



# ON MY MIND

BY KRISTEN KELESCHENYI

## Teenagers Are Tough

If you're ever been around one, ever raised one, you know. Heck, we've all been one but I am so far removed from that stage of my life I sometimes forget the sneakiness I often exhibited as a teen.

Rides to school when I didn't utter a word and barely mumbled a thank you to my dad as he drove away. Slamming doors when I didn't get my way. Eye rolls and scowls behind my mother's back. Yes, I was once a parent's nightmare but I choose to forget that. I remember being perfect. No attitude - no problem.

My husband has clearer memories of his teen years. He knows he was a jerk and always reminds me that yes, I was one too. But that comes with the territory. Wanting independence, striving for autonomy, trying out the waters of adulthood; there are bound to be missteps and growing pains.

My teenagers, overall, are not that bad. Yes, there are times when I want to ship them off on a one-way

cruise to Antarctica. There are times my frustration with their messy rooms makes me want to toss all of their belongings out the window but every now and then I get a glimpse of the thoughtful people they can be.

I got this glimpse on Christmas morning. From not one, but both teens.

The Christmas season is often a thankless time for moms. Within my circle of friends, it seems to be a recurring theme that moms take care of the majority of the holiday checklist: the presents, the cards, the baking, the wrapping.

Each year, I am usually in search of the perfect gift for each of my kids; one they will delight in unwrapping Christmas morning. This year the teens neglected to make a helpful list with possible suggestions to aid me in my pursuit. I was on my own. Then I got sick a few days before Christmas. I lost a day to my warm bed. Things did not look good but thanks to the Internet and Amazon everything

got done.

It was a race to the finish that's for sure and Christmas morning my exhaustion kicked in. While the kids were opening their presents my eyes were getting heavy. It was only a matter of time before I would get right back in bed, but first I needed to open the gifts my family had picked out for me.

My youngest was so proud of his school Santa Shop find - a pink personalized mug shaped coaster for Mom's coffee/ tea cup. My husband got me a pair of Beatles socks and a new watch. I loved these gifts and I appreciated the time that went into picking them out. But I kind of expected thoughtful gifts from those two. I was unprepared for what was to come.

My oldest bought me a book, a book I wanted but didn't know existed. For quite some time I've wanted to read about the genius behind the Beatles, producer Mr. George Martin. Martin was often considered the "Fifth Beatle" and

was there to help guide the band through the recording process for each of their original albums.

I thought it was an incredibly thoughtful gift from a kid who rarely lets that side of him show. I remember he bought me a pair of gardening gloves a few years ago just because they reminded him of me. Both gifts caught me off guard and made me feel appreciated by one who doesn't always let you know he really does care.

Then came the gift that made me cry. My daughter bought me a candle with my initial K emblazoned on the front. She must have thought it needed something more decorative so she took a sharpie and wrote adjectives to describe me. As I twisted the votive in my hands the tears began to fall from my eyes. She took time to write each word and select it with care. I didn't want to put it down.

Moments like this are rare which is probably what makes them so special and treasured. I don't always know where I stand with my teenagers but as of today, I feel a little more confident in the knowledge that they see me and appreciate what I do for them. Being a parent is often a thankless job but those brief glimmers of recognition make it all worth doing over and over again.

# Mark Your Calendars

## SOAR To Meet

Attention all US Steel SOAR members of Chapter 15-7 who normally meet at the Local 2227 United Steelworkers Union Hall located at 1301 Philip Murray Rd., West Mifflin, PA 15122 on the first Tuesday of each month, the next meeting will be held on January 4, 2022, and will begin at 1 o'clock sharp. The guest speaker will be Nicole Barnett from the Allegheny County Health Department. Barnett will be speaking about "Senior Driving Safety." If you know anyone who normally attends the meetings, please pass this information along to them. Please feel free to bring a friend, neighbor or loved one. Anyone age 45 or older is welcome to join SOAR to see what the group is about. If you enjoy the meetings, join the group. There is a modest membership fee. Come and enjoy a cup of coffee and a cookie and have a little fun. Also please bring your mask.

## Grief Support Meets January 6

The Patrick T. Lanigan Funeral Home and Crematory Inc.'s Grief Support meeting will be held today, Thursday, January 6, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

The group meets at St. Maurice Parish Center. Jill Kazour, a professional counselor, will facilitate the meeting and refreshments will be served. For more information, call 412-824-8800.

## Women's Business Network

**East Chapter** meets on the first and third Tuesdays of each month at 8:00 a.m. at Drew's Family Restaurant, 2060 Ardmore Blvd, Forest Hills. January meetings are January 4th and 18th. For more information, contact Chapter Representative Denise Murrin-Coburn at 412-260-7780.

**Pittsburgh City East Chapter** meets on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at 8:15 a.m., at Parisi Café and Italian Market, 7107 Harrison Avenue, Swissvale. January meetings are January 12th and 26th. For more information, contact Chapter Representative Berni Bishop Pirollo at 412-638-1988.

**All Virtual Chapter** meets on the first and third Wednesday of each month at 7:00pm via Zoom. January meetings are January 5th and January 19th. For more information contact Chapter Representative, Ariel Mookherji at 610-547-0004.

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**Email the information to:**  
valleymirror@comcast.net

# Veterans Helping Veterans Had A Busy December And Are Gearing Up For A Great New Year

Veterans Helping Veterans had the honor of participating in the Steel Valley Christmas parade on December 4 and was awarded a prize for its float showing the two sides of a military Christmas; a family at home and a soldier deployed. On December 19, VHV hosted 15 young home-schooled students who learned about and spoke with some of our veterans. Throughout the month of December, the students of Barrett Elementary School, Steel Valley School District, under the tutelage of teacher, Jonette Bost, paid tribute to and learned about veterans. The results were boxes of in-kind donations and financial contributions of more than \$200. The SVSD teachers participated in the fundraising drive as well, adding \$250. A great month of spreading the word of VHV's mission and community support to keep the coffee flowing.

If you are a veteran, we hope that you will find VHV in 2022. Located at 210 E. 7th Avenue in Homestead, doors are open Wednesday - Friday, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. The



Forge Urban Winery generously donates the space to VHV during the day. VHV is like a USO with a kick. Always ready with coffee and a light meal, never at a cost for the veteran, you will find other veterans here. VHV works to connect veterans with veteran services and community services as needed. It is a great space to chill, use free Wi Fi, play the piano, or play pool on our newly donated table.

A Veteran Benefit Officer will continue to be onsite the third Thursday of each month. Mark your calendar for Thursday, January 20, 2022 when Michelle, a seasoned VA officer will be able to help veterans apply for benefits. Also January 20, one of VHV's supporters who has made and donated face masks since the beginning or

COVID will be on site making and donating masks. If you are fully vaccinated we will leave mask-wearing up to you, as long as you respect social distancing.

Lastly, mark your calendar for an evening music jam session and VHV fundraiser open to the public, Saturday, January 15, 2022. These musicians and their friend, David Marks, found the VHV venue back in the fall. The energy was off the charts and when they learned that the Forge doubled as a place for veterans during the day, a fundraiser broke out. This is a no cover event with bands starting at 6:00 p.m. Bring your friends to experience the Forge Urban Winery, the music of veteran centric bands and the venue for VHV. Donations always welcome.

Follow Veterans Helping Veterans on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/VeteransHVeterans>

Call us at 412-326-1959 or email [swatson@meadowsedge.org](mailto:swatson@meadowsedge.org).



**Happy Holidays**

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**WORD SEARCH SOLUTION**

R	S	C	O	R	N	A	U	D	E	R	G	A	L	E	S	I
U	R	J	N	C	B	X	O	L	O	C	Z	S	N	E	Z	O
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**SUDOKU SOLUTION**

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9	3	4	5	2	6	7	8	1
1	6	2	8	3	7	9	5	4
8	7	5	1	4	9	3	2	6

**CryptoQuip**

Trouble is a sieve through which we sift our acquaintances. Those too big to pass through are our friends.

~ Arlene Francis