advocate for women’s rights.

Her achievements would continue to add up when she became the first female senator to New York. She was instrumental in securing $21 billion for redevelopment of the World Trade Center site and took a leading role in investigating health issues that 9/11 responders were facing. After visiting soldiers in Iraq, she supported retaining and improving health benefits for veterans. She also introduced the Family Entertainment Protection Act. And that was just in her first term.

Following her second term, she became secretary of state and helped repair a badly damaged U.S. reputation. She supported a greater role for the State Department in global economic issues, unveiled the Global Hunger and Food Security program, and made women’s rights a focal point in speeches, interviews, and town halls across the world, from Pakistan to China. “There cannot be true democracy unless women’s voices are heard,” she said. “There cannot be true democracy unless women are given the opportunity to take responsibility in their own lives. There cannot be true democracy unless all citizens are able to participate fully in the lives of their country.”
OCTOBER 27

Theodore Roosevelt

Nobody cares how much you know, until they know how much you care.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Progressivism emerged in response to social, political, and economic injustice. Progressives advocated for many different reforms but shared the belief that government should lead efforts to fight society’s ills by ending official corruption, promoting women’s suffrage, reforming prisons, and passing laws for the common good. Their members included muckraking journalists, intellectuals, and Theodore Roosevelt, a vigorous young president who believed that if you “speak softly and carry a big stick, you will go far.”

Progressivism did go far when President McKinley was assassinated and Roosevelt took office in 1901. Growing up in the Gilded Age had led him to regard commercial ideals as “mean and sordid” and he brought this view with him into public life. A firm believer in “the manly virtues,” he urged his countrymen to fight for what was right. “It is only through labor and painful effort, by grim energy and resolute courage,” he told them, “that we move onto better things.” And he acted on these words as he pushed executive power to new limits, arguing that the rise of industrial capitalism had rendered limited government obsolete.

He took on the captains of industry as a loud, effective advocate for “trust-busting,” the breaking up of enormous monopolies that had controlled prices and prevented competition. He also advocated for fair trade and pro-labor laws, including a decreased workweek, child labor restrictions, and workplace safety laws as part of giving America a “Square Deal.”

His commitment to social welfare came from his belief that Progressivism meant moving beyond the “shopworn” protection of individual rights, especially property rights. Based on the theory of evolution, he argued that there was no such thing as fixed human nature and people could progress beyond raw self-interest. So his goal was to move Americans to a higher plane where they thought less about their own rights and more about rights “developed in duty.” The future depended on it, as he once pointed out. “The things that will destroy America,” he warned, “are prosperity-at-any-price, peace-at-any-price, safety-first instead of duty-first, the love of soft living, and the get-rich-quick theory of life.”
OCTOBER 28

Bill Gates

*As we look ahead into the next century, leaders will be those who empower others.*

Bill Gates spawned the personal computer revolution as co-founder, chairman, and chief software architect of Microsoft. He also started a revolution in “venture philanthropy” to bridge the gap between rich and poor. He’s both the world’s richest man and its greatest benefactor, having endowed a foundation worth over $42 billion. He’s a king of software who believes “every life should be treated on an equal basis.” He wants to change the world once more and this second endeavor may be his greatest legacy yet.

In recent years, Gates and his wife, Melinda, have gone from making money to giving it away to benefit millions of people. Since its inception in 2000, the Gates Foundation has saved lives in poor countries by investing in vaccines, brought computers and Internet access to libraries, and sponsored the biggest private scholarship program in history — all with a single goal. “Everything Melinda and I do through our foundation is designed to advance equity,” Gates says.

And he’s gotten the most from his philanthropic buck by using leverage instead of largesse to make things happen. The foundation often makes grants with the proviso that governments or nonprofits match them. It requires recipients to meet regular performance goals, or risk losing their funding.

Gates insists on results because he knows just what’s at stake. His many visits to developing nations have shown him the faces behind the numbers and given him first-hand knowledge of AIDS, malaria, and orphans. “Actually getting out to India, to Africa,” he explains, “that’s critical to me to make sure my foundation is doing effective work and renews my commitment to take all the wealth I have and make sure it goes back to causes like world health.”

Gates’ ongoing crusade for global equity reflects the same sense of vision that made him a prophet of the digital age. Having conquered the world of cyberspace, he’s tackling even more challenging terrain. “It will be the best thing humanity has ever done,” he dreams, “if we give all people the education and health care they need to live productive lives.” Both his head and his heart tell him, “We can do this.”
Dirk Kempthorne

I am confident that we have begun the national discussion on long-term care. We must find a solution so that we can preserve the health and dignity of our aging population.

As Idaho governor from 1998 to 2006, Dirk Kempthorne took groundbreaking steps to change Medicaid in his state. His plan split Medicaid into three programs with different goals: one for healthy kids and adults, one for the disabled, and one for the elderly. The changes it made allowed Idaho to “lead the nation in modernizing a health care system for the poor, disabled, and elderly that has not been updated since its creation 40 years ago,” Kempthorne said. “Through these reforms, we will turn our focus away from cumbersome federal rules and regulations and toward a commonsense approach that puts the health of the recipient first. By giving people access to the right care at the right time — before there is a crisis — we will help them become healthier and reduce the cost of the program at the same time.”

His approach has yielded results because it gives different groups the services they actually need. Healthy kids and adults have a program that focuses on primary care, prevention, wellness, and immunizations. For those with disabilities, the program focuses on removing barriers that prevent some disabled people from working and allows those people to direct their own care, leading to better results. As for the elderly, the plan’s focus is on services to help patients stay in their homes as long as possible, instead of going into nursing homes, and developing incentives for patients to finance their own care.

Long-term care is the number-one problem facing our country, Kempthorne asserted when the National Governors Association elected him its chairman in 2003. Under his leadership, the NGA conducted a series of hearings and fact-finding missions on long-term care, leading to the conclusion that home care is the answer to the greatest issue we face. And Kempthorne was committed to giving more Medicaid patients access to it before leaving office to serve as secretary of the interior in Washington, DC. “Knowing the impact that Medicaid has on our state budget and the children of Idaho, I could not in good conscience leave it for someone else to fix while I still have a year in office,” he said.
John Adams

The way to secure liberty is to place it in the people’s hands, that is, to give them the power at all times to defend it in the legislature and in the courts of justice.

“Posterity! You will never know how much it cost the present generation to preserve your freedom! I hope you will make a good use of it,” John Adams once wrote Abigail, his wife. “If you do not, I shall repent in Heaven that I ever took half the pains to preserve it.” And heaven would have wept along with him since Adams did so much for his country. He wrote newspaper articles explaining the principles of the American Revolution and defended British soldiers who were put on trial after the Boston Massacre when no one else would speak up for them. Though warned it might destroy his political career, he thought it his duty in a society governed by law. And it didn’t hurt his career one bit. People discerned the sense of conviction that led him to serve brilliantly in the Continental Congress and get it to vote for the Declaration of Independence.

Adams never failed to answer his country’s call to serve, and he was called upon time and again. During the Revolution, he and his 10-year-old son, John Quincy, set sail for France in the dead of winter. The ocean was thick with British cruisers, just waiting for American ships looking to get French support. Had Adams been captured, he would have been taken to England and hanged, a risk he faced since he thought timidity was the source of our ills. And his service to his country continued to take him overseas. As vice president for George Washington, he convinced the Dutch government to provide large sums of money to finance the revolution. Then in 1785, he was named America’s first ambassador to England and in the long periods away from home he and Abigail exchanged loving letters that paint a vivid picture of the time.

Adams’ own time in the spotlight came when he served one term as president before losing to Thomas Jefferson, his rival and friend. Before dying, he had the pleasure of seeing John Quincy become sixth president of the United States. The son carried on his father’s belief that “the happiness of society is the end of government.”
OCTOBER 31

Juliette Gordon Low

*To put yourself in another’s place requires real imagination, but by doing so each Girl Scout will be able to love among others happily.*

Juliette Gordon Low was 50, childless, and looking for something to do with her life after her husband died in 1905. Her search ended in 1911 when she met Robert Baden-Powell, founder of the Boy Scouts, and became interested in his movement. Less than a year later, she brought together 18 girls who she thought would enjoy crafts, sports, the outdoors, and just being together. This was very similar to what many girls do today because this was the first meeting of what would become the Girl Scouts of the USA. At the time, life was very different for the fairer sex. There were no cellphones, computers, or TVs. Women and girls wore long, cumbersome skirts and women were fighting for the right to vote. But these early Girl Scouts did community service, studied first aid, and earned badges for achievement, just as they do now.

They also learned the value of sisterhood because Low believed “ours is a circle of friendships united by ideals.” From the beginning, Low wanted the Girl Scouts to be inclusive, meaning it would be open to girls of any race, background, or financial situation. All kinds of girls joined scouting — middle-class girls, wealthy girls, factory girls and orphans, from every ethnicity and faith. And they joined because Girl Scouting offered both fun and education. Low wanted girls to become better women.

“Scouting rises within you and inspires you to put forth your best,” she told them as she prepared them for the future. The girls were encouraged to be independent, make their own choices, and develop their talents. She emphasized career training for girls and some of the early Girl Scout badges were for flying, typing, telegraph skills, and farming. Another part of her program was about citizenship, and she wanted the girls to know something about the Constitution, geography and history of the United States.

In 1917, they began selling cookies to raise funds, and those cookies are now a common sight because there are 2.8 million Girl Scouts. It’s the world’s largest organization for girls and it’s still inspiring girls to put forth their best.
NOVEMBER
NOVEMBER 1

Frances Hesselbein

*Most of us will be remembered, in work and in life, for just a few words or deeds that made a difference to others.*

Frances Hesselbein thinks leadership means taking responsibility for the whole community. And this conviction guided her course in 1976 when she became CEO of the Girl Scouts of the USA. She accepted the post at a critical time because the 1960s and early 1970s brought dramatic changes: an increase in the role of women, advances in technology and science, the rise of global competition, the push for human rights, and many other societal shifts. The Girl Scouts, like most organizations, hadn’t kept up with these changes and membership had declined. “The old answers did not fit the new realities,” Hesselbein explained. “The old structures were not right for the next decade, let alone the next century.”

So Hesselbein began to build new avenues for girls. Based on a six-month study, she concluded that the core Girl Scout mission — to help each girl reach her highest potential — was still valid, but profound changes were needed for the organization to stay relevant. The Girl Scouts had obsolete programs and a nearly all-white membership, challenges Hesselbein called “opportunities” as she worked with everyone in the organization to create “one great movement.” The result was new proficiency badges in topics such as math, science, and technology and an updated handbook to appeal to a more diverse cross section of young women.

The results of her innovative leadership were clear. “The organization had achieved its highest membership, greatest diversity, and greatest cohesion,” Hesselbein recalled. And she gave much of the credit to Peter Drucker, a management guru who believed all institutions have a duty to society as a whole. In 1981, she met him in New York, and for the next eight years, he shared his expertise with the Girl Scouts’ staff and board. Over time, he came to say Hesselbein could run any business in America, and he meant it.

In 1990, just six weeks after she left the Girl Scouts, Drucker made her CEO of the Peter Drucker Foundation for Nonprofit Management, now known as the Leader to Leader Institute. She still works there to promote ethical leadership and act on her belief that “to serve is to live.”
NOVEMBER 2

Stefanie Powers

*Participate in the world through activism connected to issues that mean something to you.*

When it comes to animals, Stefanie Powers thinks with her heart. “Animals are very easy to love and be friends with,” says the co-star of the hit TV series *Hart to Hart.* She’s teaching kids to love them, too, at the William Holden Wildlife Education Center in Kenya. It brings in over 11,000 schoolchildren each year to the slopes of Mt. Kenya, where they learn about the animals and plants of the region. “We help them understand what the demands of the environment are and how much you can enhance the environment rather than destroy it,” she explains. “We do not allow boom boxes. We do not allow portable phones. All of that is left at the door. This is a natural experience. It is for students to come and understand nature, and to do so, you cannot have headphones on.”

The center is dear to Powers’ heart because it’s the legacy of William Holden, the late film star and her partner for nine years. He fell in love with East Africa after going on safari there in the 1950s. In 1959, he became co-owner of a famous resort, renaming it the Mt. Kenya Safari Club, and in the 1960s, he and his partners set up the Mt. Kenya Game Ranch, which would soon house a sanctuary for orphaned animals. After Holden’s death in 1981, Powers co-founded the William Holden Wildlife Foundation, which operates the center. Besides offering on-site visits, it reaches out to youngsters throughout schools with a curriculum geared to their educational level and understanding.

In the decades since it began, the center has reached a tremendous number of kids. William Holden would have been “astonished” at what the center has achieved, Powers says, and the thought warms her heart. Still she’s not ready yet to chill out and just enjoy her success. “We have a lot of organizations, but for all the organizations, there are fewer really solid conservation efforts going on.” So she’s filling in the gap as she passes on a heartfelt message. “We have to stop thinking about ourselves so much and start thinking about the environment. We have to change.”
NOVEMBER 3

Amartya Sen

Economic growth without investment in human development is unsustainable — and unethical.

“From the mid 1970s, I started work on the causation and prevention of famines,” says economist Amartya Sen. But his interest in famines began far before then. As a nine-year-old boy, he witnessed the Bengal famine of 1943, in which three million people perished. This staggering loss of life was needless, Sen concluded after starting his career at universities in India and England. The work he would produce changed the way economists think by restoring ethics to a field that focused on economic gains and losses. It was high time to think about the faces behind the figures, Sen pointed out. “Human development as an approach is concerned with what I take to be the basic development idea: namely, advancing the richness of human life, rather the richness of the economy in which human beings live, which is only a part of it.”

Economic policy must enhance the well-being of the community, he argued in *Collective Choice and Social Welfare*. His influential monograph — which addressed such topics as individual rights, majority rule, and the availability of information about individual conditions — inspired researchers to turn their attention to issues of basic welfare. And Sen guided them by devising methods for measuring want that yielded useful data to assist the poor.

Facts were more important than theories, he maintained as he thought back to his childhood ordeal. In *Poverty and Famines*, he argued that there was an adequate supply of food in India at the time, but its distribution was hindered because rural workers often lost their jobs and hence their ability to purchase food. Branching out from this individual case, he revealed the social and economic factors that led to starvation.

His views encouraged policy makers to pay attention not only to alleviating immediate suffering but also to finding ways, such as public-works projects, to replace the lost income of the poor. He also urged them promote education and public health in order to get at the root of human needs. “Poverty,” he explained, “is not just lack a lack of money; it is not having the capability to realize one’s full potential as a human being.”
NOVEMBER 4

Will Rogers

*Live in such a way that you would not be ashamed to sell your parrot to the town gossip.*

“An actor is a fellow that just has a little more monkey in him than the fellow that can’t act,” Will Rogers said. He showed how much monkey he had in him during his career as a fancy roper in Wild West shows and vaudeville, where his humorous chatter, laid-back delivery, and southwestern drawl made him a hit. He would go on to become a celebrated film star, journalist, and humorist, posing as a cowboy philosopher gaping wide-eyed at the shenanigans of crooked businessmen and sleazy politicians. By offering a dry, whimsical take on issues of the day, he became the voice of the average man. He also became the friend of presidents, senators, and kings — and made fun of them, too. “I joked about every prominent man of my time,” he admitted, “but I never met a man I didn’t like.”

He especially liked the “little people” as he showed when he went on radio in 1926. His radio shows centered on topics of current interest and were filled with Rogers’ sharp commentary and tales. By the end of the 1920s, he was using his position in the spotlight to campaign for humanitarian causes. When the Mississippi River flooded in 1927, he visited devastated areas, gave benefit performances for the victims, and testified before Congress supporting increased disaster aid to the region — not that he had much respect for Congress. “Tax relief, farm relief, flood relief — none of these have been settled,” he once remarked, “but they are getting them in shape at the next session of Congress with the hope that those people needing relief will have perhaps conveniently died in the meantime.”

And some folks did jump to the deaths in 1929 when the stock market crashed. As the Depression went on Rogers supported FDR’s New Deal and again gave benefit performances. He also urged people to think about themselves less. “All we hear is ‘What’s wrong with the country?’ ‘What’s wrong with the world?’” he said. “There ain’t but one one thing wrong with every one of us in the world. That’s selfishness.” Rogers knew you don’t monkey around when people need your help.
NOVEMBER 5

Jeffrey Sachs

*Let the future say of our generation that we sent forth mighty currents of hope and that we worked together to heal the world.*

“Every morning our newspapers could read, ‘More than 20,000 people perished yesterday of extreme poverty,’” economist Jeffrey Sachs once pointed out. “How? The poor die in hospital beds that lack drugs, in villages that lack antimalarial bed nets, in houses that lack safe drinking water. They die namelessly without public comment. Sadly, sad stories rarely get written.” So Sachs has brought them to light as an advisor to the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. From 2002 to 2006, he served as special advisor to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on the UN Millennium Project, which released its official report in 2005. The report marked the start of a year of initiatives to make the project’s goals — reducing poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation, and discrimination against women — a reality worldwide.

“The idea that the UN system could provide real leadership on the great development challenges will strain credulity in some quarters,” Sachs acknowledged. So he gave them a blueprint for ending extreme global poverty by 2015 and explained it in *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time*. His 2005 bestseller proposed that Western countries, especially the United States, should honor their pledges to give 0.7 percent of gross national product to global development programs. “The basic truth,” he said, “is that for less than a percent of the income of the rich world, nobody has to die of poverty on the planet. That’s a really powerful truth.”

And he’s devoted his life to it for nearly three decades. Day after day, he makes speeches, meets heads of states, holds press conferences, lobbies government officials, writes opinion pieces, and connects with anyone who might help him spread the word. Sachs has admitted he’s a “pest” and colleagues have fondly called him a “squeaky wheel that roars.” But he feels the end justifies the means because “extreme poverty is the best breeding ground on earth for disease, political instability, and terrorism.” In other words, we’re all in this together in an increasingly interconnected world. “We need to defend the interests of those whom we’ve never met and never will.”
NOVEMBER 6

Maria Shriver

*When the world is so complicated, the simple gift of friendship is within all of our hands.*

Maria Shriver was born into the public eye. Her father was Sargent Shriver, director of the Peace Corps, and her mother was Eunice Kennedy Shriver, founder of the Special Olympics and sister of President John F. Kennedy. This background meant Shriver could have simply enjoyed life as the scion of the wealthy Kennedy clan. Yet she wanted to forge her own path. “You don’t want to walk around and say, ‘I’m somebody’s niece, I’m somebody’s cousin, I’m somebody’s daughter,’” Shriver explains. “The challenge when you grow up in a well-known family is, ultimately, you have to face yourself in the mirror and say, ‘Who are you? What have you done?’”

Shriver began answering that question as an NBC news anchor before her husband, Arnold Schwarzenegger, became governor of California in 2003. As California’s first lady she launched a website to match volunteers with organizations needing assistance, supported the construction of community gardens in lower-income areas, and served on the board of Best Buddies, which pairs mentors with the disabled. She also revamped the Governor’s Conference for Women, transforming it into one of the leading women’s conferences in the world. In 2009, she partnered with the Center for American Progress to publish a groundbreaking study of American women and followed it up with a report on Alzheimer’s as a woman’s issue.

The disease, which took her father’s life, taught her a vital lesson. “No matter who you are, what you’ve accomplished, what your financial situation is, when you’re dealing with a parent with Alzheimer’s you feel helpless,” she says. “As the disease unfolds, you don’t know what to expect.”

That can also be true of husbands, and in 2011, Shriver suffered public humiliation when it was discovered that Schwarzenegger had an affair and a child. Yet she powered on and in 2014, she published the *Shriver Report* examining financial equity among women. And she still holds her Women’s Conference, where she tells attendees, “You are the leader you’ve been looking for.” Besides all her other causes, empowering other women to be “architects of change” helps her face the mirror and know just what she’s done.
NOVEMBER 7

Billy Graham

*God has given us two hands, one to receive with and the other to give with.*

Reverend Billy Graham likes to describe himself as “just a country preacher,” though he has been a cultural icon for over 50 years. He is recognized as the world’s most famous evangelist, having preached to over 250 million people in 185 countries. He was the first Christian to preach in public behind the Iron Curtain and after 9/11 led the service at the Washington National Cathedral. Pope John Paul II, several prime ministers, and every president from Eisenhower to George W. Bush have counted themselves among his friends and sometimes sought his advice.

Despite all the acclaim, he says, “I’m nothing. I wouldn’t be anything except for the power of the spirit of God.” And he’s never lost the common touch. Graham is at ease with people from all walks of life and they come away from his sermons feeling they are loved.

He hails from the segregated South but advanced civil rights in the sixties by claiming that “skin color does not matter to God.” His embrace of the mass media paved the way for a generation of evangelists, but he harnessed the technology of radio and TV to communicate a simple message of salvation. He has been the central figure behind the postwar resurgence of Christianity in the U.S. and helped thousands to find God.

As a spiritual leader who has always led with love, he personifies caring for his disciples. At the same time, he admits that he, too, is a sinner with his own spiritual problems. Imperfect as Graham might believe himself, he has appeared an unprecedented 49 times among the “Ten Most Admired Men in America” in Gallup’s annual poll. Relentlessly humble, Graham has questioned the value of the poll since he believes it’s the message, not the messenger, which brings the miracle about.

Wherever Graham has preached, his mane of white hair and piercing blue eyes confronting thousands on huge screens, he has conveyed a message of divine and human love. “God loves you,” he tells the crowds and urges them to follow suit. “What is most needed today is for us to show an unbelieving world that we love one another.”
NOVEMBER 8

Dorothy Day

The greatest challenge of the day is: how to bring about a revolution of the heart, a revolution which has to start with each one of us.

A journalist once told Dorothy Day it was the first time he had interviewed a saint. The remark was meant as a compliment, so imagine his chagrin when Day snapped, “Don’t call me a saint — I don’t want to be dismissed that easily.” Day wasn’t afraid to show her temper; she didn’t wear a halo — and she was complicated. In her early years as a radical journalist, she was shot at for her civil rights protests, served time in jail, and bore a child out of wedlock.

Day was also a devout Catholic who saw God’s face in the poor, a vision that led her to found a newspaper called The Catholic Worker. In 1933, Day’s first editorial struck a chord in a nation struggling through the Depression. “What anyone possesses beyond basic needs does not belong to him,” Day proposed, “but rather to the poor who are without it.”

This call spawned a movement, beginning with homes for the poor on Manhattan’s Lower East Side. Then came farming communes for the unemployed and in time a national network of houses and farms arose based on Christ’s command to love your neighbor.

Catholic Worker “hospitality” arose from this law of love. Guests and volunteers ate the same food, slept in the same dormitory, and wore the same donated clothing because Day believed “love comes with community.” Guests sometimes became volunteers, and volunteers nourished their spirits by tending the homeless. In the midst of them all was Day, relentless in her commitment to charity and justice. She went to mass every day, wore hand-me-down clothes and lived in cold-water flats despite the arthritis that plagued her with age.

So was she a saint? The Vatican hasn’t yet decided, but Day wouldn’t have cared a fig about being St. Dorothy of New York. “When they say you are a saint,” she sneered, “what they mean is that you are not to be taken seriously.” Yet she admitted there is a bit of the saint in us all. So long “as we are growing, and putting on Christ, there is some of the saint, the holy, the divine right there.”
NOVEMBER 9

Sargent Shriver

*It is well to be prepared for life as it is, but it is better to be prepared to make life better than it is.*

Sargent Shriver never won an election but came to embody the idea of public service. Related by marriage to the Kennedy clan, he sought high office several times without success. Yet appointments in Washington, DC, allowed him to do more than many elected statesmen. On the stage of social change for several decades, he worked with his brother-in-law, John F. Kennedy, to design the Peace Corps in 1961. After Kennedy appointed him director of the corps, Shriver suggested that he got the job because “everyone in Washington seemed to think that the Peace Corps was going to be the biggest fiasco in history, and it would be much easier to fire a relative than a friend.” But Shriver made a success of it and remained in the post until 1966.

Like the president he served during this time, Shriver was the scion of a wealthy East Coast family committed to doing good works. Despite his patrician roots, he believed “the only genuine elite is the elite of those men and women who give their lives to public service.” And he urged young people to join this select group despite the challenges of working in undeveloped nations. “In the Peace Corps,” he explained, “the volunteer must be a fully developed, mature person. He must not join to run abroad or escape problems.”

And Shriver didn’t try to escape his own duties when Kennedy was assassinated in 1963. Instead he joined President Johnson’s war on poverty as director of the Office of Economic Opportunity. From 1965 to 1968, his agency created programs like Head Start, the Job Corps, and Volunteers in Service to America, the Community Action Program, and Legal Services for the Poor.

Many of these programs have survived as has the Peace Corps, thanks to the foundation Shriver laid. He never lost his gusto for public service and was still recruiting corps volunteers in 1994. “Shatter the glass,” he told Yale graduates in 1994. “In our society that is so self-absorbed, begin to look less at yourself and more at each other. Learn more about the face of your neighbor and less about your own.”
NOVEMBER 10

Granville Sharp

Always endeavor to really be what you would wish to appear.

In 1765, Granville Sharp had a chance meeting with a runaway slave, Jonathan Strong, which made him take up the cause of slaves. Strong had been brought from Barbados to London by his owner but had escaped after being beaten and left for dead. Nearly blind and barely able to walk, Strong appeared outside the home that Sharp, a young civil servant, shared with his brother, William. They took Strong to a hospital and helped him find work as a messenger after he regained his health. Two years later, Jonathan appealed to Granville when he was recaptured by his owner. After Granville intervened on his behalf, the case developed into a complex legal battle and Jonathan was set free.

But Granville was never free from the emotions he felt after that fateful meeting with Strong. “Nothing can be more shocking to human nature,” he wrote some years later, “than the case of a man or woman who is delivered into the absolute power of strangers to be treated according to the new master’s will and pleasure; for they have nothing but misery to expect; and poor Jonathan Strong, who was well acquainted with West India treatment, seemed to be deeply impressed with that extreme horror which the poor victims of the inhuman traffic generally experience.”

The plight of these slaves inspired Granville to take up the law so he could defend other runaway slaves and challenge the slave trade through the courts. In 1772, after several unsuccessful cases, he obtained a landmark ruling with the case of James Somerset, another runaway slave. He also worked to change public opinion by writing the first major anti-slavery work in Britain and publishing many pamphlets on the harsh treatment of slaves in the colonies of his nation.

As public opinion began to turn in his direction, he cofounded the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade. He was 72 in 1807 when Britain abolished the slave trade and he died six years later. But his belief that a “toleration of slavery is, in effect, a toleration of inhumanity” remained alive. And in 1833, Britain abolished slavery for good.
NOVEMBER 11

William Proxmire

The need of the starving is obvious. Indeed, it cries to high heaven for action

William Proxmire had a 32-year run as a senator who opposed back-scratching and government waste. Nearly every day while in office, he jogged 10 miles in the morning. If you got up early you would see him whizzing down Connecticut Avenue on his way to Capitol Hill. When his colleagues were offended by one of his attacks on special-interest legislation, they retaliated by taking away his shower. From then on he sponged off at the office sink after his run.

A Democrat from Wisconsin, Proxmire was remarkable for his tenacity and public-minded spirit. As chairman of the Banking Committee, he engaged in many important legislative battles, including successful drives to win Senate approval of a treaty outlawing genocide and rejection of money for a supersonic transport plane. But he was best known for his Golden Fleece Awards lampooning frivolous government spending. One award, for instance, went to the National Science Foundation in 1975 for spending $84,000 to learn why people fall in love. Another went to the National Institute for Mental Health, which spent $97,000 to study what went on in a Peruvian brothel.

But despite mocking whimsical government contracts, Proxmire was a staunch advocate of major outlays for social good: Medicare, Social Security, investment in cities, and antipoverty spending. His serious side also came out in his refusal to accept campaign contributions and string of not missing roll-call votes, which lasted over 20 years.

When he set his mind to a task he rarely relented. For 19 years, he gave a speech on the floor nearly every morning — 3,000 speeches in all — on behalf of the long-stalled approval of the treaty banning genocide worldwide. For more than a decade, he kept alive a World War II intervention, the Re-negotiation Board, which required audits after military contracts were completed and had potential to save taxpayers billions. He was also tireless in pursuit of laws requiring lenders and credit companies to disclose their true rates. Proxmire knew “power has to be kept in check” to keep America fair. His long-distance run toward this goal stemmed from his belief that “success is the ability to survive failure” and stay on track.
NOVEMBER 12

Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Nothing strengthens the judgment and quickens the conscience like individual responsibility.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton juggled family and cause as a pioneer of women’s rights. Her husband wanted her home and she had seven kids. But this didn’t stop her from becoming one of the first feminists in our nation. In 1848, she gained widespread renown by organizing a Convention for Women’s Rights in Seneca Falls, New York.

So began the career of a great American radical. But Stanton was already shocking her father, a judge, by the year she turned 12. At the time, she heard of a local woman who had suffered legally sanctioned injustice at the hand of her dead husband’s son. To her father’s distress, Stanton grabbed a knife and cut the offending passage out of a law book on his desk. He also flinched when she left out the word “obey” while exchanging wedding vows with the abolitionist Henry Stanton.

After they settled in Seneca Falls, Stanton organized a women’s convention, drafted 11 resolutions, and composed a Declaration of Sentiments modeled on the Declaration of Independence. “We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal,” she told the 62 women and 32 men who showed up at Wesleyan Methodist Chapel. They were so stirred that they passed all 11 resolutions. At first, they balked at the one giving women the right to vote. Fortunately, famed abolitionist Frederick Douglass convinced the group that freedom was not divisible according to either color or sex.

Stanton would also benefit from the help of Susan B. Anthony, a fellow activist and friend. Anthony supported Stanton as she campaigned for women’s right to divorce, claimed their right to higher education, and condemned the double standard that forced women to endure brutal husbands.

Her relentless work helped women gain most of these rights by the time the 20th century dawned. She didn’t live to see women get the vote but consoled herself by thinking “this is winter wheat we’re sowing and other hands will harvest.” How right she was. In 1920, eight million women finally voted after Congress passed the Nineteenth Amendment. Word for word, it’s the same amendment that Stanton and Anthony wrote.
NOVEMBER 13

Whoopi Goldberg

We are all here for a reason. I believe the reason is to throw little torches out to lead people through the darkness.

One of Whoopi Goldberg’s comedy heroes is veteran standup Jackie “Moms” Mabley. The 20th-century trailblazer — and later civil-rights activist — was known for her so-what attitude, edgy humor, and dressing like your grandma. The first female comic to be featured at the Apollo, Mabley was also known to be a lesbian, a topic addressed in Whoopi Presents Moms Mabley. When the Goldberg-funded documentary came out in 2014, the award-winning actor talked about how being a lesbian had no effect on Moms becoming the world’s funniest woman in the Roaring Twenties. “Your sexuality and who you were, whether a man or a woman, didn’t matter. Funny trumps everything,” Goldberg said.

She also talked about her commitment to LGBT rights, which started long before the film. In 2012, she hosted the New York City Council LGBT Pride event. She emceed the Pride agenda dinner in 2008 and has regularly brought up gay issues since joining The View in 2005. “If you don’t like gay marriage, don’t marry a gay person,” she advised her TV viewers. She was equally outspoken at a 1987 gay march on Washington, where she pushed an AIDS-afflicted friend in a wheelchair. “Mr. Reagan,” she said at the event, “did you explain that sometimes ignorant people act in such a way toward people with AIDS that is frightening. How long is it going to be before people get smart? We’re not talking about illiterate people. We’re talking about senators and congressmen and the president” — and not just in the United States.

In 2014, when the presidents of Uganda and Nigeria signed bills into law allowing life sentences just for being gay, Goldberg called for global solidarity. In a video released with the Human Rights Campaign, she sent a sharp message to the two African leaders: “you’re on the wrong side of history.” And she urged people to speak out against laws that punish folks for who they are and what they love. “We’re all one people, baby. People keep trying to divide us into ‘you’re gay, you’re black, you’re white,’ but we’re all one people,” In other words, what we all share as human beings trumps everything else.
NOVEMBER 14

Frederick Banting

No one has ever had an idea in a dress suit.

In the spring of 1921, Frederick Banting moved into a tiny flat in Toronto. He left behind a struggling medical practice to pursue research at the University of Toronto though he had no background in research. He did have an idea for changing the treatment of diabetes and wanted to explore it in a lab. He also had a motivation. As a teen, he had watched his 14-year-old friend, Jane, die from diabetes, an event that shook him and ultimately led him to discover insulin, the first true miracle drug for the disease. His hypothesis was that a specific part of the pancreas produced a substance that could treat diabetes. And his success in proving it true was a miracle of persistence.

Banting began working in the laboratory of J.R. Macleod, who doubted his theory, like everyone else. Despite general disbelief, he set out to test his idea of deriving a secretion from part of the pancreas, the Islets of Langerhans. He thought he could isolate the key substance if he destroyed the rest of the pancreas, so he began operating on 10 dogs. When seven of them died, he sold his car to purchase additional dogs. Then he removed the pancreas from some of the dogs, inducing diabetes; extracted the secretions; and injected the extract into a collie. After obtaining stunning results, Banting tested it on himself to make sure the solution was safe.

Then in 1922, Banting reached back to his childhood and tested his solution on a 14-year-old like his childhood friend. The boy showed immediate improvement, so Banting switched his studies to cattle, which were available in great quantities, allowing for mass production of insulin. He sold the patent to a drug company for just $1 since he didn’t pursue science for economic gain. He wanted to save lives. And he kept saving them by working with the Canadian Army Medical Corps in World War II. On a secret mission to England, he went down in a plane crash over Newfoundland. His last act of service was to wrap the wounds of the injured pilot before dying of his own wounds at age 49.
NOVEMBER 15

Claus von Stauffenberg

_The man who has the courage to do something must do it in the knowledge that he will go down in German history as a traitor. If he does not do it, however, he will be a traitor to his own conscience._

On July 20, 1944, a German colonel left a bomb in Adolf Hitler’s office. It exploded, just missing its target, and the following day the officer was shot. Millions of viewers witnessed his death when Tom Cruise portrayed the daring colonel in the film, _Valkyrie_. There was also a real Claus von Stauffenberg, and he was a man of moral conviction who was horrified by the actions of Hitler and the Nazi Party. He had seen them first hand after serving combat positions in all of Hitler’s major campaigns from Sudetenland to Tunisia. During Operation Barbarossa, he was appalled by the atrocities committed by the SS and “Security Police,” especially the mass murder of Jews in Russia. He was equally disturbed by the outrages committed by the German Army against Soviet prisoners of war and by the treatment of Russian civilians at the hands of the German occupation.

By 1942, he had decided he must try to overthrow Hitler, so he enlisted some of his fellow officers and members of the German resistance in a planned coup. After putting the conspiracy together, he declared his intent to personally kill Hitler, though he was an unlikely assassin.

During a campaign in Tunisia, an American plane had strafed his jeep, leaving him with one eye and one hand with just three fingers on it. He astonished his doctors by how well he recovered, but the idea that a maimed officer could prime a bomb, then carry his bulging briefcase into the dictator’s presence and plant it under his nose was unthinkable. Yet Stauffenberg had a sense of commitment that made up for what he’d lost. “We took this challenge before our Lord and our conscience, and it must be done,” he explained, “because this man, Hitler, he is the ultimate evil.”

Unfortunately Hitler survived the blast with only a badly injured right arm, and after Stauffenberg flew back to Berlin to launch the coup, the plot unraveled. After a brief gun battle, Stauffenberg and his three closest colleagues were shot at army headquarters. Stauffenberg died shouting “Long live free Germany” and knowing that he had done the right thing.
Lynn Hunt

*Human rights are not just a doctrine formulated in documents. They rest on a disposition toward other people and a set of convictions about what people are like.*

Many people in the West today believe human rights trump all other values and claims. Everyone from Dakota to Darfur deserves certain inalienable rights just for being a human being. Commonplace as this claim is for us, it’s of fairly recent vintage. How were human rights first conceived, and how does their history shape our ability to protect them today? In her book, *Inventing Human Rights*, Lynn Hunt traces the roots of human rights to the rejection of torture as a way of finding answers.

Hunt, one of America’s most renowned historians, says “human rights require three interlocking qualities: rights must be natural (inherent in human beings), equal (the same for everyone), and universal (applicable everywhere). This conception of human rights, she explains, began in the Enlightenment of the 1700s. Although the English issued a Bill of Rights in 1689, it didn’t declare rights to be equal, universal, or natural. It fell to Thomas Jefferson and the American Congress in 1776 to issue the first notable proclamation of human rights. But it was the French Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen in 1789 that had the greatest impact on Western thought.

How did men living in societies built on slavery, subordination and subservience come to imagine men not like them, and in some cases women, as equals? The answer is that 18th-century people developed a sense of “empathy” for the autonomy and well-being of other human beings. The causes were numerous, including an explosion of novel reading which led people to see those they did not know personally as having the same kind of inner emotions.

This understanding unleashed “an implacable logic” that expanded rights to Jews and other members of minority faiths, slaves, and women. But in the 19th-century, rights became attached to particular nations and ethnicities and lost much of their universal appeal. It took two world wars before the Universal Declaration of Rights of Man brought rights again to the forefront. Still emotion, not law, remains the bedrock of human rights, as Hunt reminds us. “Our sense of who has rights and what those rights are ultimately is grounded in our informed empathy for others.”
NOVEMBER 17

Grace Abbott

To have had a part in the struggle — to have done what one could — is in itself the reward of effort and the comfort in defeat.

It should come as no surprise that Grace Abbott grew up to be a social reformer, known for her work on behalf of immigrants and children. Her father was active in Nebraska state politics. Her mother took part in the Underground Railroad, and Abbott followed in their footsteps as head of the United States Children’s Bureau from 1921 to 1934. Her efforts to end child labor and improve child health care led the press to call her the “mother of America’s 43 million children.” And like any good mother, she wanted her kids to go to school. “The first and continuing argument for the curtailment of working hours and the raising of the minimum age,” she explained, “was that education is necessary in a democracy and working children could not attend school.”

She had seen their plight as a resident of Jane Adams’ Hull House settlement in Chicago for nine years. While there she earned an advanced degree in political science and formed the Immigrants’ Protective League, which advocated for laws to shield our nation’s newcomers from harm. She wrote about her experiences with the league in The Immigrant and the Community, published in 1917.

That year, she moved to Washington to head up the Child Labor Division of the Children’s Bureau, which she would go on to direct. As part of her job, Abbott worked to enforce a 1916 federal law that prohibited interstate commerce of goods created by child labor. When the Supreme Court overturned the law on the grounds that it interfered with states’ rights, the defeat inspired Abbott to lobby for a constitutional amendment to ban child labor. “Child labor and poverty are inevitably bound together,” she pointed out “and if you continue to use the labor of children as the treatment for the social disease, you will have both poverty and child labor to the end of time.”

This conviction inspired her fights against child labor in the coal mines of West Virginia and in the factories of Massachusetts. No matter what part of the country you find yourself in “justice for children is the high ideal in a democracy,” she said.
Sojourner Truth

*Religion without humanity is very poor human stuff.*

“Truth burns out error,” said a trailblazing advocate for human rights. Isabella Baumfree had seen the error of human ways growing up a slave in early 19th-century New York. Like many others of her kind, she was sold, beaten, and forced to marry a fellow slave she didn’t love. In 1827, after her master failed to honor his promise to free her or uphold the New York Anti-Slavery Law, she’d had enough. “I did not run away, I walked away by daylight,” Baumfree later told her master. And once at liberty, she embraced evangelical religion, changed her name to Sojourner Truth, and became a wandering preacher who told stories and sang gospel songs.

In the course of her travels, she connected with the antislavery movement and joined its cause. During the Civil War, she collected food and clothing for black regiments and met with Abraham Lincoln at the White House. When she was knocked off Washington’s segregated streetcars, she made a vow: “It is hard for the old slaveholding spirit to die, but die it must.”

So should the laws that held women back, Truth pointed out. “There is a stir about colored men getting their rights,” she said, “but not a word about colored women; and if colored men got their rights and colored women not theirs, you see the colored men will be masters over the women, and it will be just as bad as before.”

This concern led her to also join the suffragette movement and in 1851, she spoke at the Women’s Rights Convention in Ohio. In her stirring speech, she asked, “Ain’t I a woman?” and told men some hard truths about women’s rights. “If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down all alone,” she warned, “these women together ought to be able to turn it back and get it right side up again! And now they is asking to do it, the men better let them.” And the progress women, both black and white, have made since then shows Sojourner Truth didn’t fib when she said, “Truth is powerful, and it prevails.”
NOVEMBER 19

Senator Tom Harkin

It is long past time to eliminate bigotry in the workplace and to ensure equal opportunity for all Americans.

In December 2014, Tom Harkin delivered his farewell address to the U.S. Senate after 40 years of public service and leadership on disability issues. Senator Harkin’s landmark work on the Americans with Disabilities Act dramatically increased opportunities for the disabled. Because of the ADA, there are curb cuts, as well as equal access to buildings, phones, computers, and more. They allow the disabled to participate in our communities just like everyone else, putting up “a ladder of opportunity,” Harkin explained. The ADA doesn’t amount to a “moving walkway” or a handout for the disabled. “But we broke down barriers, opened doors of accessibility and accommodation, and said to people with disabilities, ‘Now go on follow your dreams, and in the words of the Army motto, be all you can be.’”

Few disabled people had that chance in 1988 when Harkin put his own dreams at risk by authoring and sponsoring the ADA. The first-time senator and Iowa Democrat was up for reelection in 1990, and by sponsoring the ADA, he locked horns with local government, employers, transit operators, and powerful business interests. In addition, the prospects for expanding civil rights safeguards to include another “class” of people were still uncertain despite support from the George H.W. Bush administration. If the bill failed, Harkin’s political career could also fade, as he was strongly warned. Yet he resolved to push the legislation through. “I didn’t get elected to get re-elected,” he said. “My brother is deaf. I understand discrimination. I understand what it means and what this country can look like in 30 years.”

Those years have passed, and America has made great strides toward giving the disabled a shot at the American dream. At the same time, the disabled still don’t have enough chances for competitive, integrated employment and true independent living with supports. These goals “need more development,” Harkin reminded his colleagues one more time. Then he closed his speech by making the sign for America in ASL. “All of us interconnected, bound together, in a single circle of inclusion with no one left out,” he said, “this is the ideal America toward which we must always aspire.”
NOVEMBER 20

Robert F. Kennedy

There are those that look at things the way they are, and ask why? I dream of things that never were, and ask why not.

TV host David Frost once asked Robert Kennedy how his obituary should read. Kennedy responded that there should be “something about the fact that I made some contribution to either my country or to those less well off. I think back to what Camus wrote about the fact that perhaps this world is a world in which children suffer, but we can lessen the number of suffering children, and if you do not do this, then who will do this? I’d like to feel that I’d done something to lessen that suffering.” And he did by bringing a message of change and hope to the dispossessed.

As attorney general under his brother, JFK, he resolved to help African Americans win the right to vote, attend integrated schools, and use public accommodations. He demonstrated his commitment to civil rights in 1962 by dispatching U.S. marshals and troops to enforce a federal court order admitting the first black student—James Meredith—to the University of Mississippi. The riot that followed Meredith’s registration at Ole Miss led Kennedy to work with JFK on the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which passed eight months after the president’s death.

Kennedy went on to serve New York in the Senate and launch state projects that assisted underprivileged children, disabled students, and depressed areas of Brooklyn. These programs were part of a larger effort to advance human rights in America and abroad. “Each time a man stands up for an ideal,” he told South African students, “or acts to improve the lot of others or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.”

And a great current of hope arose in March 1968 after Kennedy announced he was running for president of the United States. But his dreams of justice were shot down by an assassin’s bullet on June 5. Concerned about others to the end, he lay there on the floor, blood pooling around his head, and spoke his final words: “Is everyone okay?”
Voltaire

*I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.*

There’s a marble bust of the French philosopher Voltaire in the National Gallery of Art. It portrays the great man in old age with sagging skin and weary, lined eyes. Beneath them, a small, wry smile shows the sense of humor that led Voltaire to say, “God is a comedian playing to an audience too afraid to laugh.”

Voltaire was among the few who dared laugh, though his jeers were all in the service of human rights. He opposed censorship, religious extremism, capital punishment, war, and courts that deprived the accused of their rights. He countered with a campaign for brotherhood and toleration.

Ideals like this brought Voltaire both infamy and fame in the course of his 84 years. He spent the first 55 of them earning renown as France’s greatest writer. Along the way, he became rich and obtained posts in the court of Louis XV. But royal patronage didn’t stop Voltaire from attacking Louis’ decision to declare France a Catholic country and deny Protestants their civil rights. After Louis issued an order for his arrest in 1773, Voltaire took refuge in the court of Frederick II. The Prussian king was a fan but soon turned on Voltaire and had him arrested on a trumped-up charge. Voltaire again fled and spent 11 years in Ferney, near the French-Swiss border.

While there, he wrote his satire, *Candide* about a young prince who grows up believing “all is for the best in this best of all possible worlds.” But his travels expose him to slavery, the Inquisition, and an earthquake that kills thousands. These horrors lead Candide to withdraw to a farm, convinced that “we must cultivate our garden.”

In other words, we must try to make life better, though this isn’t the best of worlds. You can tell Voltaire believed this by looking at his bust. His somber eyes witnessed injustice, a sight that made him cry, “Shame to nations that are yet ignorant of toleration.” Still, there’s that little smile. It reveals the wit with which Voltaire conveyed the world’s woes. “Life is a shipwreck,” he admitted, “but we must not forget to sing in the lifeboats.”
Billie Jean King

Sport is a microcosm of society and it’s important sports people take responsibility and step up and lead.

Billie Jean King won for all women when she beat Bobby Riggs, a tennis champ and self-proclaimed “male chauvinist pig.” The spectacular “Battle of the Sexes” caught the attention of the nation, not just tennis fans. On September 20, 1973, Riggs rolled into the Houston Astrodome Court on a rickshaw pulled by a team of curvy women called “Bobby’s Bosom Buddies.” King entered like Cleopatra, in a gold litter carried by four muscular men dressed as ancient slaves. While King had embraced the show biz aspect of the event, she was all business when they faced the net. She ran Riggs ragged, winning in a match the London Times called “the drop shot and volley heard around the world.”

It resonated most with the many women it empowered. In 1973, the women’s lib movement was at its height as women struggled for equal pay both on and off the court. King was a natural spokesperson as part of the Virginia Slims Tennis Tour, made of nine women champs. The sponsor’s slogan was “You’ve come a long way, baby,” and King showed how far women had come in 1971 when she became the first woman athlete to win more than $100,000 in a season. When she faced Riggs later on, she knew it would “affect all women’s self-esteem” if she won. “I wanted to use sports for social change” she says.

As a sports icon, she has used her status to help many go a long way, too. When she became the first woman sports star to come out as gay, she energized the LGBT community though it meant losing all her endorsements. She has raised more than $225 million through the Elton John Foundation to help HIV/AIDS victims worldwide and also founded the Women’s Sports Foundation, which has awarded over $50 million to improve the lives of women and girls through physical activity and sports. Despite the advances women have made, they have yet to win pay equality, King complains. And as she considers the ongoing battle of the sexes, she urges women to keep their eyes on the ball. “Women have to stick up for themselves and fight!”
NOVEMBER 23

Chuck E. Schumer

Giving up even an ounce of precious freedom is a very serious thing to do.

In May 2015, Senator Chuck Schumer joined Senator Susan Collins of Maine in co-sponsoring the Home Health Care Planning Improvement Act. This bipartisan bill would allow nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nurse midwives, and clinical nurse specialists to order home health services for their patients. As a strong proponent of home care, the Democrat from New York said he would be “pushing the home health bill pretty hard.” His plan was to offer it as an amendment to another health care bill with a good chance to advance. And it’s not the only time he has gone to bat for seniors by helping them get the services they need.

In 2006, he launched a grassroots effort to protect Social Security from cuts proposed by the Federal Reserve. “When it comes to cutting Social Security, my answer is no way, no time, no-how,” he told seniors at a meeting in upstate New York. “The federal government made a promise to all Americans that if they worked hard, paid their taxes, and played by the rules, they could retire in dignity and get their benefits. We’re going to fight tooth and nail to protect Social Security,” he vowed.

He also fought for seniors in 2015 by urging the federal government to provide funding for Project Independence, a vital program serving over 50,000 seniors across Nassau County in New York. Project Independence provides transportation to supermarkets, doctor appointments, and senior events, along with in-home nursing visits and other home care and case worker needs to seniors.

These in-home services play a critical role in helping seniors maintain their dignity and independence, as Schumer pointed out in the debates over health care reform in 2009. As a sponsor of the Community First Choice Option, he addressed the institutional bias in health care by proposing that states get an enhanced Medicaid match for providing patients with services and supports at home. “The elderly and disabled should not have to choose between staying in their home and receiving the care they need,” he said, “and I will continue fighting until no one has to choose between their health and their home.”
NOVEMBER 24

Dale Carnegie

*Any fool can criticize, complain and condemn — and most folks do. But it takes character and self-control to be understanding and forgiving.*

It was 1936, and America was in the throes of the Depression. The wealthy few kicked up their heels while most folks barely scraped by. The time was ripe for the granddaddy of all self-help books. Millions of anxious readers took heart when Dale Carnegie preached a new gospel of success in *How to Win Friends & Influence People*.

Carnegie’s book was an extended sermon on how to belong: take the other guy’s viewpoint, be thoughtful, and have a positive outlook. “Everybody in the world is seeking happiness,” he wrote, “and there is one way to find it. That is by controlling your thoughts. Happiness doesn’t depend on outward conditions. It depends on inner conditions.”

Carnegie knew what he was talking about since he had grown up poor in Missouri. But his sense of character and boundless enthusiasm made him a star of his college debate team. After leaving school, he went on to dabble in sales and acting before deciding to teach public speaking to businessmen. He convinced the manager of a local YMCA to let him teach on commission, and off he went to his first class. But in 15 minutes he ran out of things to say. In desperation he got class members to talk about their own experiences. That regimen became the heart of Carnegie’s course as he went on to teach at YMCAs along the East Coast.

In the next 20 years, he planted the seeds for the Dale Carnegie franchise based on a homespun version of the golden rule. Make others happy, you’ll be happy – and never focus on yourself. “You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get people interested in you.”

This assessment of human nature made Carnegie famous, and his ideas still offer a lot in a country where the income gap is again growing. You may not get rich from reading Carnegie’s book, but you’ll think twice about how you deal with people. Being kind to others was the core of Carnegie’s message, and it’s always been the true measure of success.
NOVEMBER 25

Andrew Carnegie

Surplus wealth is a sacred trust which its possessor is bound to administer in his lifetime for the good of the community.

Andrew Carnegie preached “a gospel of wealth” that urged the rich to benefit the greater good. “The problem of our age is the proper administration of wealth,” he wrote in 1889, “so that the ties of brotherhood may still bind together the rich and poor in harmonious relationship. The conditions of human life have not only been changed but revolutionized within the past few hundred years. In former days, there was little difference between the dwelling, dress, food, and environment of the chief and those of his retainers.” But the gap had grown as the Gilded Age produced a new class of self-made rich. “The contrast between the palace of the millionaire and the cottage of their laborer with us today,” he explained, “measures the change which has come with civilization.”

Carnegie had known both sides of the spectrum in his rags-to-riches career. A billionaire, by current standards, he started life as a “bobbin boy” in a cotton mill for a salary of $1.20 a week. His ferocious drive allowed him to advance quickly and become a manager with the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, where he saw the economic value of iron and steel. Using his financial skills and eye for innovation, he consolidated several small factories and mines to create the world’s largest producer of iron and steel. In 1901, he sold Carnegie Steel Company to financier J.P. Morgan. The sale netted him over $200 million. And at age 65, he decided to spend the rest of his days helping others to better themselves.

His belief in self-improvement led him to focus on education, and over the next 18 years, he gave away $350 million — or 90 percent of his wealth — much of it to establish a university, a music hall, and over 2,500 libraries. After his death, his last $30 million went to charities and a foundation to continue his work. And his gospel of wealth is again being preached as the gap between incomes grows. People like Bill Gates and Warren Buffett have vowed to give away all their wealth while they’re still alive. They agree with Carnegie that “the man who dies thus rich dies disgraced.”
NOVEMBER 26

Mary Walker

_You must come to terms with the reality that nothing outside ourselves, be it people or things, is actually responsible for our happiness._

“A woman reasons by telegraph and a man’s stage coach reasoning cannot keep up with hers,” Mary Walker once said. And Walker was ahead of both because she made her own rules. She became a doctor when few women were even credentialed in nursing and got divorced at a time when most women defined themselves as wives and mothers. She questioned the medical wisdom of the times and criticized surgeons for doing too many amputations. She lectured on women’s rights while wearing men’s clothes and remains the only women to receive a Congressional Medal of Honor, recognizing her courage during the Civil War.

When hostilities began in 1861, she pronounced herself “confident that the God of justice would not allow the war to end without its developing into a war of liberation.” Her wish to serve the cause of justice led her to close her medical practice in Rome, New York, descend on Washington, DC, and demand a spot in the Union Army. Denied a commission as a medical officer, she volunteered anyway to treat wounded soldiers. During two years on the front lines, she observed her colleagues performing unnecessary amputations. She began counseling soldiers against surgery and many wrote her thankful letters, reporting their limbs to be working fine.

Her growing fame as a friend to soldiers finally earned her a commission as an acting assistant surgeon. Her duties regularly included missions outside of Union lines since she was also assigned to spy under the guise of a Union doctor. In 1864, she was captured by Confederate troops, who put her in a jail where she spent six months eating maggot-filled food and sleeping on an infested mattress.

Her sacrifices earned her the Medal of Honor in 1865, but Congress rescinded it in 1917 after tweaking the criteria to include only “actual combat with the enemy.” This didn’t stop her from wearing the medal every day of her life, and in 1977 President Jimmy Carter reinstated her award. It was vindication of her conviction that women could more than keep up with men. “Let the generations know,” she said, “that women in uniform also guaranteed their freedom.”
NOVEMBER 27

Benigno Aquino, Jr.

I will never forgive myself if I have to live with the knowledge that I could have done something and I did not do anything.

Ninoy Aquino did not fear dying. “A time comes in a man’s life,” he said, “when he must prefer a meaningful death to a meaningless life.” That moment came in 1983 when the Filipino freedom fighter returned home after three years of self-imposed exile. When his plane touched down in Manila International Airport, army personnel boarded on orders from the Philippines’ corrupt president, Ferdinand Marcos. The soldiers ordered Aquino to disembark, and when he walked out onto the tarmac, they refused to let his companions follow. Suddenly the sound of a shot rang through the plane, followed by wails and three more shots. Two bodies lay on the ground in a bloody pool. One of them was Aquino, dead at the age of 50.

Until then, he had spent much of his life guiding his nation in “the ways of freedom,” as he once explained. The scion of a prominent political clan, he entered politics at an early age. At 23, he became his nation’s youngest mayor, at 27 its youngest vice-governor, and at 29 its youngest governor. He had been elected to the Senate by 1972, when Marcos declared martial law. After publicly blasting Marcos, Aquino was jailed on trumped-up charges. “For seven years I was not allowed to see the moon and stars,” he recalled. Denied company and books, he would spend his days walking back and forth across his narrow cell. When he got tired, he would fall asleep “knowing that tomorrow will be the same.”

These endless tomorrows crept by at a petty pace until Aquino suffered a heart attack and Marcos allowed him to go to the U.S. for surgery. He remained there until the dictator’s health began to flag and with it his iron grip on the nation. Despite the risk, Aquino decided to return to the Philippines and help bring back freedom. He never had a chance, but news of his violent death sparked massive protests that led to the end of Marcos’ 20-year regime and restoration of democracy with the election of Aquino’s wife, Corazon. This return to the freedom justified his unswerving faith that “the Filipino is worth dying for.”
Bob Byers

After all the struggles we went through as a company and in our personal lives, it all started to change when we began to think of others.

Bob and Joyce Byers think you can run a business in the spirit of Christmas. The holidays are the busiest time for their company, Byers Choice, as 80,000 people converge on their factory in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. The attraction is a miniature street straight out of Dickens filled with the Byers’ famous Caroler figurines. Holiday shoppers love the handcrafted dolls adorned in felt scarves and hats with their heads cocked to one side and mouths open in song. The Carolers are sold in over 3,000 stores and they’ve allowed the Byers to give back liberally to the community. While most companies dream of increasing their profits by 20 percent each year, the Byers give 20 percent of their annual profits to good causes. “Part of being a good Christian is caring about others,” says Bob. He and Joyce have believed in sharing since they started their company in 1978.

The impetus was a trip to London they took in the 1960s. While there Joyce saw a set of 19th-century porcelain figurines in an antique dealer’s window. They were so much more charming than the glitzy decorations she saw in U.S. stores that she began making her own figurines when she returned home. A neighbor suggested she take them to a local store, where they quickly sold out. Soon dozens of stores asked Joyce to supply them with Carolers. She fulfilled the demand with help from her two sons and increasingly Bob, after an economic downturn led his construction business to fail.

In time, Joyce’s hobby became a multi-million-dollar business known for its humane values. “We wanted a family atmosphere, not a factory,” Joyce says. So they have a generous profit-sharing plan and award yearly $2,500 scholarships to each of their employee’s college-bound children. Their goodwill extends to a wide range of charities, including the Salvation Army, YMCA, and Habitat for Humanity. It’s how they give thanks for their blessings, Joyce explains. They decided early on not to be scrooges when they wondered what to do with all their money. “The obvious answer was to share it with others,” she says, and honor the spirit of Christmas all year long.
The long work of bringing harmony to the earth requires a holistic vision based on mature values and deep intuitions.

One of the world’s best-known peace activists met a violent end. In 1992, 44-year-old Petra Kelly, founder of Germany’s Green Party, was murdered by Gert Bastian, her lover and co-founder of the party. Kelly was asleep when Bastian shot her in the head before killing himself on the stairway outside the bedroom. At first, the police termed the deaths a “double suicide,” but there was no evidence to support this claim. Besides, those who knew Kelly denied that she would have chosen to die. She was too committed to preserving life as an advocate for women’s rights, the environment, and nonviolence.

Her motto, “Be gentle and subversive,” reflected the years she spent in the U.S., where her mother was born. While attending college in Washington, DC, she campaigned for Robert F. Kennedy in the 1968 election and became involved in the civil rights movement led by Martin Luther King, Jr. King’s commitment to nonviolent protest would shape her thinking after she returned to Germany in 1970, the year her sister died from eye cancer at age ten. The belief that exposure to nuclear radiation caused her sister’s death sparked Kelly’s lifelong passion for environmental causes.

In 1979, she helped found the first green party to rise to prominence worldwide. As the party’s young, charismatic spokesperson, she became the feminist face of Germany’s anti-nuclear movement and a proponent of grassroots action to build a more inclusive form of democracy. “The vision I see,” she explained, “is not only a movement of direct democracy, of self- and co-determination and nonviolence, but a movement in which politics means the power to love and the power to feel united on the spaceship Earth.”

And her own sense of unity with mankind also led her to use her status to defend victims of oppression, stage protests against apartheid, and take up the cause of Tibet in its struggle for independence from China. The Dalai Lama commended her on the tenth anniversary of her death as he mourned the loss of this champion of peace and planet Earth. “Her spirit and legacy of human solidarity,” he said, “continue to inspire and encourage us all.”
NOVEMBER 30

Winston Churchill

_We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give._

In May 1940, an aging British politician got up in the House of Commons to make a speech. British forces had just been evacuated from France, fleeing the German Army, and Britain seemed sure to be invaded soon. At a moment when all seemed lost, Winston Churchill vowed to wage a relentless fight. “We shall go on to the end,” he declared. “We shall never surrender.” They were words that announced what had to be done, though many of the most powerful people in Parliament thought it was time to make a deal with the Germans.

It wasn’t the first time Churchill had gone against the grain. In 1900, he joined the Commons as a Conservative. Four years later, he “crossed the chamber” and became a Liberal. His work on behalf of social reforms such as an eight-hour workday, a government-mandated minimum wage, a state-run labor exchange for unemployed workers, and a system of public health insurance infuriated his Conservative colleagues. They called him a traitor to his class, leading him focus on foreign affairs.

When the Nazis came to power in 1933, Churchill warned his countrymen of the perils of German nationalism. But few listened until 1939 when Hitler invaded Poland. Britain and France declared war. Neville Chamberlain was pushed out of office as prime minister and Churchill took his place.

“I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat,” Churchill admitted as he predicted a long, hard road to triumph. The future looked grim, but Churchill kept British spirits high by giving stirring speeches and persuading FDR to provide war supplies to the Allies before America entered World War II.

After winning the war, Churchill lost the 1945 election to the Labor Party. But he returned to power in 1950 and served as PM for five years. And he received further recognition after his death. Hundreds of millions of viewers tuned in to their TVs in 1965 to watch the largest state funeral the world had ever seen. People around the globe honored the man who stayed the course despite tremendous odds. “If you’re going through hell,” he famously advised, “keep going.”
DECEMBER
DECEMBER 1

Lee Trevino

In the game of life it’s a good idea to have a few early losses, which relieves you of the pressure of trying to maintain an undefeated season.

Lee Trevino is the classic rags-to-riches story in golf. He’s now a six-time major champion, but he never lost sight of his humble roots. This son of a poor Mexican-American household is a self-made player who won championships because he owned his golf swing. And he’s used it to give others a better shot at life. For more than 25 years, Trevino has been virtually on call for countless charities, agreeing to be “auctioned” to a donor, then playing golf with groups around the country. “I do more for charity than probably anyone,” he says, “simply because people always want to play golf with me and will donate to something.”

The people he’s played with include a president and a king, though Trevino was raised in a three-room shack without plumbing or a father. “My family was so poor,” he once joked, “that when somebody threw our dog a bone, he had to call for a fair catch.” He began working at age 5 and taught himself to play on the golf course near his home. He built on that experience as a caddie and driving range hand before spending four years as a Marine. When he finally made it to the PGA Tour, he won 29 events, including six majors, and then added another 29 wins on the senior tour. His crowning moment was winning an 18-hole playoff over Jack Nicklaus at the 1971 U.S. Open at Merion, a round of golf the “Merry Mex” began by pulling a rubber snake from his bag and flinging it at Nicklaus.

His sense of humor is only surpassed by the humanity he shows. Trevino was the 1971 National Christmas Sports Ambassador and a member of both the President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports and the National Multiple Sclerosis Society Sports Committee. He supports our service members and he has so much passion for St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital that he gave them $500,000 after recording a hole-in-one in the Par-3 Shootout. “That’s what I do,” Trevino explained. “I don’t want the money. I just give it away.”
Tom Rath

*When your boss and colleagues care enough to invest in your health, it is good for you and the business.*

Tom Rath knows that small choices lead to big changes in our wellbeing. He’s spread the word as a senior scientist and advisor to Gallup who studies the role of human behavior in health, business, and economics. Based on extensive research, he has written a number of worldwide bestsellers: *How Full is Your Bucket?, StrengthsFinder 2.0,* and *Strengths-Based Leadership and Wellbeing: The Five Essential Elements.* His latest book, *Eat Move Sleep,* has received critical acclaim as a transformative work, and he wrote it because he was sick of seeing people die too young. After losing far too many friends, colleagues, and loved ones to largely preventable conditions, he had enough. It had become clear to him that improving health is the biggest social and economic challenge of our time. So he stepped away from a job he loved to devote all his time to fixing this colossal problem.

In his most recent book, he sets out ways for managers to make the workplace healthier and more productive. “The conventional wisdom is wrong,” he explains. “You can’t be anything you want to be, but you can be a lot more than you are. The key for you and the people you lead is to step back and reflect on your talents and commit them to the people you serve.” And one way to achieve this is to focus on positive reactions. When you work with others, you need to have three positive interactions for every negative one. Otherwise productivity will go down, so trying to bring out people’s best could be the best investment you make.

Relationships at work matter, Rath explains, because a bad work environment leads to enormous stress. Managers can build a healthy workplace and get staff to follow their lead by focusing on a few key issues: “trust, caring, stability, and hope.” At the same time, Rath reminds us, managers need to put their own health first, so they have the energy to serve both those they lead and those they love. “Wellbeing is a contribution we make to our families and communities that continues to live on after we’re gone.”
DECEMBER 3

Joseph Conrad

Woe to the man whose heart has not learned while young to hope, to love — and to put its trust in life.

“My task is, above all, to make you see,” Joseph Conrad once explained. And he wanted us to see a lot, especially the ties that bind people together. The Polish-born writer came to know a wide swath of mankind after traveling the world for 20 years. As a young man, he became fascinated by the sea and sailed around the globe, first as a sailor and then as a captain. Over time, he was saddened to see the strife caused by religious divisions and came to look on humankind not as different nationalities and races but simply as people. It was the brotherhood and sisterhood of all human beings that concerned him in a number of novels he wrote from the heart.

During the long journeys he had started to write and decided to devote himself to literature at the age of 36. After settling in England, he turned his life experience into such well-known works as Lord Jim, Nostromo, The Secret Agent, and Heart of Darkness. These books enriched the English language, which Conrad had learned when he was 20 years old. They also deepened our sense of duty to others, especially in the face of danger and the unknown. Conrad had confronted both at sea and his experiences led him to explore honor, steadfastness, and integrity in human conduct.

His heroes are men who struggle to be good and his favorite theme is that of affection and devotion, tested by danger, nature, and savage men. The object of this devotion may be a child, a ship, or a woman. It may involve loyalty between men of different races. And it may lead to self-sacrifice, as it does for Lord Jim, a young seaman who gives his life to atone for a moment of weakness when he abandoned ship during a collision. By doing so, Jim became the kind of hero that Conrad hoped we all could be. “To be hopeful in an artistic sense,” he said, “it is not necessary to think the world is good. It is enough to believe there is no impossibility of it being made so.”
DECEMBER 4

Edith Cavell

_Patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness towards anyone._

On October 12, 1915, Edith Cavell was executed by a German firing squad in Brussels, Belgium. The 49-year-old nurse was there working at the Berkendael Institute, where she headed a training school for nurses. In 1914, when World War I broke out, she was visiting family in England but chose to return to her post in Belgium though Germans now occupied the country. “At a time like this,” she explained, “I am needed more than ever.” And her hands were full after the institute became a Red Cross hospital where Cavell cared for both German soldiers and troops from Allied forces.

The Red Cross had a code of non-involvement in military affairs but Cavell ignored it to help some 200 Allied soldiers. She began by hiding two sick English soldiers in the hospital until they recovered and finding guides who helped them escape to England. These actions put her at risk because the German army threatened strict punishment for anyone found to be “aiding and abetting the enemy.” Yet Cavell continued to defy the occupying forces. “Nothing but physical impossibility, lack of space and money would make me close my doors to Allied refugees,” she later explained.

So she joined a small group that helped protect fugitive Allied soldiers from the Germans, who were putting many of those they captured to death. Cavell hid the soldiers until arrangements were made for their escape, supplied them with money and papers, and found guides to lead them to safety. She would even take them to secret meetings, choosing crowded streets so as not to attract attention. And she was careful not to let her staff or students get involved because she didn’t want to put them in danger if she was caught.

It was good thinking because the Germans arrested her on July 31 after capturing members of an escape route team she had worked with. Believing that the others had already confessed, Cavell admitted she had “successfully conducted Allied soldiers to the enemy of the German people.” Under German law, the penalty was death. Yet her only defense was “I can’t stop while there are lives to be saved.”
DECEMBER 5

Walt Disney

If you can dream it, you can do it.

Walt Disney built a multimedia empire built on America’s dreams. He dedicated Disneyland to the “ideals, dreams, and hard facts that have created America.” He fused education and fun at EPCOT Center a daring vision of the future. Then there are the groundbreaking films that draw viewers into a world of wonder with Cinderella, Snow White, Sleeping Beauty, and Pinocchio. The puppet who wanted to be a boy believed that “when you wish upon a star, your dreams come true.” So did Disney. His dreams sustained him during a poverty-stricken, work-filled youth. Disney had no childhood, so he spent his adult life trying to invent one and building magical memories for kids of all ages.

The films and theme parks “began with a dream and a mouse,” Disney explained. After becoming a commercial artist, he discovered animation and formed a struggling partnership with his older brother, Roy. Their business was at its lowest ebb when he sketched Mickey on a train ride, and in 1928, the young mouse broke box office records with a few clicks of his tail. The films that followed in the thirties and forties brought animation to new heights as they evoked a lost world of childhood. Disney produced a magic realm where animals spoke, flowers fell in love, and brooms danced. It was a formula that grabbed both kids and adults, just as Disney intended.

This vision of childhood regained also sustained him as he mortgaged himself to the hilt to build Disneyland. The $17 million he spent on his famous theme park didn’t prevent the 1955 opening from being plagued by power failures, a gas leak, and epic traffic jams. Still his “work of love” became a stupendous success. In the first seven weeks, over a million people came and enjoyed the perfect childhood world Disney had created.

One day, a young visitor came up and said, “I understand you are one of the wisest men in the world, Mr. Disney.” Disney wasn’t sure about that, but he offered the boy some advice: “Think, believe, dream, dare.” He knew “all our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them.”
Joyce Kilmer

Poems are made by fools lie me / But only God can make a tree.

Joyce Kilmer made his mark on the world with 12 lines of verse. Everyone knows the words: “I think that I shall never see / A poem as lovely as a tree.” What they don’t know is that the author of “Trees” was not just a poet. He was also a features writer for the *New York Times* and a decorated hero of World War I. When the war broke out in 1914, he was living outside Manhattan with his wife and five small children. His small, white house on a wooded lot was an ideal refuge from the concrete jungle of Manhattan. From his office, Kilmer could gaze out on a splendid stand of trees that lifted their leafy arms to pray like the one in his famous poem.

Kilmer also prayed after his second daughter died. But his grief didn’t stop him from thinking about his country when the U.S. entered the war in 1917. As a family man he wasn’t required to join the services. Yet he volunteered for the infantry and was soon deployed to France. Before departing, he promised a publisher to write a book about his experiences in battle.

But once in France he became absorbed in the dangerous work of collecting data from the enemy’s front line. “At present I am a poet trying to be a soldier,” he explained in a letter home. “To tell the truth, I am not interested in writing nowadays, except in so far as writing is the expression of something beautiful. The sort of book I care to write about the war is the sort people will read after the war is over — a century after it is over.”

He never wrote that book because he was killed by a sniper’s bullet at age 31. But six weeks before his death he composed a poem in which he accepted the sacrifice to come. “What matters death if Freedom be not dead?” he wrote. “Who fights for Freedom goes with joyful tread to meet the fires of Hell against him hurled.” They’re lovely lines we still read almost a century after the war came to an end.
DECEMBER 7

Susan Collins

We will have to work together in a bipartisan spirit and with our international partners if we are going to achieve progress and peace now and for future generations.

Susan Collins hasn’t missed a single vote since begin sworn into the Senate. The Republican from Maine committed herself to making every vote after completing her first term in 1999. At the time, “I started thinking about my hero, Margaret Chase Smith, the legendary senator from Maine,” she recalls, “and the fact that she was known for her diligence as a senator and compiled a record of voting consecutively without missing a vote for 13 years until she was forced by surgery to miss a vote.” Smith also gained fame in 1950 for publicly denouncing Joe McCarthy, and she was still serving the public in 1971, when Collins made her first visit to Washington as part of a Senate program for youth. Smith sat the 17-year-old student down and spoke with her for two hours. “She had such integrity,” Collins recalls. “She always did what was right.”

So has Collins. And she’s gained renown for working across party lines to gain consensus on pressing issues. As a leading health care advocate, she supports programs that expand access to care, especially in rural parts of the country. As founder of the Senate Diabetes Caucus, she helped triple funding for diabetes research. As co-chair of the Congressional Task Force on Alzheimer’s Disease, she works to increase funding for Alzheimer’s research and support family caregivers. She led the fight to restore critical funding to Medicare home health, and as chair of the Senate Committee on Aging, issues affecting home care and hospice are “at the top of my agenda,” she says. Her passion for home care and hospice comes from first-hand experience of what these services do. “Because of the compassionate care they received,” she says, “my family and friends were able to have peaceful departures from this world.”

The people Collins has lost include Smith, who died in 1995, but Collins thinks about her often. In her office, there’s a prominent photo of the woman who shaped her career. Letters Smith sent to Collins, then a high school senior, hang on either side. “Now I sit at her desk on the Senate floor,” Collins says, “which I think is so cool.”
DECEMBER 8

Wendell Pierce

Art is a form in which people can reflect on who we are as human beings and come to some understanding of this journey we are on.

After Hurricane Katrina, Wendell Pierce felt called to respond through his art. He was in his hometown of New Orleans to act in Waiting for Godot, an absurdist play written in 1949. It’s about two men waiting on an empty road for someone to save them and remind them of their purpose in life. “What are we doing here? That is the question,” Pierce’s character said. And the words inspired him as he faced a sea of faces in the Ninth Ward, the area hardest hit by Katrina. “I turned to the audience,” he recalls, “and almost breaking character. I said, ‘Let us do something while we have the chance. At this moment, at this place, this hallowed ground where so many people have died, we owe it to them. Let’s do something while we have the chance.’” And he has. Pierce is helping rebuild the historic black neighborhood where he grew up.

“I just want my city back,” Pierce said in the TV series Treme, where he played a down-and-out trombonist in post-Katrina New Orleans. And he acted on this line in real life when he formed the Pontchartrain Community Development Association. Since 2007, his nonprofit has built 40 affordable homes on abandoned properties and four convenience stores around the city. He plans to build 85 more homes, but his efforts have been beset with bureaucratic snafus, much like many of the plots from Treme and The Wire, in which he played a Baltimore detective. “It’s life imitating art and art imitating life,” Pierce explains. “The shows influence me and the work I do influences the shows.”

Art and life collided in The Wire, hailed for its realistic portrayal of urban problems. Pierce’s detective spends his days on the killing streets of the late eighties when crime in Baltimore reached new heights. And those streets erupted again in 2015 after the death of Freddie Gray. Shortly afterward, Pierce announced his plans to invest in a $20-million construction project to develop apartment buildings and provide jobs. Pierce isn’t waiting for someone to tell him what we’re doing here. He knows that helping others is the purpose of life.
DECEMBER 9

Tip O’Neil

This nation is great. Why is it great? Because we are the voice of the American people and we respond to their will.

Tip O’Neill believed “all politics is local,” an idea that’s still relevant to politics today. Although lawmakers in Washington make decisions for the whole country, their loyalty ultimately belongs to the constituents they serve. Based on this conviction, Rep. O’Neill never forgot that he should remember the people he was representing. They were the working folk of Massachusetts and he never took them for granted during his 34 years in Congress, nine of them as speaker of the House.

Throughout this long stretch of time, he was a fighter for liberal causes. He went against President Lyndon Johnson as one of the first politicians to come out against the Vietnam War. He served as majority leader during the Watergate scandal and was the most prominent Democrat in the House to call for the impeachment of Richard Nixon. He was an important force in the Northern Ireland peace process, and most of all he was an advocate for the New Deal policies of FDR. To O’Neill, the Democratic Party was the party of the cities, the working people, the poor, the needy, the unemployed, the sick and disinflicted. “And no way are we ever going to let them down,” he would insist. He said he opposed a balanced budget because it would “dismantle the programs that I’ve been working for as an old liberal.”

His concern for social programs inspired him to lead the opposition to Republican President Ronald Reagan. Though the two men shared an Irish heritage and interest in sports, they had a profound disagreement about government. The speaker regarded government as the solution to many social ills, while Reagan regarded it as a problem itself, impeding economic and social progress.

Despite their differences the two men understood the art of the deal. In 1983, they forged a bipartisan agreement that strengthened Social Security by more heavily taxing upper-income retirees. They achieved a similar compromise in the Tax Reform Act of 1968 by plugging tax loopholes for the rich. And though they often clashed during the day, they were friends after hours, prompting Reagan to answer the phone with “Tip, is it after 6 p.m.?”
DECEMBER 10

Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet

*I only crave a cup of consolation for the deaf and dumb from the same fountain at which the Hindoo, the African, and the savage are beginning to draw the water of eternal life.*

The American Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb opened its doors in 1817. At the time, most Americans thought you couldn’t teach the deaf. But Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, the school’s founder, believed that signing would allow the deaf to become full-fledged members of the nation. As a young man, Gallaudet had hoped to become a missionary, but poor health stood in his way. By chance, he found a new mission: teaching the deaf and building a community where they could truly belong.

In 1814, he was in Hartford, Connecticut, watching the children play in his father’s garden. Among them was a neighbor’s deaf child who could neither read nor write. After watching her try to keep up, he began teaching her, to the delight of her physician father who convinced state lawmakers to fund America’s first school for the deaf.

Gallaudet prepared himself to be principal of the new school by studying the methods of Europe. In France, he met Laurent Clerc, a teacher at the Royal School for Deaf-Mutes, and persuaded him to be the first member of his faculty. With Clerc’s assistance, Gallaudet ran the school for 13 years. Besides teaching six hours a day, he handled correspondence, greeted visitors, and acted like a father to his students. In 1828, the school’s accomplishments gained the interest of President Monroe, who invited Gallaudet and three of his students to appear before Congress, where Gallaudet praised signing as a “natural language” through which all people could express their thoughts.

It remains the basis of education at Gallaudet University, founded by Gallaudet’s son, Edward Miner. Gallaudet students showed their commitment to their heritage in 1988 when they forced the board of trustees to hire Gallaudet’s first deaf president. In 2006, the students successfully protested again when the university tried to hire a new president who wasn’t committed to signing.

The students’ victory over the administration signaled the ongoing ascent of deaf power. By acting on their own behalf, the students had fulfilled — even exceeded — Gallaudet’s mission to give deaf “the dignity of citizens of a flourishing and happy community.” Now “who knows,” the students exulted, “what we can accomplish next.”
DECEMBER 11

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

The salvation of mankind lies only in making everything the concern of all.

In 1962, a middle-aged, high-school teacher defied the Soviet state. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn’s weapon was words as he told the truth about Stalin’s labor camps to the world. *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* describes a single day in a Siberian camp where cold, starvation, and punishing work crush inmates’ bodies and souls. The novel begins at dawn when every man submits to a body search in the freezing wind before going to work on nothing more than a bowl of broth. What follows is an account of the minutiae of daily life. If Ivan does not watch his food bowl, someone will steal it. He has to sew his bread into his mattress in order to keep it. Informers are knifed, and if one man defects the rest are punished. Then it all begins again since this is just one of the 3,653 days of Ivan’s sentence.

The relentless horror of the camps came from Solzhenitsyn’s own experience. He was arrested after World War II for criticizing Stalin in letters to a friend. The eight years he spent in confinement were the end of his life as a free man but the start of his life as a writer. “I can say without affectation,” he explained, “that I belong to the Russian convict world no less than I do to Russian literature. I got my education there and it will last forever” — prescient words since his ordeal inspired him to write enduring works that made him a symbol of resistance to communist rule.

His ethical stance earned him a Nobel Prize in 1970, though his works were banned in Russia. With his masterpiece, *The Gulag Archipelago*, he gave a name to the network of labor camps set up during Stalin’s drive to industrialize Russia. Some 60 million died in the camps, Solzhenitsyn revealed. And his insistence on speaking out led to his exile from Russia for 20 years. But it gained him fame as a prophet who bore witness to tyranny. “The simple step of a courageous individual is not to take part in the lie,” he contended. “The word of truth outweighs the world.”
DECEMBER 12

William Lloyd Garrison

*Enslave the liberty of but one human being and the liberties of the world are in peril.*

On January 1, 1831, a crusading young editor published a new weekly paper. In the maiden issue of *The Liberator*, William Lloyd Garrison announced his conviction that slavery was a sin. “I am in earnest — I will not equivocate — I will not excuse — I will not retreat a single inch — And I will be heard!” He was as he helped make slavery a burning issue. At one point, he even set fire to a copy of the U.S. Constitution, declaring it “an agreement with hell” for permitting human bondage. The public immolation of the law of the land dramatized an argument he would make in over 1,800 issues of his paper: “Whenever there is a human being, I see God-given rights inherent in that being whatever may be the sex or complexion.”

He felt for society’s downtrodden members because he’d endured hard times as a child after his father left the family. At 13, he went to work as a printer’s apprentice for a semi-weekly newspaper and came to try his hand at writing. At 20, he decided to start his own paper to fight injustice, something he felt he had suffered all his life. The injustice that most disturbed him was slavery, which erupted in violence soon after he printed his first issue in Boston.

The Nat Turner Slave Insurrection brought Garrison infamy and fame. After sales of his rag-tag publication soared, slave owners, looking for a scapegoat, blamed him for the violence. There were death threats on his life and an angry mob tried to lynch him after he made a fiery speech. The dangers he faced didn’t stop him from organizing the American Anti-Slavery Society and promoting controversial causes like women’s suffrage and temperance.

And he kept publishing *The Liberator* until after the Civil War. A few months before the last issue appeared in 1865, he made a speech to Charleston blacks in which he explained why he had embraced their cause. It was “because you were the children of a common Father created in the divine image,” he told them, “and as much entitled to liberty as the proudest slaveholder that ever walked the earth.”
DECEMBER 13

Gloria Casarez

Engage, find your voice, expand your community.

“I am Rocky,” Gloria Casarez said after learning she had breast cancer in 2009. She was “greased up for the fight” and convinced she could win. After all, she’d faced up to big foes all her life. The Philadelphia activist made the city of brotherly love more loving for those who were on the ropes, especially minorities and LGBT youth. As director of the Mayor’s Office of LGBT Affairs, she punched down barriers to equal rights, health care, and education. During her tenure, Philly was ranked #1 in a survey of the nation’s large cities by the Human Rights Campaign’s Municipal Equality Index.

This knockout score reflected her gift for bringing people together to work for a cause. In college, she was a founder of Empty the Shelters, a national student group that pushed for creative answers to homelessness, and her role would later earn her kudos. But at the time, it dismayed her immigrant parents. “I was the first person in my family to go to school,” she recalled, “and they thought I was going to become a big-time lawyer and make lots of money, so when I became an anti-poverty activist, they were like, ‘Wait, that’s not about money.’ And I responded, ‘It is about money, just not about me getting any of it.’”

But she did get to make a difference in the city where she held several hats. After college, she was program director for the LGBT Center at the University of Pennsylvania, executive director of the Gay and Lesbian Latino AIDS Education Initiative, and a leader of the Bread and Roses Community Fund to advance economic and racial justice. Then she worked in City Hall until a few weeks before her death at 37.

A couple of years earlier, she threw the ceremonial first pitch at Citizens Bank Park before a Phillies game against the Astros. Determined not to embarrass herself, she had trained for this moment. The ball went straight into the catcher’s mitt as the crowd roared. It was hard not to be in her corner as she stood up for the oppressed. Like Rocky, she kept fighting until the end.
DECEMBER 14

Margaret Chase Smith

The right way is not always the popular and easy way. Standing for right when it is unpopular is a true test of moral character.

During the Cold War, one brave woman stood up to a bully. At the time, Senator Joe McCarthy was conducting a witch hunt for communists in the State Department. No one in the Senate dared take him on except Margaret Chase Smith — though she seemed an unlikely David for a Goliath whose scare tactics cowed the nation. She was the shortest member of the Senate and its only woman. She was a more junior senator than McCarthy, having been elected in 1948 after eight years in the House that began when she was appointed to fill the seat of her late husband. She was a loyal Republican and McCarthy was a powerful member of her party, who could hurt her in the political arena. Yet on June 1, 1950, she made a “declaration of conscience” on the Senate floor. In it she denounced McCarthy for his reliance on “the four horsemen of calumny — fear, ignorance, bigotry, and smear.”

McCarthy responded by stripping her of committee assignments and sneering at her as “Snow White.” But Smith didn’t let jeers or attacks stop her from doing what was just and right. Her constituents from Maine responded by voting her into the House in her own right and electing her to four terms in the Senate. During her time in public office, she put principles above party since “public service,” she believed, “must be a complete dedication to the people and the nation.” As a member of Congress, she supported FDR’s New Deal legislation to the dismay of her more conservative colleagues. In the Senate, she again irked members of her party by being a strong supporter of civil rights and an early advocate of government-financed health care for the aged. Though she denied being a feminist, she co-sponsored the Equal Rights Amendment and helped women get permanent status in the armed forces.

The importance of a strong national defense was on her mind as the Cold War went on. In 1961, she was so opposed to reductions in military spending that Khrushchev called her an “Amazon warmonger,” another smear that Smith dismissed. “Some Amazon,” she scoffed. “I’m five foot three.”
DECEMBER 15

Phil Sokolof

*Even though writing checks and giving away money is worthwhile, it doesn’t compare to hands-on.*

“Would you let your child eat nine strips of bacon a day?” asked the headline in a full-page ad from 1995. It appeared in newspapers nationwide, thanks to an Omaha businessman who fought the fattening of America. Over nearly two decades, Phil Sokolof spent $15 million of his own money to change American eating habits. “Cut fat and live longer,” he urged in a billboard that towered over Times Square. “Cholesterol kills,” he warned in a crusade that targeted fast-food chains, food processors, and dairies.

He realized it was true in 1966 after having a near-fatal heart attack at 44. At the time, he had made millions in the construction field after an early career as a song-and-dance man. And he became a one-man band for better health upon learning his cholesterol was a lethal 300 due to a diet of greasy foods. People needed to know more about the artery-clogging substance, he thought. And inspired by his wife, who taught blind children, he took his message right to the public.

After forming National Heart Savers Association in 1985, he threw his heart into his new task. He organized a cholesterol-testing campaign that tested 200,000 people in 16 states. He bought full-page newspaper ads scolding big companies for their ingredients. “McDonald’s, Your Hamburgers Have Too Much Fat!” one protested. “THE POISONING OF AMERICA” blazed across the top of another on the perils of tropical oils. And they forced big companies like General Mills and Proctor & Gamble to pull the oils from their products. But Sokolof considered his greatest coup a 1990 ad campaign that gained support for a federal law requiring nutritional labels.

This success made him envision new triumphs. “I can’t say we’re going to tear down the golden arches,” he said, “but I am confident that by the year 2000 they are going to be serving healthier food.” And his prediction came true, though it took longer than he expected. In 2013, McDonald’s promised the Clinton Global Initiative to give customers more access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Mickey D’s has come to realize, as Sokolof pointed out, “We Can’t Continue to Deep-Fry Our Children’s Health.”
DECEMBER 16

Margaret Mead

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

What matters more: nature or nurture? People have asked the question for ages. Margaret Mead gave new answers by bringing the insights of anthropology to the public. Based on her study of South Pacific cultures, she described racism, sexism, and intolerance as problems we can solve since we are not hard-wired to hate. “Love and hate,” she explained in 1969, “are two aspects of the human capacity to react to other human beings in terms of experience. The infant whose world is warm, giving, and reliable responds with love that echoes the love he has received. But the infant who is continually hungry, cold, and neglected will come to hate those who hurt him and do not attend to his needs. In a sense, both love and hate are learned: the infant is born with the capacity to respond and experience guides his learning.”

Culture continues to shape human character, as she saw in the 1920s during expeditions to Samoa and New Guinea, where she lived with tribal peoples. Her experiences there led her to produce a number of ground-breaking books directed toward the general public. In *Coming of Age in Samoa*, a provocative bestseller, she contended that adolescence might be less stormy in cultures where sexual mores are less strict. In other words, so-called “primitive” people had something to teach “civilized” people, as she pointed out in *Growing Up in New Guinea*. She followed up these early works with *Male and Female* and *Growth and Culture* in which she claimed that differences between men and women were the product of social expectations not genetics.

And she brought her findings to bear on current social issues. In the forties, she began giving numerous lectures in which she denounced prejudice, supported women’s rights, and pleaded for more acceptance of diversity. “We must recognize” she urged her listeners, “that beneath the superficial classifications of race and sex the same potentialities exist.” Her efforts to assure all people had the same human rights earned her fame as “Mother to the World” — a fitting description of her nature. Mead nurtured our innate promise for building a culture based on tolerance and love.
DECEMBER 17

Pope Francis

*Let us treat others with the same passion and compassion with which we want to be treated. Let us seek for others the same possibilities which we seek for ourselves.*

“My people are poor and I am one of them,” Pope Francis says. His commitment to those in need has led him to launch a gentle revolution based on justice, charity, and hope. He has softened the image of a church that sometimes seems forbidding and shown that a pope can hold modern views on atheism, homosexuality, and single moms. More than anything, Francis has demonstrated a gift for conveying his faith by gesture. Every recent pope has spoken of the need to treasure human life, but Francis acted on it when he embraced a victim of neurofibromatosis, a disfiguring genetic disease. Though all popes pay lip service to the need for simplicity, Francis actually lives by his words. He resides in an apartment, cooks his own supper, and drives a modest 1984 Renault.

And he expressed his concern for social justice in his first official writing as pope. *The Joy of Gospel* is a plea for compassion in a world where the gap between rich and poor has continued to grow. In this 2013 apostolic exhortation, Francis described a “culture of prosperity” that “deadens us” to the misery of the poor. All of those lives stunted for lack of opportunity fail to move us, he complained, as we try to increase profits “by reducing the workforce and thereby adding to the ranks of the excluded.” Our belief in trickle-down theories “expresses a crude and naïve trust in the goodness of those wielding economic power,” he pointed out. “Meanwhile, the excluded are still waiting.”

But Francis has long been sensitive to their plight. As archbishop of Buenos Aires, he wandered the city’s worst neighborhoods, kissed the feet of AIDS patients in a hospice, heard confessions from prostitutes on park benches, and disguised himself in a poncho to march in a slum procession. He also conceived of a missionary project based on assistance to the city’s poor and sick. Now that he’s risen to the top of the church, he’s urging the whole world to give hope and love to those in need. “Be poor among the poor,” he tells us. “We need to include the excluded and preach peace.”
Steven Spielberg

*My parents always told me to give, give, listen, and then give more.*

Steven Spielberg has shown us how good men can defeat evil. Several of his films pass on lessons from the past to guide us in going ahead. In *Amistad*, former President John Quincy Adams argues eloquently for the freedom of rebellious slaves. *Lincoln* depicts the president’s arm twisting to secure approval of the 13th Amendment putting slavery to an end. In *Bridge of Spies*, an attorney defends a communist spy from a subversion of justice and the law. And in *Schindler’s List*, a German businessman rescues 1,200 Jews from Nazi death camps. He makes the list of lives he can save with help from a Jewish accountant who assures him “the list is absolute good.” So are the ways Spielberg has bettered the world by putting charity high on his own list.

In 1994, he used his profits from *Schindler’s List* to establish the Shoah Foundation and turn his lens on real-life survivors of the Nazi camps. The foundation began by filming nearly 52,000 eyewitness accounts from survivors worldwide. Then it expanded its mission to include interviews with survivors of genocides in Armenia, Cambodia, Rwanda, and Guatemala. The collection is digitized, and the foundation now partners with the University of Southern California to bring tolerance education to teens. Students also have the chance for close encounters with Spielberg when he visits schools. The students get fired up when he talks about the interviews, though at first, as he admits, they’re more eager to discuss *E.T.* and *Indiana Jones*.

Indy may have fought his last crusade, but Spielberg continued to give after launching his foundation. He donated to victims of Katrina and the 2004 Asian tsunami. He supported the Cedars Sinai Medical Center and created Starbright World, an online social network that links sick kids nationwide.

These mitzvahs have helped millions, but Spielberg still considers the foundation his greatest achievement. On its 20th birthday in 2014, he wrote the introduction for a commemorative book: *Testimony: The Legacy of Schindler’s List and the USC Shoah Foundation*. It was a chance to repeat the timeless message of his moving film: “One person can change the world, and that person is you.”
DECEMBER 19

Robert Urich

*If there’s a message I give you, it is to love each other, to care for each other, and the rest is in God’s hands.*

“Something has happened to me that I do not understand,” Robert Urich says in *The Lazarus Man*, a TV western about a soldier who claws his way out of a grave with no memory of his past. Urich’s character wonders, “How did I get here? Who am I?” And they’re also questions people ask when they get a fatal disease. Urich asked them at 49 after learning he had a rare form of soft-tissue cancer. The former star of *Spenser: For Hire* and *Vegas* was used to playing good guys who beat the bad guys and wasn’t prepared for this new role as a patient. “To have somebody say, ‘Take your clothes off. Put that gown on. You’re not going anywhere.’ That sense of loss of control is quite debilitating and frightening,” he admitted. Yet he beat his fears to give hope to other cancer patients.

Granted, Urich wanted to fall apart at first. Then he thought to himself, “I have always played these guys who are capable. Maybe it’s time to prove you are capable.” He did, even after getting more bad news when his illness led Castle Rock TV to cancel *The Lazarus Man*. Like his character, he bounced back to life and kept working through his treatment. A week after finishing chemo, he hosted *Vital Signs*, a reality series about medical success stories. When his cancer went into remission, he promised God to make something positive out of his painful ordeal.

For six years, he travelled the country preaching a “gospel of survival” to cancer victims and their loved ones. “We can’t always control what happens to us,” he told them, “but we can control how we react to what happens to us.” And what happens to cancer patients is better because of the millions he raised for research and care through the Robert Urich Foundation, which has lived on since he died at 55. By then he suspected that fate was at work when Castle Rock nixed his western. “I don’t regret not having to get on a horse 14 hours a day,” he said. “Maybe it is my destiny to do something else.”
DECEMBER 20

Morrie Schwartz

The most important thing in life is to learn how to give out love, and to let it come in.

Morrie Schwartz wrote his own epitaph: “A Teacher to the Last.” It was true as he taught millions how to live and how to die. Some of them were students at Brandeis, where he was a professor for 30 years. Others were people from all walks of life who learned from him as he stared death in the face. At 77, Morrie was diagnosed with Lou Gehrig’s disease, a crippling illness which leads many to withdraw from life. Instead Morrie decided to conduct a mock funeral so his friends could say nice things about him while he was still there. One of them wrote an article about Morrie, and word of his upbeat approach to death reached Ted Koppel, who interviewed Morrie three times on Nightline. People nationwide watched as Morrie revealed his fears and expressed his resolve to keep his zest for life. “The truth is,” he said, “once you learn how to die, you learn how to live.”

These words shook Detroit columnist Mitch Albom one night in 1995 while he was channel surfing. Albom, who had been one of Morrie’s favorite students, decided to contact his professor and resume the talks that had meant so much to him in college. He visited Morrie on 16 Tuesdays, recording their conversations in hopes of publishing a small book that would pay for Morrie’s medical expenses. In the course of their Tuesdays together, Morrie discussed how to live a good life and die with no regrets. “The way you get meaning into your life,” Morrie believed, “is to devote yourself to loving others, devote yourself to your community, and devote yourself to something that gives you purpose.”

His words survived his death because Albom’s book, Tuesdays with Morrie, became a massive bestseller. Readers worldwide have been inspired by Morrie’s advice to “do the kind of things that come from the heart,” understand that “money is not a substitute for tenderness,” and realize that “love is how you stay alive even after you’re gone.” So Morrie may be gone. Yet he remains a teacher in a global classroom. “Death ends a life, not a relationship,” as Morrie knew so well.
Benjamin Disraeli

Justice is truth in action.

Benjamin Disraeli was an outsider in nineteenth-century England. He looked different with his lavish curls, olive skin, and black eyes. He drew attention by sporting canary-yellow waistcoats, green velvet trousers, and lace at his wrists. He also stood out because he’d been born a Jew in a nation where Jews couldn’t sit in Parliament until 1858. His father had him baptized, which allowed him to run for public office and win a seat in the House of Commons. He went on to serve twice as a Conservative prime minister and become Queen Victoria’s close friend, yet political foes never let him forget his background. When they did he showed the steel beneath the velvet and lace. “Yes, I am a Jew,” he admitted, “and when the ancestors of the right honorable gentlemen were brutal savages in an unknown land, mine were priests in the temple of Solomon.”

Like Solomon, Disraeli believed in justice, and his sense of social duty crossed political lines. “I am a Conservative to preserve all that is good in our constitution, a radical to remove all that is bad,” he explained. “I equally decry the appeal to the passions of the many or the prejudices of the few” — a balanced approach that led him to champion the common man. Throughout his time in public office, he wrote political novels with poignant descriptions of the poor. As prime minister, he practiced a “one-nation” conservatism that would benefit all.

In the 1870s, he championed reforms designed to close the gap between rich and poor. The Climbing Boys Act reinforced the ban on employing young chimney sweeps. The Artisans Dwelling Act encouraged local authorities to provide housing for the poor, and the Public Health Act provided running water and refuse disposal. There were also laws to allow peaceful picketing and let workers sue employers in civil courts.

These measures reflected his conviction that “power has one duty — to ensure the social welfare of the poor.” They made him a hero for many, including the queen. When he was dying, Victoria wrote her “Dizzy” a warm note in which she quoted from Proverbs: “Kings love him who speaketh right.”
DECEMBER 22

Diane Sawyer

*I am eternal believer in hope and possibility taking hold.*

Diane Sawyer is known for her hard-hitting interviews with newsmakers like Barack Obama, Bruce Jenner, and Saddam Hussein. Her work has taken her from New Orleans to North Korea, where she gave viewers a look “inside the shadows” of that secretive country. When she explored the “hidden America,” Sawyer revealed her softer side. She has exposed the overmedication of children in foster care, reported on deprivation in Appalachia, and revealed the challenges of life in Camden, New Jersey, America’s poorest city. Her report focused on students at the school, Urban Promise, and her involvement didn’t end when the show aired in 2007. She raised funds for the school and kept tabs on its students, an unusual degree of involvement for a seasoned journalist. Sawyer knows she must keep her personal feelings out of her work, but some stories go straight to her heart.

She learned the importance of bringing her heart to her work from her very wise father. “My dad,” she recalls, “had the most beautiful, simple checklist for what you should do in life: Do something you really love that you would do anyway. Do it in the most adventurous place you can do it. And make sure that it helps other people. And if you feel there’s a genuine need for it, and that through that need you can help other people, you’re home.”

She’s followed his advice by using her stature to help the needy and the ill. She has raised money for cancer and supported the Gates Foundation in ending polio worldwide. She serves on the board of the Robin Hood Foundation, which backs poverty programs, and meets often with those the foundation helps.

Many of them are former drug addicts, prostitutes, and homeless people — all folks with problems. And Sawyer, despite all her success, had her own problems in 2014 when her husband and mom died within a month of each other. Her fix for her broken heart was to pour herself into work and chase down new stories that would make a difference. “Whenever you are blue and lonely,” she explains, “the cure and the hope is in caring about other people.”
DECEMBER 23

Samuel Mockbee

Architecture has to be greater than just architecture. It has to address social values, as well as technical and aesthetic values.

Drive through Hale County, Alabama, and you’ll see poverty that most people would rather ignore. The county is filled with cotton fields interspersed with the shabby motor homes or shanties in which much of the population lives. Then in unexpected places, you’ll come across a startling residence that has replaced the trailer or shack where a family lived before. The Hay Bale House, for instance, is built of stucco-covered bales of hay. The Butterfly House has a tin roof that slopes upward like the wings of a butterfly poised to take flight. There’s also a community center with rammed-earth walls and a soaring chapel with walls constructed of recycled automobile tires. Other buildings use salvaged lumber and bricks, concrete rubble, colored bottles, and old license plates in a style that combines modernism with Southern tradition. They all express the vision of Samuel Mockbee, an architect who was convinced that “everyone, rich or poor, deserves a shelter for the soul.”

In 1993, his commitment to teaching both craft and compassion led him to found the Rural Studio, which has put up nearly 100 homes for those most in need. Each year Mockbee brought students to Hale County, where they designed and constructed community building and homes, as well as digging wells, repairing mobile home roofs, and septic tanks. The goal of this work, as Mockbee told students, was to boost “democracy” and “provide a decent community for all.”

And he saw the result of his labors after building the Hay Bale House, one of his favorite projects. He put it up, as he recalled shortly before his death in 2001, for an elderly couple who lived in an old shack. The husband could no longer work outdoors and the wife had her leg amputated just weeks before moving into the new house. She didn’t know what would have happened to her without it, she said after moving in. And the house also made a lasting impact on the couple’s grandson, who was inspired to go to college after talks with the young architects who built it. “He wanted to be like them,” Mockbee recalled, “and now he’s going to be.”
DECEMBER 24

Greg Porter

*When you feel like you’re being called to do something, you have to go and do it.*

Have you ever read something and wondered how it fit into your own life? That happened to Greg Porter in 1990 when he opened his Bible and read Isaiah 58. For some time, he wondered if he was fulfilling its command to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and house the homeless. Then he decided he was doing enough by cooking meals for the poor once a month. It would take a disaster of biblical proportions to show him the true meaning of Isaiah 58.

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina made landfall on the Gulf Coast, leaving survivors with the same story: “We lost everything.” News of their plight led Porter to leave his home and business in Kentucky and drive to the Mississippi Gulf. Once there, he pitched a huge circus tent and set up God’s Katrina Kitchen to feed the hungry, homeless, and disabled. When word of his efforts spread, 13,000 volunteers joined him and churches from 22 religious denominations donated truckloads of food.

This wave of support allowed Greg to serve more than a million meals and rebuild hundreds of homes. During two years of nonstop work, he rarely saw his family, but he gained the experience to run a first-response unit. This know-how allowed him to go on with his mission after local officials decided they couldn’t handle the huge influx of people that God’s Katrina Kitchen was bringing in.

In 2007, he formed his own first-response unit, Calvary for Christ, made up of folks who had worked with him on the coast, and launched God’s Kitchen to help disaster victims nationwide. He was ready in 2008 when a tornado tore through the nation’s midsection and ravaged Greensburg, Kansas. City leaders knew just who to call, so they asked Porter to come do what he had done in Mississippi. And by helping people rebuild their lives, he answered the question that hounded him after reading that old Bible passage so many years ago. At the time he didn’t realize how prophetic it was. But what he felt on the coast finally showed him the truth: “Isaiah 58,” he said, “is my life.”
DECEMBER 25

Clara Barton

An institution or reform movement that is not selfish must originate in the recognition of some evil that is adding to the sum of human suffering, or diminishing the sum of happiness.

Clara Barton faced danger but never feared it. She showed her mettle during the Civil War when she brought supplies to the front lines, cared for the wounded, and kept track of those who had died. Because she was so close to the battlefields, she narrowly escaped death several times. During the Battle of Antietam, she felt her sleeve move as a bullet went through it, killing the soldier she was tending. At the Battle of Fredericksburg, she saw a fragment from an exploding shell sever a soldier’s artery and applied the tourniquet that saved his life. When a shell struck the door of a room she was in, she continued her duties assisting the doctors. She cradled the heads of ailing men as artillery boomed in the distance and bullets whizzed overhead.

Despite her valor, her only prewar medical experience came when she nursed a sick brother for two years. A school teacher by training, she founded New Jersey’s first free public school and was working as a clerk in the U.S. Patent Office when war broke out in 1861. “This conflict,” she said at the time, “is the one thing I’ve been waiting for. I’m well and strong and young — young enough to go to the front. If I can’t be a soldier, I’ll help soldiers.”

She saved many lives during the war, but her heroics went beyond the front lines. As the war ended, she helped locate thousands of missing soldiers, including those who had died in Confederate prisons. She provided assistance in the Franco-Prussian War, and while abroad, she came in contact with the International Committee of the Red Cross. In 1881, this encounter inspired her to found an American branch of the Red Cross devoted to helping people in need during both peacetime and war.

In the years since then, the Red Cross has given aid everywhere from Kosovo to Cuba. Wherever a war or disaster has occurred, Red Cross workers are there to help the afflicted. They bear the cross of the world’s woes as they embrace Barton’s ruling belief: “Everybody’s business is nobody’s business, and nobody’s business is my business.”
DECEMBER 26

John Walsh

*America is ready for intelligent talk. I am ready to bring some humanity to TV*

“The abduction of a child is a tragedy,” says John Walsh, longtime host of *America’s Most Wanted*. “Every parent responds differently. Each parent copes with this nightmare in the best way he or she knows.” And Walsh’s way was to go from grieving father to crusader for justice and victims’ rights. Yet the man now famous for hunting bad guys had no plans for a career catching fugitives from the law.

In 1981, he was a hotel developer in Florida, where he had an idyllic life with his wife, Reve, and six-year-old son, Adam. But everything changed the day Adam was abducted from a local mall. Two weeks later, his severed head was found in a canal, news that broke Walsh’s heart. He also wept tears of rage because the prime suspect in the murder, Adam O’Toole, was never charged and died in prison while serving life for other crimes. It wasn’t until 2008 that police had enough evidence to convict him of the crime.

In the meantime, Walsh used his personal anger to serve the public good. “Adam’s abduction was our private hell,” Walsh explains, “but it was not an isolated incident. On any given day, any number of children are absent from their homes for diverse and numerous reasons.” Yet there was no coordinated way for law enforcement to search for missing kids on the state or national level. Nor was there an organization to help desperate parents. So Walsh started the Adam Walsh Child Resource Center and co-founded the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, a leading nonprofit that has helped police find over 196,000 children. He and Reve also lobbied for the Missing Children Act, which set up an FBI database of missing children.

In 1988, he agreed to bring his crime-fighting passion to *America’s Most Wanted*. In its 24-year run, the show led to the capture of over 1,000 fugitives and helped bring home more than 50 missing kids. As host, Walsh saw every travesty of justice from murder to child molestation. Yet he didn’t become numb to the plight of victims, especially children. “One missing child,” he says, “is one too many.”
DECEMBER 27

Louis Pasteur

*When I approach a child, he inspires in me two sentiments: tenderness for what he is, and respect for what he may become.*

One morning in July 1885, a mad dog attacked young Joseph Meister in Alsace, France. Fourteen bites left the nine-year-old barely able to walk. Even worse, he probably had contracted rabies, a death sentence as his mother knew. She frantically took him to Paris because she’d heard that a scientist there was working on a cure for rabies. While making inquiries, she met a doctor who told her to go to the lab of Louis Pasteur. It was true Pasteur was working on a cure for rabies, but he had never tried his rabies vaccine on a human being. Still the mother’s tears convinced him to put aside his qualms and inject Joseph with a culture from the spinal cord of a rabbit that had died from rabies. Over the next 10 days, he gave Joseph 13 more injections and watched anxiously at his bedside. To his tremendous joy, the boy survived!

News of this success spread fast, and hundreds of people came to the lab for treatment. Pasteur and his colleagues worked around the clock to save people who’d contracted rabies. The only failure was a 10-year-old girl who arrived at the lab 37 days after being bitten. Pasteur knew the disease was too advanced, but he tried. When the girl died in his arms, he told her parents, “I did so wish I could have saved your little one.”

Pasteur felt deeply for the parents because he had lost three children, two to typhoid and one to a liver tumor. His solution was to declare war on illness. “One must work,” he said as he changed the face of medical research. During his life, he founded microbiology with his studies of fermentation and established the germ theory of disease. Pasteurization, the process he invented to make food safe, remains in use worldwide.

His legacy also includes the Pasteur Institute, which has improved public health since 1888. During its early decades, Joseph Meister served as the gatekeeper and regaled visitors with tales of his time with Pasteur. “I shall always see Pasteur’s good face focused on me,” he said as he recalled the man who saved his life.
DECEMBER 28

Ignatius McDermott

*Kindness is the only language in the world that the deaf can hear, the blind can see, and the dumb can speak.*

He walked Chicago’s streets tending to thousands addicted to alcohol and drugs. During 70 years in the priesthood, Monsignor Ignatius McDermott helped people of all kinds who had wound up on Skid Row. His flock included doctors, football players, and even priests, both the wealthy and the poor. Whoever they were “you had to identify with them and believe in them. You had to give them the dignity of man,” said the priest many called Father Mac. “Every man came from dust and to dust he shall return.” We are all brothers and sisters, he pointed out. Yet we once failed to bring our sense of kinship to the way we looked on addiction. It was an illness, not a moral sin, Father Mac maintained as he brought the methods of AA to Skid Row and offered treatment based on kindness.

Beginning in the ‘40s, he launched programs to fight addiction and reunite the families it had torn apart. He founded the Addiction Counseling Education Services for substance abusers with no other means of assistance and Alternatives to Expulsion, which helped teachers salvage addicted teens. In 1963, he founded the Central States Institute of Addiction to produce qualified treatment counselors and educators. In the 1970s, he led the charge in Illinois to decriminalize public drunkenness, and on New Year’s Eve 1975, he founded Haymarket Center and gave it the mission of “treating the whole person.”

Since then, Haymarket has grown into Chicago’s largest nonprofit treatment center, offering many services to help people have productive lives, just as Father Mac wished. The center guides clients from detoxification, to recovery, to finding a home, learning a job skill and getting employment. Though it mainly serves Chicago’s poor and homeless, it extends its services to the entire state of Illinois.

It was clear what a wide range of people the center had helped by 2005, when Father Mac died. The mourners who attended his funeral mass included the rich and famous, the poor, and down and out. Whatever their problems, he considered it a “privilege” to serve them. Where some people saw bums and drunks, Father Mac saw children of God.
DECEMBER 29

William Gladstone

Nothing that is morally wrong can be politically right.

Not everyone liked William Gladstone, four-time Liberal prime minister of England. Both friends and foes admired his ethics but mocked the forthright piety that sometimes made him seem a prig. He “had not one single redeeming defect,” quipped his political rival, the Conservative Benjamin Disraeli, and Queen Victoria called him a “half-mad firebrand” who “speaks to me as if I were a public meeting.” Novelist Henry James remarked that “Gladstone is very fascinating — his urbanity extreme — his eye that of a genius — and his apparent self-surrender to what he is talking of, without a flaw.” He was “Oxford on top, Liverpool below,” a detractor said of his roots in the gritty commercial city. And he raised eyebrows as he walked the streets striving to reform prostitutes and rescue them from lives of sin.

His reforming zeal went further as he acted on his vow to “back the masses against the classes.” The changes he made from 1868 to 1894 led the public to call him “the Grand Old Man” or “G.O.M.,” letters Disraeli preferred to interpret as “God’s only mistake.” But the reforms Gladstone pushed through were no mistake. Forster’s Education Act made schooling available to Welsh and English children between the ages of five and 13. Civil service reforms introduced exams so merit, not family connections, determined who got government and army jobs. The Ballot Act of 1872 instituted secret ballots for elections, and The Irish Land Act guaranteed compensation for improvements made by tenant farmers who were evicted by landlords.

Rising violence in Ireland and longtime resentment of England led Gladstone to introduce two bills granting home rule to Ireland. By the time the second bill died in 1894, Gladstone’s health was failing and he decided to resign. He delivered his last speech in Liverpool, where he denounced the slaughter of Armenians in Turkey and urged England to intervene. Over 6,000 people gathered to hear him give a message everyone should like, no matter how they feel about Gladstone. “We look forward to a time,” he said, “when the power to love will replace the love of power. Then will our world know the blessings of peace.”
DECEMBER 30

LeBron James

*I have kids looking up to me and hopefully I can inspire these kids to do good things.*

In 2011, 300 third-graders in Akron, Ohio, made a promise to NBA superstar LeBron James. They promised their hero they would go to school, make good decisions, stay active, and be respectful to their parents and teachers. In return, James promised them to be his best both on and off the court. While the kids soared through the school year, the Miami Heat forward wondered if he could live up to their expectations. He decided he had to keep his promise the night before a big game in Boston, where the Celtics had slaughtered his team the year before. The next night, James posted 45 points and 15 rebounds, igniting the spark that led his team to a championship in the NBA. That was also the start of his I Promise program to give Akron’s children the chance for college and success.

James knows the challenges these children face because he once lived in the Akron projects with a single mom. “As a kid growing up in the inner city,” he says, “and as an African-American kid, you don’t really think past high school because it’s not possible or your family can’t support you.” But he’s changing that through the LeBron James Family Foundation. Each year, the foundation selects 300 third-graders from Akron public schools to enter its Wheels for Education program, which provides technology summer camps, after-school activities, and mentoring. As those students enter middle school, they move to the Akron I PROMISE Network, where they remain through high school. They qualify for a guaranteed college scholarship if they graduate from an Akron public school, pass standardized tests, and do community service.

James’ own commitment to the community led him to leave Miami in 2014 for the Cleveland Cavaliers. “I always believed I’d return home and finish my career here,” he said after returning to northeast Ohio. “I feel my calling here goes beyond basketball.” And his long-term goal is to put 2,300 kids in college. “These students have big dreams,” he explained, “and I’m happy to do everything I can to help them get there.” With college in their futures, the kids can fulfill their promise.
DECEMBER 31

Simon Wiesenthal

For evil to flourish, it only requires good men to do nothing.

What are the limits of forgiveness? Simon Wiesenthal always wondered after spending the Second World War as a prisoner in the Nazi death camps. One day in 1943, he was brought to the bedside of a dying SS man named Karl. As Wiesenthal listened, Karl recalled setting fire to a building full of Jews and shooting those who tried to escape. Since then, he’d “longed to talk about it to a Jew and beg forgiveness.” It was probably too much to ask, he admitted, “but without your answer, I cannot die in peace.” Wiesenthal’s response was to get up silently and walk away.

But he didn’t remain silent two years later after being freed by an American armored unit. By then he’d lost 89 relatives and nearly died of starvation, but his spirit was unbowed. So he resolved to hunt down the murderers of Jews rather than resume his career as an architect in the Ukraine. In 1947, he became a freelance Nazi hunter in Vienna operating on a shoestring budget from donations.

For six decades, he poured over records, talked to survivors, and took tips from informants. Then he used his research to build cases that would stand up in court. His undercover work brought scores of top SS men to trial, including Adolf Eichmann, head of the Gestapo’s Jewish Department, and Karl Silberbauer, the officer who arrested Anne Frank. By the time he retired at 94, he’d help capture 1,100 Nazis in an obsessive quest that exposed him to several assassination attempts and drew criticism, even from friends. But Wiesenthal wanted history to show that the Nazis didn’t get away with their crimes and he wanted young people to learn tolerance from the tragedy of the Jews.

As we judge the mass murderers of today everywhere from Syria to Sudan, we face a number of questions. Can we forgive them? Or are there crimes beyond forgiveness? And how important is repentance? Wiesenthal searched for answers all his life and died still wondering if he should have forgiven Karl. But he did know “my work is a warning to the murderers of tomorrow that they will never rest.”