

# The CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR WEEKLY

*"The object of the Monitor is to injure no man,  
but to bless all mankind."*  
— MARY BAKER EDDY

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## An unlikely Thanksgiving story

**T**hanksgiving is a big deal around the Monitor. For one day, public conversation aligns with some of the values that we hold dearest – gratitude, generosity, community, family.

Yet in recent years, the U.S. discourse around the annual feast has taken a more contentious tone, as concerns long expressed by Native American communities have found footing in more mainstream conversations. Beneath this joyous and loving celebration lies a fraught history. Many Indigenous communities observe the fourth Thursday of each November with a day of mourning for the widespread killing of their ancestors at the hands of European colonists. More recently, some have gone so far as to rename it Unthanksgiving Day.



BY NOELLE SWAN  
EDITOR,  
WEEKLY EDITION

As the holiday season approached, Monitor editors considered addressing this latest rift in the culture wars head-on. It's the kind of story that we do well. And yet, in a year marked by intense division, it didn't feel quite right to lean into the controversy.

It is true that the narrative of the "first Thanksgiving" that many Americans were taught is rife with inaccuracies and stereotypes. But it is also true that, however flawed its origin story, this day has come to represent some truly wonderful things. What story could we tell, we wondered, that would amplify the gracious tone of the holiday without stoking the hurt felt around its painful history?

Our first thought was to explore the idea of gratitude from an Indigenous perspective.

I brought the idea to the two writers at the Monitor most focused on Indigenous issues: Henry Gass and Sara Miller Llana. Together, Sara and Henry have carved out a "borderless beat," covering Native American and First Nations communities. Did they think this idea would be feasible? Would Indigenous communities even want to participate in a story timed around Thanksgiving? Might they find it insulting to be asked?

Henry and Sara first cautioned that there is no singular Indigenous perspective. There are 574 Native American tribes and Alaska Native entities in the United States and 630 First Nations communities in Canada. Each one has its own history, values, and cultural narratives. So would they find the timing of our inquiry around Thanksgiving objectionable? There could be no single answer to that question. Some might welcome the opportunity to help shape a Thanksgiving story. But others could be offended. Fair enough.

The two writers looked back at their reporting on both sides of the border. By focusing on gratitude, would we even be asking the right question? they asked. If we want to offer an Indigenous perspective, should we be setting the storyline ourselves?

In the end, we found the cover story that anchors this Thanksgiving issue. It turned out not to be an American story at all, though it carries many hallmarks of the Thanksgiving story told in the United States. I'll let you discover how that story unfolds. But for me, it is a reminder that the goodness we honor on Thanksgiving Day need not be a casualty of historical reckoning. In fact, it doesn't need to be tied to any single day. We can keep it with us all year long. ■

WASHINGTON

## What Trump's historic victory says about America

By Linda Feldmann / Staff writer

**T**he American people have spoken, and the message in the historic victory by once-and-now-future President Donald Trump came through loud and clear: A majority of voters wanted change – sort of.

That sounds contradictory, but here's the logic: Americans are tired of paying higher prices and of feeling that the nation projects weakness, especially on the immigration issue. Those were the top issues for Trump supporters in the exit polls.

Voters' way of effecting change was to boot the current administration – as represented by Vice President Kamala Harris – and bring back a familiar face: former President Trump. In America's two-party system, those were the only viable choices on the ballot. The votes of the "hold your nose and vote Trump" cohort counted just as much as those of the enthusiastic, MAGA-hat-wearing supporters.

It is doubtless the most stunning political comeback in American history, given Mr. Trump's two first-term impeachments, criminal convictions, and unorthodox "strongman" style that seems to break all the rules of normal political discourse.

Mr. Trump's survival of two recent assassination attempts, to some supporters a sign that "God was involved," only enhanced his mystique.

Beyond a repudiation of the status quo, it's clear plenty of Trump voters like what they see. That includes both his brash style and policies aimed at addressing Americans' deep frustration with everything from border security to the cost of living to the United States' role in the world.

"2016 was not an aberration," says Chris Borick, director of the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion in Allentown, Pennsylvania.

"Trump's victory ... makes a case that much of what he sells, from a political perspective, is what Americans want."

However, this election also reflects a larger anti-incumbent backlash seen in other Western democracies, from the United Kingdom and (likely soon) Canada, to New Zealand, Australia, and the deeply unpopular leaders of France and Germany. Before the U.S. election, political observer Matthew Yglesias wondered out loud why "all post-COVID electorates are grumpy and miserable."

Some analysts caution against reading too much into Mr. Trump's victory, noting that Democrats faced strong structural headwinds. Polls show that the percentage of Americans saying they were satisfied with the direction of the country was only in the mid-20s, a clear danger zone for an incumbent party.

"It is difficult to interpret this result as a mandate," says presidential historian George Edwards III, a professor emeritus at Texas A&M University. "The country remains divided."

### A drag on Harris' candidacy

Still, Democrats face their share of blame for the loss, which saw a Republican presidential nominee win the popular vote for

### WHY WE WROTE THIS

Former President Donald Trump's win reflected many voters' frustration with issues from border security to the cost of living to America's role in the world, and is part of a larger anti-incumbent backlash seen in other Western democracies.

the first time in 20 years.

“Democrats need to do some real soul searching, they were pretty massively repudiated in the election,” says veteran political analyst Charlie Cook in an email.

Mr. Cook praises Ms. Harris’ performance as a candidate – “better than many expected, and her campaign was very competent” – but notes it wasn’t enough. And he blames the Biden administration for overreaching in its agenda after winning the 2020 election only narrowly.

The Trump victory “was a massive repudiation of the Biden-Harris four years in general and [specifically] their economic and border policies,” says Mr. Cook, founder of the nonpartisan Cook Political Report.

Under President Joe Biden, inflation averaged 5.2% year-over-year, versus 1.9% under Mr. Trump. On the southern border, Mr. Biden saw illegal crossings soar during his first three years in office, far higher than in the decade before he took office.

“You cannot overstimulate the economy, creating inflation levels that had been pretty dormant for over 30 years, and not have a massive backlash,” Mr. Cook adds. “You cannot ignore the border for three years, only settling down to address it in your last year, and not face massive backlash.”

This analysis suggests that a different Democratic nominee might not have fared much better this cycle. Still, the what-ifs of the Democratic effort are flying thick and fast.

First up for recriminations may be President Biden. What if the octogenarian had stuck to his original suggestion that he’d be a “bridge” president – i.e., a one-termer – and announced he wouldn’t run for a second term early last year, allowing for a proper primary competition among the next generation of Democratic leaders?

Instead, his initial decision to run for a second term, only to be pushed out of the race by fellow Democrats less than four months before Election Day, left the party scrambling. Ms. Harris, the nominee by default, had little time to introduce herself to voters and establish an identity apart from the Biden brand.

Ms. Harris’ decision to make Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz her running mate rather than popular Gov. Josh Shapiro of Pennsylvania – the biggest battleground state – raises questions. It appears a Harris-Shapiro ticket likely would not have prevailed, but we’ll never know what his rhetorical skills and centrist, bridge-building persona could have added to the effort to win over swing voters.

To die-hard Trump opponents, the test now is to practice what they preached: Accept the election result, and prepare to counter what some see as the potentially existential threat Mr. Trump poses to American democracy. Exit polls show that defending democracy was the No. 1 issue for Harris voters.

“Citizens across this country, our courts, members of the press, and those serving in our federal, state, and local governments must now be the guardrails of democracy,” former Wyoming Rep. Liz Cheney, an anti-Trump Republican and a former party leader, said in a statement Nov. 6.

The Republican takeover of the Senate suggests that this chamber may not be the check on Mr. Trump some opponents were hoping for. The GOP-controlled Senate will also ease confirmations of Trump Cabinet and judicial nominees. At press time, control of the House leaned Republican.

But the real story of the 2024 election is with the voters themselves, and why they voted the way they did.

## Pocketbook issues

Mr. Trump made gains with nearly every group. But the most noteworthy shift was among Hispanic voters – particularly men. In 2020, Mr. Biden won Hispanic men by 23 percentage points; this year, Mr. Trump won that demographic by 10 points. Overall, 40% of Hispanic voters cited the economy as their most important issue, 9 points higher than the population as a whole.

In Los Angeles, Isabel Velez, who owns a real estate business with her husband, cast a ballot for Mr. Trump – while keeping her support for him quiet among her friends, who don’t all agree. She points to interest rates, violence, and abortion as her top reasons.

First-time voter Devon Che also voted for Mr. Trump. The 21-year-old artist was unhappy that the U.S. under President Biden seemed to be funding war in Ukraine and Gaza. He also recalls easier economic times when Mr. Trump was in office: “It was very easy to just live life and buy day-to-day things and not worry about saving as much.”

At the polls in Hobart, Wisconsin, on Election Day, Dan Skenandore said he was still pondering his options when he left his home in nearby Oneida to go vote. He supported Mr. Trump in 2016 but switched to vote for Mr. Biden in 2020. “It was a difficult time, with the pandemic, all the confusion,” says Mr. Skenandore, a police officer and member of the Oneida Nation. “It seemed like there was a need for strong leadership.”

But Mr. Biden disappointed him. Mr. Skenandore’s economic situation became more difficult. “I pay more in taxes,” he says. “My money is worth less.” He likes Mr. Trump’s idea of ending taxes on overtime pay, even though he calls it unrealistic. He also has positive words for Ms. Harris, citing her “message of hope.” And he paid close attention to the TV ads during the Packers-Lions NFL game the Sunday before the election.

In the end, he says, he voted for Mr. Trump.

■ Staff writer Ali Martin contributed to this report from Los Angeles, and contributor Richard Mertens from Hobart, Wisconsin.

LOS ANGELES; WHITEMARSH ISLAND, GA.;  
AND PHILADELPHIA

# ‘A slap in the face.’ For many US women, Harris loss to Trump feels personal.

By Francine Kiefer, Ali Martin,  
Patrik Jonsson, and Caitlin Babcock / Staff writers

Kissy Fraelich was “shocked” by the election results. Not only that Donald Trump won, but that he won so decisively. She saw it as a strike against women’s rights, particularly reproductive rights, and as a blow to her hope to see a woman in the Oval Office. Twice now, American voters have chosen Mr. Trump over a woman for the presidency.

“It’s a slap in the face,” says the professional actor from Springfield, Pennsylvania. “I had my 25-year-old daughter call me in tears from Florida and say, ‘Why does America hate women so much?’”

Across the United States, many women are reporting feeling devastated, pained, and fearful of Mr. Trump’s return to the White House. They wonder how his supporters – 45% of whom are women – voted for a man found liable for sexual abuse, and who coarsely insults women and brags about overturning *Roe v. Wade*.

What does it mean that Mr. Trump defeated Hillary Clinton in 2016 and returned in 2024 to trounce Vice President Kamala Harris? Will a woman ever break “the highest, hardest glass ceiling,” as Mrs. Clinton describes it?

Women are indeed electable, as evidenced by Mrs. Clinton’s winning the popular vote eight years ago, says Debbie Walsh, director of the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University. Last year, women held a record number of seats in Congress (151, or 28%), and with this election women now hold a record number

of governorships (13).

Still, says Ms. Walsh, when women run for president, they are trying to disrupt the notion of who can hold the most powerful position on the planet – one long associated with masculinity and, except for President Barack Obama, white men.

“There are absolutely people out there who are not comfortable with women holding positions of leadership like that,” says Ms. Walsh. She adds, “Donald Trump fed into, in a lot of his rhetoric, that unease that some people are willing to talk about, and some people don’t want to talk about.”

In his criticisms of Ms. Harris, Mr. Trump ridiculed her as having a “low IQ” and said she would get “overwhelmed” and “melt down” going up against male authoritarian leaders. He laughed at one rallygoer’s shout that Ms. Harris “worked on the corner” – a reference to prostitution.

“Just remember, it’s other people saying it. It’s not me,” he said to the cheering crowd. In his final rally, he called former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi an “evil, sick, crazy” and then mouthed the B-word. “It starts with a ‘B,’ but I won’t say it,” he said. He added, “I want to say it,” which got some of the roaring crowd chanting the word.

### **Gender stereotypes – exploit or avoid?**

Mr. Trump has leaned heavily into masculinity, and successfully drove up his support among men, particularly Latino men. He did targeted interviews and appeared at football games and mixed martial arts fights. While most candidates look to expand their base, says Ms. Walsh, the Trump campaign focused narrowly on strengthening its appeal to men. “He’s made a decision that [women] are not voters that are going to be there for him.”

While Mrs. Clinton leaned into gender in her campaign, Ms. Harris played down her candidacy as a woman – the daughter of a Jamaican father and an Indian mother. Instead, she stressed women’s rights, particularly reproductive rights. She criticized Mr. Trump as the man who took those rights away with his Supreme Court appointments, and warned that, if elected, he would sign a national abortion ban.

On Election Day, Julianne DeCosterd, a student at Montana State University, stood in line for five hours to vote for both Ms. Harris and a ballot measure anchoring the right to an abortion in the state constitution. Ms. DeCosterd said that she was tired, hungry, cold, and under the weather. But she stuck it out – because she said she was “really bothered” by the idea of women not having a choice in whether to start a family.

“I definitely wanted to vote to allow abortion to be available in Montana,” she said via text.

The measure passed in the ruby-red state, but not with the help of Piper Butler, another student at Montana State who helped easily elect Mr. Trump in Big Sky Country. She voted against the abortion measure and appreciates that the former president helped send abortion back to the states to decide. That’s a kind of choice, says Ms. Butler, who believes that God has a plan “for every single little individual” but also grants freedom of choice.

Referencing the 2005 “Access Hollywood” tape, in which Mr. Trump boasted about grabbing women by the genitals, she says, “Obviously, no one wants to hear that. Nobody at all.” But when picking the country’s leader, Ms. Butler put emotions aside and focused on which candidate had the best policies. She believes that Mr. Trump will lower gas and housing prices and will exhibit pride in his country. And she’s “highly doubtful” he’ll implement a national abortion ban, which he says he’s against.

Despite Ms. Harris’ efforts to mobilize women around reproductive rights, she ultimately won a smaller share of female voters than Joe Biden in 2020 and Mrs. Clinton in 2016.

Both women candidates carried baggage and faced headwinds, says Dianne Bystrom, director emerita of the Center for Women and Politics at Iowa State University. Mrs. Clinton contended

with investigations of her work and her husband’s, as well as his infidelities and impeachment. Ms. Harris got off to a late start, was not vetted by voters through a primary, and had the challenging task of separating herself from an unpopular administration and her association with skyrocketing illegal immigration.

At the same time, “We still live in a sexist society,” says Dr. Bystrom. “This election displays that.” She adds that Ms. Harris, as a woman of color, faced a “double whammy” of both sexism and racism.

She points to a Pew Research Center poll from last year in which only 1 in 4 American adults said it’s extremely or very likely that the U.S. will elect a woman

president in their lifetime. They cited gender discrimination, Americans not being ready to elect a woman to higher office, and women having to do more to prove themselves than men. While Democratic presidential candidates have

won the women’s vote overall since 1992, that’s largely because of women of color. A majority of white women have voted for Republicans in every presidential election for the past 20 years – including this one.

Mr. Trump’s polarizing character and boorish rhetoric about women have contributed to his low favorability ratings: More than half of voters (53%) view him unfavorably, according to exit polls. But even if they don’t like him, Americans know what they’re getting.

“Donald Trump makes misogynist remarks. Donald Trump does not have a good history when it comes to how he treats women. But to say that makes a voter who supports him also misogynist, I think, is a leap too far,” says political scientist Amy Black, who specializes in women and politics at Wheaton College in Illinois.

### **Low priority of electing a woman**

In this election, the opportunity to elect the nation’s first female president was not a high motivator, according to an AP VoteCast survey. Only about 1 in 10 voters said that was the most critical factor determining their vote.

Traditional gender roles, “a willingness to call the kettle black,” and lowering grocery store prices were the top issues for Susan Inveninato, a Trump voter shopping for groceries in Whitemarsh Island, Georgia, after the election. “These days, if it’s not on sale, it don’t get bought,” she says. What hurt Ms. Harris the most with Ms. Inveninato was her failure to separate her cultural and economic policies from President Biden’s – including support for transgender rights, which, in Ms. Inveninato’s view, creates inequalities for women in sports.

“In the end, Kamala never really focused on what she was specifically going to do differently from Biden to help Americans across the board when it comes to food costs and taxes,” she says.

In Milledgeville, Georgia, Jasmine Daniels, a 20-something restaurant worker, says that she would like to see a woman as president. And she liked Ms. Harris’ stands on many of the issues important to her – including reproductive rights and gender equality. Yet economic concerns ultimately pushed Ms. Daniels toward voting for Mr. Trump, whose character she sometimes questions. “It was a tough choice: morality versus economical,” she says. “I chose economical.” ■

### **WHY WE WROTE THIS**

Republican Donald Trump has twice defeated a seasoned female candidate for president of the United States. Women have ably led many other nations. Are American voters ready to send a woman to the Oval Office?



# Trump is back. Parents worldwide share their hopes and fears for the future.

By Ryan Lenora Brown and Ann Scott Tyson / Staff writers  
Whitney Eulich, Fred Weir, Dominique Soguel, Dina Kraft,  
and Taylor Luck / Special correspondents  
and Ghada Abdulfattah / Special contributor

On Wednesday, Nov. 6, Donald Trump declared victory in the U.S. presidential election, and in a tent camp for migrants in Mexico City, a Venezuelan boy named Yorjan turned 7 years old.

Neither knew of the other's special day, but Mr. Trump's victory means their lives are now intertwined. Yorjan and his family are trying to cross the U.S. border, the same one the president-elect has promised to "seal" when he takes office in January.

Yorjan was blissfully unaware of that pledge as he excitedly accepted a wedge of vanilla birthday cake laced with icing squiggles from a volunteer.

But sitting beside him was his mother, Yojani, whose eyes pricked with tears. So much – from the economic collapse that caused them to flee Venezuela to the rats scurrying through their tent – felt out of her control as a mother. And now this. "My fear now is that the [U.S.] president won't receive us," she says. "That Trump will send us back to the jungle."

Every four years, Americans choose who will fill the world's most powerful office, and this year they've selected a leader who touts as one of his greatest foreign policy strengths his unpredictability. At a time of broad global conflict, with mass human migration, major wars in the Middle East and Europe, and China jockeying to surpass the United States as the world's superpower, Mr. Trump's "America First" mantra will bend the arc of the world's future.

Political leaders and foreign diplomats are on alert. But during election week in the U.S., it was parents around the world who absorbed the news of Mr. Trump's victory with particular immediacy. Some feel that an American "strongman" could finally put an end to the instability that has shadowed their children's prospects. Others feel his erratic approach to global affairs has the potential to upend their dreams.

"Sometimes you pay for problems that aren't yours," says Yojani, whose last name we are withholding for her security.

## "I die a hundred times a day"

As the sun dipped below the horizon on American Election Day, casting long shadows over a tent camp in central Gaza, Sawsan Swirky's heart broke again.

She wasn't thinking of Mr. Trump or Democratic candidate Kamala Harris, but of Mousa. One year to the day earlier, her 16-year-old son had walked out of the gates of Al Quds Hospital in Gaza City, where the family was sheltering from Israeli airstrikes.

In his hurry to get to safety, Mousa had left his beloved rescue cat, Mishmish, at home.

Now, as the bombs fell and the sirens wailed, he couldn't bear the thought of Mishmish scared and alone, looking for his master in the rubble. So Mousa and his cousin decided to go back to find him.

The bomb struck them on their way. Onlookers carried the severely wounded boy back to the hospital, where he died in front of his mother's eyes.

Now, she says, "I die a hundred times a day."

But as she listened to news about the American election results, a single hope pushed its way through her grief: Maybe Mr. Trump could end the war that had so far killed at least 42,000 Palestinians. "I wish he would bring a cease-fire" that would allow Palestinians to return home, she says.

She knew that plenty of people thought it was possible. Mr. Trump had told Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that he wanted an "end to hostilities" before his Inauguration Day, according to Israeli media.

Far from those backroom negotiations, Ms. Swirky was simply desperate to keep her family alive. She longed to see one of her daughters, who lived on the other side of an Israeli checkpoint. And every day, she feared another of her nine children might die doing something ordinary such as collecting water.

Waiting for Mr. Trump's next move, she revisited her memories of Mousa, the boy who loved okra with beef, had an incredible laugh, and died for the love of an innocent.

In her grief, she hoped only that the next American president would make sure "No parent in the world sees what I have seen."

## "He says he wants to make peace"

Three hundred ninety-six days.

That was how long it had been, on American Election Day, since the last time Idit Ohel had seen her son Alon. That October evening, he sat at the family piano in a village in northern Israel, his fingers gliding across the keyboard as he played a popular Israeli song about longing.

Nothing suggested it was the eve of the family's greatest nightmare.

But early the next morning, on Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas militants stormed the Nova music festival where Alon, 22 years old and an aspiring jazz pianist, had gone with friends. They dragged him by his curly hair, tossing him into a pickup truck with others he had been sheltering with, and drove them into Gaza.

Since then, Ms. Ohel's life has been consumed by a single thought: Alon must live.

And for Alon to live, the war must end.

By American Election Day, her son had become a familiar face to Israelis, his image plastered on posters across the country, along with others taken captive that day, and carried through the streets in mass protests. The Israeli government's failure to return him and the other hostages wasn't just a reminder of the country's most catastrophic intelligence failure, or the war it had sparked. It was also a challenge to a fundamental covenant of Israeli society: Leave no one behind.

Ms. Ohel never had much interest in politics, seeing herself as merely a person "interested in ... doing good in the world," she says. But now she had no choice but to care, because her child's life depended on the choices of politicians.

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu remained steely in his resolve to fight in Gaza until what he calls "total victory."

But like Ms. Swirky, Ms. Ohel saw hope in Mr. Trump, though it was a faint one. He wasn't a man who took no for an answer. He projected "aggression and power."

"He says he wants to make peace here," she says, her voice soft and exhausted.

Maybe, she thought, that would be enough to finally bring Alon home.

## WHY WE WROTE THIS

The world always watches the American presidential election. But this year, the stakes feel much higher – especially for parents around the globe who wonder if Donald Trump will make their children's lives better or worse.

## Two mothers, one wish

Marina also knows what it is like to live in the unspeakable space between your child's life and their death.

In March 2022, her son Volodya abruptly stopped calling.

At the time, he was a junior intelligence officer serving in the Russian army in the Russian-occupied Donbas region of Ukraine. When she stopped hearing from him, Marina, a real estate agent whom we are calling by a pseudonym for her security, first approached the local military office. It didn't have an answer, so she went to Moscow, and then to Donbas itself.

There, she traveled from town to town with a photo of Volodya, clean-shaven and baby-faced, barely out of his teens, asking every soldier she met if they had seen him.

Each "no" ached, but it also gave her hope that he was out there somewhere, perhaps captured by the Ukrainians, but still breathing.

Then, in early 2024, she received a notification from the army. Volodya's remains had been identified. He died a hero, she was told. But the platitudes felt hollow.

"This hell is over for me now. But so many other mothers are still going through it," Marina says.

On the campaign trail, Mr. Trump pledged repeatedly that as president he would end Marina's war in "24 hours." Juliia Kozak wants her war to end, too.

The Ukrainian mother was seven months pregnant when Russia invaded her country. She was on vacation at that time, and her flight home was canceled. So she flew to Zurich, where she had a friend who could give her a place to stay.

Today, her daughter, Dana, is growing up like any other Swiss suburban child, in Basel now, splashing around in toddler swim classes and speaking to her mother in a babbling mix of English and Ukrainian.

Ms. Kozak is grateful Dana's first memories won't be of hearing air raid sirens and hiding in basements, but she also cannot help but long for the life they do not have. Just before she left Kyiv, she had bought an apartment there, where she imagined she would raise her daughter in comfort, surrounded by friends and family – not as a refugee in a foreign land.

Watching the American election results, she felt conflicted. While she likes the Democrats, they were unable to stop the war or help Ukraine win it. Mr. Trump strikes her as "a crazy person," but his unusual methods might just be her country's best hope now. He "wants to be a hero ... and if he does stop the [Ukraine] war, then he will be a hero."

Marina, who this spring held Volodya's funeral in the same church where she had brought him to be baptized two decades earlier, is silent when asked if the American president-elect can usher in peace.

Finally, she says, "I've always believed that everybody needs to sit down at the negotiating table and put a stop to this slaughter. If this Trump can do that, I will support it."

## Peace above all

Indeed, Mr. Trump promised in his victory speeches that he would make the world a more peaceful place. "I'm not going to start a war; I'm going to stop the wars," he proclaimed.

Those words brought comfort to Li Zhandong. Though he has never lived through war himself, he, too, knows its costs.

Like other Chinese of his generation, the music teacher in his 40s was raised by relatives who had survived two violent conflicts: the Japanese occupation around World War II and then the Chinese civil war just after it.

His grandfather barely eked out a living from tiny, terraced fields in the drought- and famine-prone hills of China's northwest Shaanxi province. His parents, meanwhile, grew up in the turbulent aftermath of the 1949 communist revolution, hunger and political

unrest hanging low over their childhoods, too.

By contrast, Mr. Li was born at a moment when China was stabilizing and flinging itself open to the world.

That allowed him to study music education at secondary school, a level of learning his parents couldn't dream of. His own children have done even better. His eldest son is now 20 years old and a university student in a technical field.

Lately, however, the peace that made all this possible has begun to feel precarious to Mr. Li. Amid growing U.S.-China tensions, the Chinese military was stepping up operations around Taiwan, the self-governing island of 23 million people across the Taiwan Strait that Beijing claims sovereignty over.

A war for Taiwan would ensnare the U.S., too, and so much depended on the American president-elect, a man who often seemed to despise China but also promised geopolitical pragmatism.

"That is the best," Mr. Li says. If there was one thing he knew intimately, after all, it was how much depended on peace.

## A time of rumor

In Mexico City, Yojani spent much of Yorjan's birthday listening to postelection rumors whistle through the migrant camp at warp speed. People spoke of mass deportations. Of the border closing.

Yojani didn't know what was true, but she was shaken. In July, she and her husband made the painful choice to leave home so that her children could "have a future," she says. They made a journey she would never wish on any child – walking hungry through jungles that echoed with the howls of wild animals – to end up here. And now it felt like it was all at risk.

As she spoke, Yorjan reappeared, rosy-cheeked with damp hair, after a shower he cheerfully described as "freeezing cold." He wore a new hoodie, plucked from a table of donated clothes.

He had chosen the red, white, and blue uniform of Captain America. ■

## THE EXPLAINER

# Why do we eat turkey on Thanksgiving? Here's some information to gobble up.

**L**et's talk turkey. How did this large fowl, which has paraded unchallenged for centuries as the holiday centerpiece, come to be synonymous with an iconic American tradition? Read on for some turkey trivia to share around the table.

### Q: How much turkey do Americans eat?

Farmers in the United States raise 210 million to 215 million turkeys a year, says Leslee Oden, CEO of the National Turkey Federation. The highest-producing state is Minnesota (with 37 million birds), followed by North Carolina and Arkansas.

Over the Thanksgiving holiday alone, Americans will dine on about 40 million pounds of turkey, says Ms. Oden. In 2023, Americans ate more than 5 billion pounds of turkey, about 15 pounds per person, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

### Q: Where are turkeys from?

Wild turkeys are indigenous to North America, having foraged their way from Central America up to eastern Canada. They were domesticated in Mexico by the Aztecs, who roasted the *guajolote* on a large spit and used its feathers to decorate clothing and blankets. Spaniards brought the bird back to European trading markets in the

1500s, where it soon found its way to fancy English dinner parties. Wealthy English, who loved to impress guests with exotic birds as the meal's centerpiece, named the fowl after the far-off place some merchants had carted it from: Turkey. The name stuck.

**Q: Didn't Benjamin Franklin think the turkey should be the national bird?**

Not exactly. Remember that Franklin was a satirist. In January 1784, Franklin privately wrote to his daughter, Sarah Bache, "For my own part I wish the Bald Eagle had not been chosen as the Representative of our Country." In context, Franklin was critiquing a rather dumpy drawing of an eagle lacking a regal beak by the Society of the Cincinnati, which had adopted the nation's bird as its symbol. The national punch line was that the Cincinnati eagle looked more like a turkey. In short, think of Franklin's letter to his daughter as an early dad joke.

**Q: Why is turkey associated with Thanksgiving?**

The only existing eyewitness account of diplomatic talks between the settling English and the Wampanoag tribe is a 1621 journal entry that includes numerous references to bagging "fowl," which came to be interpreted as the roaming "turkey." A century on, "turkey" appeared firmly rooted in American culinary literature and practices. Amelia Simmons' 1796 "American Cookery," widely considered the first American cookbook, includes instructions on how "to stuff and roast a Turkey, or Fowl." In 1827, novelist Sarah Josepha Hale romanticized the role of the turkey in "Northwood: A Tale of New England," in which she described the ideal Thanksgiving dinner: "The roasted turkey took precedence on this occasion, being placed at the head of the table; and well did it become its lordly station."

Later, Hale launched a letter-writing campaign to politicians, imploring them to make the Northeast tradition of a Thanksgiving feast a nationwide holiday. She is largely credited with influencing Abraham Lincoln to declare a National Day of Thanksgiving and Praise in 1863 amid the Civil War.

**Q: Why does the president pardon turkeys?**

It's unclear which president first officially pardoned a turkey – some say it was Lincoln, who turned a turkey into a family pet. Others say it was John F. Kennedy. Regardless, for the past 76 years, the National Turkey Federation has been delivering a live turkey to the White House. George H.W. Bush officially made the pardon an annual event.

The National Turkey Federation chairman has the honor of keeping the "presidential flock." Two turkeys are selected from the flock for the voyage to Washington, explains Ms. Oden, in case the official turkey gets stage fright. To prepare for the trip, the turkeys are carefully tended to by the farmer, who exposes them to camera lights, pompoms, music, and crowds. Then comes an informal beauty pageant to select the finest turkey in the land. "It's the one that ultimately struts around the best, has the most beautiful feathers, and really most important is their temperament," says Ms. Oden. "They are going to go meet the leader of the free world, and we want to make sure that they act on their best behavior."

This year, the turkeys will travel from a Minnesota farm by private coach. Once in Washington, they will be put up in a hotel suite at the Willard InterContinental to rest up for their big moment. Then, it's back on the coach for the trek home to Minnesota, where they will live out their lives at Farmamerica, an educational farm, as feathered ambassadors.

– Kendra Nordin Beato / Staff writer

## EDUCATION CURRENTS

ANANTNAG, INDIA

# To reach Kashmir's Himalayan nomads, teachers bring classrooms to the pasture

By Adil Amin Akhoon / Contributor

It takes Mubarak Hussain Bajard two hours of trekking through dense forests to reach his classroom, careful to avoid the wild animals that live in the mountains of Dardpora, India.

When he arrives, a group of 16 children is waiting in the tree shade – all are members of Kashmir's remote, pastoral communities, where literacy rates have historically lingered around 30%. As his whiteboard goes up, 16 books open, and the courtyard reverberates with recitations.

This is one of a growing number of mobile schools for shepherds.

Backed by regional education authorities, the schools have a curriculum that focuses on traditional academic subjects as well as life skills, environmental awareness, and cultural preservation. The teachers who run these open-air classrooms also serve as mentors and role models for the children. Many come from nomadic communities themselves and understand the unique challenges faced by the region's shepherds.

"They are our children, and we want to make a difference in their lives," says Mashkooor Ahmed Koka, another teacher. "Just remember: If one of them gets educated, it will have an impact on the whole community."

## Teachers bring passion to the pastures

Across India, tribal communities have long struggled to boost literacy rates and overall interest in education. Common challenges include seasonal migration, teacher absenteeism, and lack of motivation on the part of parents.

The Gujjars and Bakarwals – pastoral nomads who live throughout Jammu and Kashmir – are no exception.

This is why, high in the mountains surrounding the Kashmiri village of Dardpora, the local education department has set up around 25 mobile schools, providing a ray of hope for children who would otherwise have limited or no access to education. Head Clerk Nasir ul Islam says education officers select teachers – who make a salary of \$120 per month and receive tents and other supplies from the government – and carry out surprise visits to the schools throughout the school season, which starts as early as April and runs to September or October, depending on weather. And officials say demand for mobile schools is growing.

This year, more than 1,000 schools served tens of thousands of children throughout Kashmir.

Nizamuddin Gojjar Khatana has three children participating in the program – the only members of the family enrolled for formal education. "I have ruined my life by ignoring the importance of education, but I won't let it happen to my children," he says.

Mr. Khatana praises their passionate teacher, Shaista Akhtar. Born

## WHY WE WROTE THIS

### HOPE

Access to education looks different depending on the community. In the hilly pastures of Kashmir, mobile schools meet little shepherds where they are.



and raised in a nomadic family, she witnessed firsthand the struggles faced by her students, and received her primary education at a similar school for little shepherds. Determined to make a difference, Ms. Akhtar continued her studies at a local high school, and started teaching five years ago, at age 19.

“There are only two to three female teachers” in the Dardpora area, she says. “And it is not easy to break the shackles of ignorance. I have to convince and motivate the children.”

Her hard work has not gone unnoticed. “Apart from teaching, she inspires our children to take education seriously,” says Mr. Khatana, adding that his children can already read and write, unlike him.

### Juggling chores, cattle, and homework

Yet nomadic students must also balance their desire for education with the responsibilities related to grazing livestock.

Children from pastoral communities are expected to participate in crucial grazing activities from a young age. Boys are primarily responsible for herding cattle, while girls are expected to take care of household chores and help with the animals when needed.

To get their education, teenage cousins Khalida Akhtar (no relation to Ms. Akhtar) and Jeelani Ahmed go the extra mile. They leave early in the morning to take cattle to the grazing fields, and even still, they often run late for class.

“It takes us a couple of hours to look for greener pastures,” says Jeelani. “We want to get education like other kids get, but we have the responsibility of grazing cattle on which our livelihoods depend. That’s why we juggle.”

Their tardiness doesn’t anger their teacher. “The grazing of cattle is passed down from one generation to another. We have to be supportive,” says Mr. Koka. “If they are careless in taking care of cattle, they get scolded by their parents.”

After school, the duo immediately scurry back toward the grazing field.

Khalida, an extroverted teen with dreams of becoming a doctor, does her homework late at night, after class is done, the cattle is home, and the household chores are complete. Her schedule is tiring, and unpredictable, but she’s grateful for the chance to learn.

“If there were not these schools around our *bahaks* [temporary settlements], we would not be able to get an education,” she says.

It’s a hopeful sentiment echoed by their teachers.

“Their fathers and forefathers remained uneducated. If there were no nomadic schools around, the fate of children would remain the same,” says Mr. Bajard. “It is because of these schools, that there are nomadic people into the different professions. Education, of course, can open any door.” ■

### PEOPLE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

AMSTERDAM

## Martine Postma is building a ‘fix-it’ culture

By Anne Pinto-Rodrigues / Contributor

It was 15 years ago when Dutch environmental journalist Martine Postma was finally moved to action over all the appliances she saw being thrown away in her Amsterdam neighborhood.

Despite being repairable, malfunctioning coffee machines, electric kettles, irons, and the like were ending up in landfills. And all the while, manufacturers made more and sold cheap, contributing to carbon dioxide emissions and exacerbating climate change, to Ms.

Postma’s frustration. “At that time, repair was not seen as something normal,” Ms. Postma says. “You couldn’t do it anywhere.”

So on Oct. 18, 2009, she arranged a local event where volunteers skilled in repairs would try to fix broken devices that community members brought in, free of cost. She had no idea if anyone would show up.

But as soon as the doors of the venue opened, people began streaming in with their defective items. In addition to all the repairs, the event created an opportunity for people of different social and economic backgrounds to come together and bond. “The huge interest really surprised me,” Ms. Postma says. “It showed that people want to do the right thing but have to be enabled to do so.”

Her first “Repair Café” turned out to be a resounding success.

Today, the Repair Café movement has spread to more than 40 countries across six continents, with nearly 3,200 Repair Cafés in operation, including 200-plus community repair programs in the United States. Moreover, the Repair Café Foundation, which Ms. Postma set up in 2010, has helped foster legislative changes to make repairing more accessible in Europe.

“The Repair Café Foundation has not only stuck around, but coalesced into a political force in the Western world that has driven the adoption of repair-friendly consumer laws,” says Adam Minter, a columnist for Bloomberg Opinion and the author of two books on waste, recycling, and reuse.

“That’s a notable contribution to early 21st-century sustainability,” he adds. The foundation “can be an important example in developed countries that no longer incorporate repair into most consumer product cycles.”

### “Energy is saved”

Experts say that repair events are a vital step toward a more sustainable economy. “By extending the life of products, [they] reduce the demand for new raw materials,” says Jelle Pothoven, strategic communications adviser at Dutch environmental information organization Milieu Centraal. “When resources are conserved, the carbon footprint is lowered, and energy is saved.”

Last year alone, Repair Cafés around the world saved over 1.4 million pounds of broken appliances from going to a landfill, according to the foundation’s 2023 annual report. That translates to more than 33 million pounds of carbon dioxide emissions prevented from entering the atmosphere, based on the calculation method of British researcher Steve Privett.

Ms. Postma hopes that the reach of the cafés extends even further. Their current 3,200 “is still a very low number,” she says matter-of-factly. “Every community should have a Repair Café,” she adds. “We can have millions of Repair Cafés around the world.”

That ambition got a monumental boost in Europe when the European Union adopted a “right to repair” directive in April 2024. Ms. Postma and the Repair Café Foundation played a key role in achieving this milestone, with the legal text of the legislation mentioning Repair Cafés multiple times.

But for Ms. Postma and the foundation, the legislation is just the first step. They are now working toward an extension of this legislation, which currently applies only to a limited number of products.

Ms. Postma points out that under the current law, a manufacturer can offer to replace a broken item instead of repairing it, in situations in which repair is more expensive than replacement. “This rules out [fixing] a whole range of cheap and low-quality products, which

### WHY WE WROTE THIS

#### RESPONSIBILITY

Throwing away a repairable appliance is a waste of the materials used to manufacture it and a waste of the materials used to build its replacement. A “fix-it” culture points the way to a greener society.



are precisely the ones likely to break soon,” she says.

## Bringing communities together

Repair Cafés have evolved over their existence, particularly in regard to who wants and supports them, Ms. Postma notes. In the beginning, it was mainly environmental activists who wanted to organize them, she says. But later, as it became evident that the cafés brought the community together, people who wanted to do something for their own neighborhoods also became interested.

“Over time, we’ve seen the motivations change and become broader,” says Ms. Postma. “Now with the starter kit, more people are starting their own Repair Cafés.” The starter kit is now available in English, Spanish, French, and German, in addition to Dutch, and can be downloaded for a voluntary fee of €49 (\$53).

The attitudes of appliance manufacturers have also changed dramatically. “Earlier, product manufacturers didn’t want to be associated with us,” Ms. Postma says. “They said that repairing is dangerous, and that it shouldn’t be done by an amateur.”

Nowadays, manufacturers are themselves contacting the foundation. “They want to discuss the repairability of their products,” she says.

Robert Riede, who in 2018 co-founded the Repair Café Jeltje in Amsterdam’s Old West neighborhood, has observed another heartening trend. In the past, the main repair person has generally been someone who is retired or otherwise out of the workforce. But that is changing, he says. “A new generation – 25 to 35 years of age – is now spreading the Repair Café message.”

Ms. Postma is working toward getting repairing introduced as a subject in vocational schools. There is also a huge amount of interest from other educational institutions, which are using the foundation’s starter kit to set up Repair Cafés. “Parents don’t know how to repair, so they can’t teach their children,” she says. “It [repairing] needs to be taught in school.”

“Organizations like the Repair Café Foundation can and do play a critical role in presenting new ways of consuming and maintaining stuff, to a younger generation open to new forms of consumerism,” says Mr. Minter, the Bloomberg Opinion columnist.

Ms. Postma remains dedicated to her mission of making the infrastructure for getting repairs as rich and diverse as that for buying new items. “Getting a repair should be just as easy,” she says. “You should have many options when you want to get an item repaired.”

Like Repair Cafés, several other initiatives are steadily gaining momentum. The Restart Project in the United Kingdom focuses on the repair of electronic items, while Fixit Clinic in the U.S. organizes community repair events.

“More people now understand that we need to start consuming differently, use less resources, and create less waste,” Ms. Postma says. ■

## POINTS OF PROGRESS

### 1. Mexico

**A preschool mandate set up children for success.** Mexico began requiring three years of preschool education in 2004. Children born right after the cutoff date, who went to preschool under the mandate, performed better on math and Spanish tests in fifth and sixth grades than those born right before the cutoff date, a recent study found.

They were also more likely to pay attention in class, take part in extracurricular activities, and do their homework, and less likely to skip classes. Students affected by the mandate were 9% more likely to finish high school and 11% more likely to attend some college.

Studies in high-income countries have shown mixed results on the outcomes for children receiving early childhood education. But the researchers in Mexico suggest that preschool policies implemented at scale in lower- and middle-income countries could have lasting effects.

VOXDEV

### 2. Argentina

**Homicides have plunged in a drug trafficking hot spot.** Considered the least safe city in Argentina, Rosario has struggled to address violence. That has changed in the past year.

Homicides have fallen 65%, a success attributed to increased police presence, more coordination among different levels of government, and a change in local law that is allowing the prosecution of gang members operating from prison.

Waiting times for police to arrive when called dropped from an average of 20 minutes to six to eight minutes. Firearm injuries were down 57% in the first half of 2024 compared with the same period of 2023. And cocaine seizures increased by 500%.

Petty crime has increased, possibly a result of a spike in poverty attributed to President Javier Milei’s fiscal austerity. But in September, the city went a month without any homicides for the first time since 2013.

BLOOMBERG, INFOBAE

### 3. Slovenia

**A national culture of beekeeping is protecting pollinators.** These insects are crucial for the health of crops and wild plants, but their populations are declining worldwide. Around 40% of invertebrate pollinators, such as bees and butterflies, are at risk of extinction.

Slovenia is home to 11,000 professional beekeepers, more per capita than any other country in Europe, and caring for these pollinators starts early. Beekeeping clubs are active at close to a third of Slovenia’s primary schools. In 2011, it became the first nation to ban neonicotinoids, a type of pesticide that is toxic to bees.

Because conserving wildflower meadows safeguards pollinator habitats, 12 hectares (about 30 acres) of meadows in the capital of Ljubljana are not mowed until late June, an initiative that has won support among residents. The national beekeepers association also distributes pollinator-friendly tree saplings and hosts a planting day each March. World Bee Day was first inaugurated in Slovenia on May 20, 2018, and is now celebrated around the world.

REASONS TO BE CHEERFUL, CABI REVIEWS

### 4. India, China, Thailand

**Robot boats are clearing trash out of waterways across Asia.** Most of the plastic trash that reaches the ocean starts in rivers and coastlines. Researchers and developers are designing tools to help remove waste and gather data.

One boat, Clearbot, collects over 400 pounds of garbage per hour, methodically sucking up trash in a way the founder compares to the robot vacuum Roomba. The project began at the University of Hong Kong. It now operates in locations ranging from the Ganges River in India to the Mai Po Nature Reserve in Hong Kong, where it uses artificial intelligence to detect and remove the eggs of invasive snails. In Bangkok, the boats move algae off lakes using conveyor belts. They can also map waterway floors, test water quality, and help clean oil spills.

CNN

# World

**Clean energy requires less mining than fossil fuels.** All sources of power need metals and minerals to deliver electricity, from the steel used in wind turbines to the lithium in batteries. Mining those materials can be harmful for the environment and people.

Yet studies show that sticking with the status quo would be far more material-intensive than transitioning to cleaner sources of power. Coal requires 1.2 million kilograms of mined waste rock per gigawatt-hour of electricity it generates. That's 20 times more material than what's needed by onshore wind, which uses more metals, minerals, and rock than other low-carbon electricity sources.

Technological improvements are also making solar panels, batteries, and wind turbines more efficient, further reducing the need for mining and materials.

OUR WORLD IN DATA

— Erika Page / Staff writer

## COVER STORY

# Common traditions of Giving Thanks

In Canada, Acadian descendants and the Mi'kmaq remember when they gathered to celebrate the harvest – and “good cheer.”

STORY BY SARA MILLER LLANA / STAFF WRITER

PORT-ROYAL AND BEAR RIVER FIRST NATION, NOVA SCOTIA

**P**aul Lalonde adjusts his glossy beaver felt hat and welcomes the visitors gathered around a long table to his Order of Good Cheer.

The year, he explains, is 1606, and winter is coming to the banks of the Bay of Fundy. He and his French compatriots barely survived their first winter, unprepared for the harsh conditions that blast through these parts of Canada. They only survived here, in present-day Nova Scotia, with the aid of the Mi'kmaq, the Indigenous people of the area.

That's why the colonists and Mi'kmaq, he says to the guests watching him bring this history alive, are seated around this table set with pewter plates and cups, about to dig in to a hearty moose muffle stew or perhaps beaver tails seared over a burning hearth.

Mr. Lalonde is an interpretive officer for Parks Canada, and part of his job is to reenact, or “interpret,” events that happened at the Habitation at Port-Royal, a full-scale replica of one of the first European settlements in North America four centuries ago.

Today, in his wood-buttoned black wool doublet, he's playing the part of a 17th-century French colonist and member of L'Ordre de Bon Temps (the French name), an eating and entertainment club established with a royal charter, like similar orders in France. These rotating feasts are also considered an early Thanksgiving – a holiday most Canadians today experience more as a harvest festival in early fall, but that some historians also trace to the meals in Port-Royal's common room.

The story shares similarities with the American narrative of Plymouth Rock. The Mi'kmaq, who had lived here for thousands of years, brought the sick and starving colonists both food and their ways of healing.

“We've always operated with the understanding that everybody in the world is in relation with one another, whether we admit it or

not, and our job is to make those relations good,” says Mercedes Peters, Sharing Our Stories coordinator of the Mi'kmawey Debert Cultural Centre near Truro, Nova Scotia.

But there the similarities mostly end. In the United States, the first Thanksgiving at Plymouth Rock is part of America's founding lore, a moment that commemorates the birth of a people. In Canada, the holiday is not wrapped up in the colonial narrative, nor is it as fraught with controversy over the reality of colonialist violence against Indigenous people.

The story of Port-Royal's L'Ordre de Bon Temps, one of Canada's early Thanksgivings, recalls a moment in history when French colonists and Mi'kmaq chiefs shared a relationship based on respect and reciprocity. That distinct relationship would evolve over time with the descendants of those first French colonists, a people who would come to be called Acadians.

Mr. Lalonde, an Acadian, looks across the Habitation's common room at his guests here today. “Who do you invite to sit at your table? You invite your friends. You invite the people you trust.”

■ ■ ■

**A HALF HOUR DRIVE** from the Habitation sits the Mi'kmaq community of Bear River First Nation, which is called L'sitkuk in the Mi'kmaq language. Each October, L'sitkuk, at the edge of the fertile Annapolis Valley, Nova Scotia's breadbasket, holds an annual Harvesters' Gathering, just as their people have for thousands of years.

This year the annual celebration began the day after Canada's official Thanksgiving Day, which is designated as the second Monday of October.

But the Harvesters' Gathering is not a date on a calendar, says Gerald Gloade, a Mi'kmaq elder and educator at the Mi'kmawey Debert Cultural Centre.

Instead, it's the time of year when the tides in the Bay of Fundy, which has the largest tidal range in the world, are at their peak. It is the time of year when hunted game are large and healthy, and at their nutritional peak.

“Our fish stocks are at a premium,” Mr. Gloade says. “The bass are in; the salmon are back, and the sea-run trout.”

At this time of year, the Mi'kmaq always listen for the singing of grasshoppers and crickets to stop, he says. It's a sign of the end of humidity and an indicator to start drying fish for the winter.

“Everything is based on pattern recognition and our connection to the environment,” Mr. Gloade says. “So that's part of our traditional and ecological knowledge based on where the planet is. That's when we celebrate. It's not a specific date.”

This Harvesters' Gathering starts with a sunrise ceremony and the lighting of a sacred fire, which will burn continuously for four days. Over that time, community members give thanks to the land. They also honor those who hunt, fish, and gather throughout the year.

Community members roast traditional foods like moose, deer, and salmon. They also serve turkey and *luski*, a Mi'kmaq bread, and boil corn and lobster. At this year's gathering, participants were taught how to use the *atlatl*, a spear-throwing hunting tool that predates the bow and arrow.

The Mi'kmaq recognize modern Thanksgiving too, as do Indigenous peoples across Canada. But it's at the Harvesters' Gathering where they express gratitude.

“It's about enjoying the year's bounty,” says Carol Ann Potter, a councilor at Bear River First Nation. “It's to truly give thanks to land, to mother earth, and to harvesters.”

For L'sitkuk and other Mi'kmaq communities, the Harvesters' Gathering is a celebration of a way of life based on *Tpi'tnewey*, a concept that expresses their values of giving, especially during the harvest.

“*Tpi'tnewey* is when people generously give away what they have hunted, gathered or made, honouring the intention of doing

good things for others,” one poster at the cultural center explains.

With an understanding of the interconnection of all peoples and their value of Tpi’tnewey, the Mi’kmaq gave generously to the first French colonists in Nova Scotia as they struggled to survive.

■ ■ ■

**WHEN THE FIRST FEAST** put on by The Order of Good Cheer was organized at Port-Royal in 1606, the Mi’kmaq would have just concluded their own seasonal gathering to mark the harvest.

The famous French explorer Samuel de Champlain was one of the founders of the settlement at Port-Royal. (He would later settle Quebec City in 1608.) He believed the colonists’ survival depended not only on access to food, but also on “good cheer,” which he was confident would help stave off scurvy and give colonists the fortitude to endure the winter.

So he obtained a royal charter to found The Order of Good Cheer for the “gentlemen” of the colony, which came with a coat of arms. Its first recorded feast was Nov. 14, 1606.

At each gathering, one member was appointed chief steward. Wearing a special collar around his neck and the order’s medallion, the chief steward would march in with serving plates he filled with mallard and partridge, moose, caribou, beaver, otter, even wildcat – whatever might outdo the previous week’s host.

The order’s practices were set down by the first chief steward, Marc Lescarbot, a lawyer and poet in the colony at Port-Royal. According to his book “Histoire de la Nouvelle-France,” or “History of New France,” the meals served here rivaled the offerings on the Rue aux Ours, a Paris street known for its rotisseries.

At that first feast, Lescarbot also composed and directed the first European play performed in North America, “Théâtre de Neptune,” an ode to the promise of New France in a new world.

But what set this eating club apart from the chartered establishments in Europe was the presence of Mi’kmaq as guests.

As Lescarbot explains, “As for Sagamos [Grand Chief] Membertou, and other chiefs, who came from time to time, they sat at table, eating and drinking like ourselves,” he wrote. “And we were glad to see them, while, on the contrary, their absence saddened us.”

The first feast at The Order of Good Cheer is described by Canada’s National History Society as an early first Thanksgiving. But the story goes well beyond an account of colonists’ friendly encounters with local peoples who provided food and helped colonists survive, says Andrew MacLean, a writer and podcaster who recalls the history of Atlantic Canada.

The Order of Good Cheer “explicitly flipped the old world order on its head,” he writes in his book, “Backyard History,” a compilation of the columns he has published about the history of the region. “All were treated as equals. Men, women, children, Catholics, Protestants, Mi’kmaq people, white people, and black people.”

“There was definitely a business side to things,” says Mr. MacLean in an interview. “There’s a mutual benefit rather than just one side being nice for the sake of it.”

The two groups were bonded by pragmatics. The French traded metal tools, fabric, blue dye, and weapons. The Mi’kmaq taught the colonists their nutritional and medicinal know-how that essentially kept them alive.

Indeed, it was not the “good cheer” of the eating club, but likely the vitamin C in the Mi’kmaq recipe for pine needle tea that helped colonists survive, says Ms. Peters at the Mi’kmaewey Debert Cultural Centre.

“There is a friendship there, in the beginning,” she says. “But when I hear people looking at Eurocentric points of view and how things are presented as French people and Mi’kmaq, or European settlers and Indigenous folks getting along – this isn’t just ‘Everything was hunky-dory,’ because it wasn’t. It was difficult and it was hard.” Simplistic and rosy narratives ultimately serve only to reinforce the

mythology of colonization.

And it should never be forgotten, she adds, that Mi’kmaq perspectives went unrecorded.

■ ■ ■

**AFTER A CENTURY OF BLOOD-SOAKED** wars between France and Britain in North America, in 1755 the British began to forcibly remove Acadians, who had already evolved with their own dialects and cultural traditions, from the region. Acadians remember the expulsion as Le Grand Dérangement, or The Great Disturbance.

Over 11,000 of an estimated 14,000 Acadian inhabitants were forcibly removed and scattered throughout the 13 Colonies and Europe. Thousands died en route.

(Descendants of these expelled French settlers also include Louisiana’s Cajun people, whose name is derived from an evolved and quickly spoken version of “Acadian.”)

The Mi’kmaq, who suffered the same grievances as Indigenous peoples across Canada as victims of colonial land grabs, forced assimilation, and residential schooling, assisted Acadians during the Le Grand Dérangement.

And while the relationship has faltered since colonization, Mi’kmaq leaders acknowledge the close relationship they once had with Acadian settlers.

“We had similar ideals,” says Tim Bernard, executive director of the Mi’kmaewey Debert Cultural Centre. “The French weren’t coming here and saying, ‘Move out, we’re moving in.’”

“The Mi’kmaq and the French had a better relationship because of the reciprocity that the French showed to the nation,” Mr. Bernard continues. “And that’s part of what the culture has been built around. The British didn’t have that. The British said, ‘We’re going to conquer you.’”

Acadian people still recognize how crucial the Mi’kmaq were to their very existence. “The Acadians owe much to the Mi’kmaq, since the beginning,” says André-Carl Vachon, a prizewinning historian who has written 11 books on Acadian history. “Many recognized this, and recognize it even today.”

The two peoples exchanged ideas and intermingled. Mr. Vachon cites the words of Champlain in 1633 to underline French attitudes toward the Mi’kmaq: “Nos garçons se marieront avec vos filles et nous ne serons plus qu’un peuple.” [“Our boys will marry your daughters and we will be one people.”]

In a key moment that brought the two groups closer, Grand Chief Membertou converted to Catholicism in 1610, receiving the baptismal name Henri in honor of the French king.

When Robert McEwan, a member of the Bear River First Nation council, thinks about how the British burned down the Habitation, he gets unsettled. But it’s not the way a Native American might feel unsettled about Plymouth Rock.

His mother worked at the Port-Royal replica for 25 years. He worked special events and then took over for his mother for two years before being elected as a councilor in 2021.

A craftsman who builds boxes with porcupine quills and traditional games made with carved wooden pieces, Mr. McEwan has also taught traditional techniques inside a tipi on the site. He says he has made visitors cry telling them the story of Indigenous dispossession over the centuries.

His own tenure at the Habitation at Port-Royal included building a traditional community drum. He’d sing so loud – “loud and proud,” Mr. McEwan says – that he swears the music could be heard across the bay.

But the story of The Order of Good Cheer is not a story that is central to his own narrative or identity – or to any of the Mi’kmaq interviewed for this piece.

Still, Mr. Bernard recognizes that moment when his people sat across the table from the first French colonists. He comes to the



same conclusion that the Acadian interpretive officer Mr. Lalonde does about the feasts once put on in the dining hall of the Habitation at Port-Royal:

"I think it's safe to say that everybody felt safe around that table," Mr. Bernard says. ■

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## PERSPECTIVES ON THE WORLD

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### THE MONITOR'S VIEW

# Thanksgiving as forgiving

For many Native Americans, Thanksgiving is often seen as a day of mourning – a reminder of what their peoples lost at the hands of European settlers and their descendants. This year, however, that dark history saw a blush of light. On Oct. 25, President Joe Biden stood before the Gila River Indian Community in Arizona and apologized on behalf of the federal government for the forced removal of Native American children to assimilation schools.

Coming at the start of a season in which Americans count their blessings among family, friends, and strangers, that gesture of national atonement fits into a shift in recent years toward a broader reading of past abuses of Indigenous people.

"We do not erase history; we make history," Mr. Biden said. "We learn from history, and we remember so we can heal as a nation."

Apologies often open a pathway to reconciliation. Any remorse, however, even if it is only official, relies ultimately on a response of forgiveness in order to bring a mutual feeling of justice.

"Instead of looking at the apology for what it isn't," wrote Anton Treuer, a professor of Ojibwe at Bemidji State University in Minnesota, "we should look at the apology for what it is – an opportunity to set a new tone for our country and start a healing journey."

"The only way through this is together," he wrote in The Minnesota Star Tribune.

Under the Indian Civilization Fund Act of 1819, hundreds of thousands of children were taken from their families and scattered throughout government-funded schools. Most were deprived of their names, their languages, and their families. Many died because of abuse. Much of that policy endured into the 1970s.

Several initiatives aim to repair the damage. Bills in Congress, for example, would establish a commission to forge a common narrative through the testimonies of separated families. A Senate bill requires that members of the panel "be persons of recognized integrity and empathy" with an understanding of Native American approaches to healing and reconciliation.

The legislation coincides with a two-year investigation by the U.S. Department of the Interior into abuses under the school policy and a "road to healing" listening tour, which completed last year, through a dozen Native American communities.

Together with the presidential apology, the combination of acknowledgment and accountability may do more than shape a new narrative of past harms or lead to material forms of restitution.

A novel college experiment shows how. Last year, the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor in Texas restored a long-lapsed tradition of making Thanksgiving a day of forgiveness. Every student was required to offer a gesture of reconciliation before sitting down to the holiday meal. The effort was as transformative as it was challenging.

"I love the concept of intentionally forgiving people right before Thanksgiving so you can be thankful with a grateful and unburdened heart," recalled Danielle Kenne, then a senior, in a recollection published by the university in June. "I never really considered how forgiving others could affect my ability to be truly thankful, and it made me want to spend time in prayer about forgiveness before Thanksgiving." ■

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### THE MONITOR'S VIEW

# A shield for Gaza's innocent

After nearly 14 months of destruction, the war in Gaza has taken an unexpected turn for peace. In a religious ruling, the most prominent Islamic scholar in the Palestinian enclave says Hamas failed to keep its fighters "away from the homes of defenceless [Palestinian] civilians" – or, in effect, the group used innocent people as shields against Israeli attacks on Hamas positions purposely placed in or under civilian buildings.

"Human life is more precious to God than Mecca," stated Professor Salman al-Dayah, a former dean of the faculty of *sharia* and law at the Hamas-affiliated Islamic University of Gaza.

The BBC, which reported on the religious edict, notes that Dr. Dayah cites Islamic principles that require Hamas to avoid "actions that provoke an excessive and disproportionate response by an opponent."

In the past, Dr. Dayah has been respected enough to mediate disputes between Islamist militant groups within Gaza. His edict, or fatwa, could now further undercut Hamas' claim that much of its legitimacy rests on its obedience to Islam.

Since the group's Oct. 7 attack last year on Israeli civilians, many in the Muslim world have debated how much Islamic law and international law apply to the conflict in Gaza. Dr. Dayah's ruling echoes similar calls by Jewish scholars for the Israeli military to honor international and Jewish law by protecting Palestinian noncombatants in both Gaza and the West Bank.

The core of the differences between Israelis and Palestinians "is the ability and willingness to empathize with innocent victims on both sides," wrote Singapore-based scholar James Dorsey after the Oct. 7 attack. Such empathy is shared by the three Abrahamic faiths of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism. ■

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### BEHIND THE SCENES

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# Why we let Taiwan tell its own story

The story of Taiwan is often framed in terms of China or the United States. Its own narrative is more complex.

By **Lindsey McGinnis** / Asia editor  
and **Jingnan Peng** / Multimedia producer

China sees Taiwan as a breakaway province that will someday be united with the mainland, possibly by force. But the self-governing island increasingly views itself as a distinct country with its own laws and culture. Its people overwhelmingly want to maintain local autonomy.

"On Taiwan, about two-thirds of people consider them to be purely Taiwanese, and only 2% see themselves as purely Chinese," says Beijing Bureau Chief Ann Scott Tyson on our "Why We Wrote This" podcast. "That is a big shift from several decades ago."

This shift in national identity coincides with Taiwan's transformation from an island under martial law in the 1980s to a thriving democracy of 23 million today.

In bustling cities and sleepy coastal towns, Ann met farmers, security experts, Indigenous leaders, and young protesters who are feeling the pressure to protect that progress amid hostility from



China.

She also witnessed a growing civil defense movement, one taking lessons from Ukraine on how to respond to mass casualty events. What Ann didn't see: panic. People are "just sort of calmly learning some skills," she says, "that could be helpful in many circumstances."

Whatever happens, the people of Taiwan are not willing to go backward. "They very much treasure their freedoms," says Ann. ■

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#### GLOBAL NEWSSTAND

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THE TIMES OF ISRAEL / JERUSALEM

## As Trump wins, Netanyahu nears absolute authority

"[Donald Trump won the U.S. presidential election] just a few hours after [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu brusquely advanced a dramatic comeback of his own, ousting his only significant coalition dissenter, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant," writes founding editor David Horowitz. "... In acute contrast to Trump's historic comeback, however, Netanyahu's has been achieved without recourse to the electorate ... [and] without him having acknowledged his prime responsibility for the failures that enabled the Hamas invasion [on Oct. 7, 2023]. ... The next concern is that he will ... subjugate the judiciary to the political majority. ... This would give the prime minister near-absolute authority. ... And that would constitute not just a comeback, but a vast surpassing of the powers he held before October 7."

DAILY MAVERICK / CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

## The US has a fresh chance to engage with Africa

"It would be a mistake for Africa to give up on a Trump presidency based on ideological assumptions or personal prejudice," write Greg Mills and Ray Hartley, director and research director, respectively, of The Brenthurst Foundation, a Johannesburg-based economic development think tank. "... If Trump wants to cement his legacy with African people and not just its elites, he needs his policy to double down on the promotion of democracy. ... Trade and investment work best with countries that have open, democratic systems. ... [Trump should support] visa access, educational opportunities, increasing trade ... and government training and technical help to democratic standards. ... [This approach] could ensure he has a meaningful African legacy, unlike his predecessors."

THE GUARDIAN / LONDON

## Trump's win spotlights misogyny. The left cannot give in.

"A nation that was once the beacon of the democratic world has knowingly elected a ... criminal who tried to overthrow the government," writes author and columnist Polly Toynbee. "... The tides will carry this poison across the Atlantic, invigorating Europe's hard right. ... On the morning of the result I was speaking to US students visiting the UK. ... They talk of abortion rights and deep dark misogyny: 'American men will not vote for a woman,' one said. ... Would it be better to give up all this angst? ... No, of course not. There is no escaping the danger of Trumpism, only escapism. ... 'Never give up,' said the vanquished and exhausted Kamala Harris."

KOREA JOONGANG DAILY / SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA

## Export-reliant nations must brace for American protectionism

"The Korean economy is under dark clouds as it faces the second presidency of Donald Trump," states an editorial. "... [His] protectionist policies ... can devastate export-reliant economies like Korea's. Trump has warned of blunter 'decoupling' from anything related to China by slapping as high as a 60 percent universal tariff on imports from China. ... The move will adversely affect Korea whose trade with China ... mostly involves intermediate components for finished products in China to be sold in the United States and other countries. ... Trump has vowed to revisit current ... policies like the Inflation Reduction Act and the CHIPS and Science Act – which can baffle Korean companies who invested billions of dollars in the country. ... Our government must do its best to protect the interests of Korean companies by reminding its U.S. counterpart of the escalated bilateral relationship on the economic and technological front."

THE CITY PAPER / BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA

## US-South America alliances could now shuffle

"Donald Trump's decisive victory in the U.S. presidential election presents a momentous opportunity for the incoming Republican administration to strengthen its presence across Latin America," writes Richard Emblin, director of The City Paper. "... President Gustavo Petro's administration in Colombia ... is openly critical of the United States' role in global affairs. ... Argentina's President Javier Milei, [in contrast,] ... expressed his congratulations for Trump's 'formidable electoral victory.' ... Milei's statement echoed similar messages from [other] right-wing Latin American leaders [in El Salvador, Brazil, and centrist Uruguay]. ... [Will] the Colombian leader ... find a way to balance his leftist agenda with the realities of U.S. power and influence in the region[?]"

– Compiled by Nate Iglehart and Jacob Posner / Staff writers

# The day the blessings fell at my feet

It took a near injury and a dreaded chore for me to appreciate the frozen bounty under my nose.

When I opened our kitchen freezer one recent morning, a batch of persimmon fruit dropped to the floor and barely missed my toe. Persimmon pulp is a lovely, golden thing, but when frozen, it's as hard as a hockey puck. I counted myself fortunate after the near miss, but our freezer looked poised for an even bigger landslide. Sighing, I decided to cull the shelves, a chore that seemed about as pleasant as sorting my sock drawer.

Even so, a task I'd dreaded soon made me feel deeply grateful, a sentiment I'm trying to keep alive as another Thanksgiving rolls around. Digging through packages white with frost, I couldn't believe how many treasures I found.

I'd forgotten about those two bricks of diced ham, perfect for a pot of split pea soup. In the far reaches of a corner, deep in Arctic sleep, sat two sacks of summer corn. Along with the sausage I'd fished out, I now had the basic ingredients of *maque choux*, a simple but satisfying corn dish inspired by Creole and Native American cultures, guaranteed to brighten a gray autumn day.

Other delicacies rolled forward and announced themselves as I ferried the contents of each frigid shelf to the kitchen counter. There was a bright red bag of spaghetti sauce, no doubt just as good as when I'd stirred it to perfection a year ago. In a great stroke of serendipity, I came across a loaf of garlic bread as a complement. Fish fillets from my brother, peaches for a future cobbler, and biscuits ideal for Sunday brunch added to the sumptuous tableau. Orange juice and chicken, peas and bell peppers, ice cream, sherbet, and casseroles spilled into view, too.

All in all, I felt as rich as Midas, and suddenly sated. The way I figured it, we wouldn't need to stock up at the grocery store for a week or two.

I also felt a little bit chastened. Why had I groused just moments earlier about managing our surplus of food, which was really a singular blessing?

My morning dive into our freezer underlined a few basics about gratitude I want to embrace, especially in this season that celebrates thankfulness.

**Be alert to abundance rather than absence.** A simple fact of life is that we tend to see what we look for. I'd greeted my overflowing freezer as an obstacle, when it was really an opportunity to savor my good fortune. It reminded me of other times when I've been oblivious to the wealth of my days.

Like many others buffeted by inflation, my wife and I have cut back on travel and restaurant outings, a change I first felt as a loss. But the shift has freed more time at home, and we're connecting more deeply with the nature in our backyard and with loved ones who visit our patio. When we consciously look for what's good, it reveals itself more often.

**Savor details.** In the autumns of my childhood, our holiday coloring books often pictured horns of plenty – those cone-shaped baskets of fruits and vegetables that symbolized Thanksgiving bounty. At first glance, the scene just looked like spilled produce. But in working our crayons over each item – the orange pumpkin, the scarlet grapes, the yellow squash – we

came to understand that plenitude lives in particulars, that it's not one thing but many.

I reconnected with this truth as I scanned our freezer, called once again to the kind of gratitude that reads life as a story with many layers. Seen this way, gratitude can be an adventure, an exercise not only in piety but also in imagination.

**Simplify.** Mary Stein, my librarian friend, once told me that after her shelves are culled, patrons check out more books than before. Simplifying the collection allows visitors to better grasp the real gems. That basic principle seems to work at home, too. Cleaning out our freezer inspired me to weed our living room bookcase and winnow my closet. That meant reconnecting with novels I hadn't read, poetry I wanted to revisit, neckties I'd overlooked, and pants and shirts that now, in being reclaimed, have given me a new wardrobe. In thinning my household, I have, paradoxically, gained more.

**Share.** The wonder of abundance is that when it's shared, gratitude grows, which is why holidays like Thanksgiving feature communal feasts.

I've tried to cultivate that practice in other parts of my life. When our freezer rendered ingredients for *maque choux*, a popular dish in my home state of Louisiana, I thought about how good it would look at the center of a table graced by friends.

As *maque choux* simmered in our kitchen, I remembered that bag of frozen persimmons that had slid from our freezer, taking me on an unplanned odyssey of gratitude. Hopefully, future blessings won't have to fall at my feet before I notice them.

– Danny Heitman

## MAQUE CHOUX

*Maque choux*, pronounced “mock shoe,” is a popular Cajun dish in Louisiana, thought to have been adapted from Native American cuisine. There are many variations, and part of the joy in the recipe is that it's open to improvisation. Start with good corn, which is the star of the dish. Fresh corn is perfect, though my frozen summer corn worked well, too. We use chopped Cajun pure pork sausage for our meat seasoning, though you can use a pound of chopped ham or bacon instead.

*Maque choux* can be served alone in a bowl, like chowder or succotash, or over rice. It's a nice, filling dish to share with a full table.

### Ingredients

6 ears of corn, shucked  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
2 celery stalks, chopped  
1 red bell pepper, chopped  
1 onion, chopped  
1 pound of smoked sausage, diced  
1 cup heavy cream  
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper  
1 teaspoon thyme  
1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika  
Salt and pepper to taste

### Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a large pan or wok, and then add chopped vegetables, except corn, and sausage. Sauté until tender.
2. Add corn and seasonings, except salt and pepper. Stir until combined.
3. Reduce heat and add cream. Let simmer until the liquid has reduced slightly, about 10 minutes.
4. Season with salt and pepper to taste. *Maque choux* can be served with toasted French bread and a garden salad as sides.

## Gratitude – the remedy for envy

**O**n my morning walk one day, I noticed that my neighbor had a new mailbox. The granite and redwood it was made of were exquisite. As I admired it, I thought of my own serviceable but plain mailbox and a twinge of envy rose up in me. And just the day before, I had felt jealous of someone else.

I realized that the habit of coveting had been playing out in me for a while, and that I was breaking the Tenth Commandment: “Thou shalt not covet” (Exodus 20:17). This brought me up short and made me feel uncomfortable, so I did something I always find helpful: pray for inspiration.

Obedience to the Commandments could seem like a restrictive way to live. And yet, I could see that they were actually safeguards – like the channel markers in a river that keep boats from getting mired in marshes along the shore. They act as spiritual boundaries that guide us and keep us from drifting off into quagmires of difficulties.

So what was the one about being envious keeping me safe from? I realized that if we’re feeling envy, we’re not feeling gratitude for what God has given us.

Christian Science helps us understand that because our gifts, or qualities, come from divine Spirit, they are not material, but spiritual and indestructible. Qualities such as benevolence, gratitude, humility, generosity, and tenderness are gifts God bestows upon all His children. God is pure goodness, and as Christ Jesus taught, “It is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32).

Envy clouds our view of the bounty that God freely gives to all, without measure. So in a way, the commandment not to covet is like a directive not to forget to be grateful. This statement by the discoverer of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy, in “Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures” is thought-provoking: “Are we really grateful for the good already received? Then we shall avail ourselves of the blessings we have, and thus be fitted to receive more” (p. 3).

These ideas brought the value of this commandment to life for me. God’s children cannot be made to feel deprived, discontented, or dissatisfied, because in truth, God has bestowed unlimited goodness on each of us. And in turn, gratitude for this spiritual fact makes us feel God’s gifts even more tangibly. It was as if God was telling me, “Don’t focus on what you don’t have. Open your eyes and your heart to what I am pouring forth to you.”

God, divine Love, has given all of us gifts to use and share, blessing not only ourselves but others, too. Each quality, lived and loved, is essential, representing the completeness of God’s creation.

What a healing realization this was! I began to take note of the gifts God had given me. By the time I finished my walk, gratitude, instead of discontent and dissatisfaction, was welling up in my heart. And it’s been a lasting lesson on the power of genuine gratitude to displace discontent and jealousy.

I’m learning that it’s vital to remember our God-given gifts daily. Every day, we can gratefully acknowledge God’s abundant love and care for all, and this sets us on a productive and joyous path.

– Karen Neff

CAVENDISH, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

## Beyond ‘Green Gables’: A new look at Anne’s creator

Story by Sara Miller Llana / Staff writer

**T**he white-shingled home with a green-gabled roof is perched timelessly amid the rolling pastures of Prince Edward Island.

For a century, the farmhouse, which inspired the setting of “Anne of Green Gables,” has lured fans eager to retrace the bucolic footsteps of their favorite red-headed literary character. Visitors snap photos of patchwork quilts and rocking chairs. They wander the forest groves that Anne – with an e – who was so fiercely imaginative about the natural world around her, renamed the “Haunted Woods.”

But the Victorian farmstead is not just a capsule suspended in time. It welcomes a diverse fan base whose members see themselves in the foibles of the impetuous orphan who breaks all the rules but finds love and family.

“Anne of Green Gables” has sold more than 50 million copies and been translated into over 30 languages. The headstrong 11-year-old who was sent by mistake to live on a farm is one of the most beloved children’s characters of all time.

“[Author Lucy Maud Montgomery] is looking at the world and seeing people’s foibles and imperfections, yet holding them up affectionately and loving them anyway,” says Laura Robinson, a professor at Acadia University who chairs the L.M. Montgomery Institute management committee. “There are people who find any time they are in a tough place in their life, they really want to reread these because there’s something healing and redemptive about them.”

Ultimately, it’s a story about an outsider finding acceptance – a lesson that, if anything, resonates more today than ever.

And with the 150th anniversary of Montgomery’s birth on Nov. 30, there are plenty of visitors to these red-sanded shores. Many people see the anniversary as an opportunity to more intentionally shift the conversation beyond just the “pastoral prettiness” of the story. They aim to examine the wider world the character would have inhabited and to consider Montgomery and her work with a 21st-century eye toward inclusion and diversity.

“Don’t get me wrong, we love Anne,” says Linda Lowther, a tourism and education consultant touted as the island’s “Montgomery at 150” expert. She is part of an effort to highlight new tours and tributes that educate visitors about the creator of Anne, not just the character.

Many of those events are exactly the kind one might expect on an island that can sometimes feel as if it jumped out of a storybook: floral scrapbooking, journaling workshops, musicals, concerts created with Montgomery poems, and the chance for children to be taught in a re-created classroom.

But Montgomery, the writer of hundreds of short stories and 20 novels, was also a woman ahead of her time. She broke barriers and turned Anne into one of Canada’s most cherished, and lucrative, icons.

“She was a fierce environmentalist. I heard someone say she had the business acumen of Taylor Swift,” says Ms. Lowther.

### WHY WE WROTE THIS CREATIVITY

Who was L.M. Montgomery, beyond the creator of a beloved literary character? On the 150th anniversary of the author’s birth, Prince Edward Island is urging a broader understanding.

She also had a complex life. Montgomery based the story of Anne in part on her own upbringing, after her mother died and her father left her with her stern grandparents in Cavendish on the north shore of the island. Throughout her life, she struggled with depression, and some of that trauma is found in her writing.

"[The story] is often represented as kind of fluffy and happy happy, but it can be scathing in moments," says Dr. Robinson.

### "More than one single narrative"

Anne has always appealed to a diverse set of readers. The Japanese are counted as some of her most devoted fans; Aretha Franklin famously considered Anne a "kindred spirit."

But Montgomery today is being examined for blind spots. Her series, for example, ignores the Indigenous inhabitants of Prince Edward Island, who arrived thousands of years before European settlers. That storyline was explored in Netflix's "Anne with an E," when Ka'kwet, a Mi'kmaw character, befriends Anne.

Parks Canada, which runs Green Gables Heritage Place, this year released a 10-year management plan to "engage with Indigenous and marginalized communities to tell their stories." Already, the site, which saw 165,000 visitors last year, includes panel information (some of it in Mi'kmaw language) about Indigenous history at the time "Anne of Green Gables" was published in 1908.

Parks Canada is also looking forward, considering the visitor experience in a more multicultural contemporary Canada. Prince Edward Island's capital, Charlottetown, is among the fastest growing Canadian cities, thanks to immigration.

Their management plan, still abstract, has nothing to do with changing the story, says Janette Gallant, with Parks Canada. "It has to do with reflecting the diversity of Canadian society and understanding there are more stories and more voices to be heard ... more than one single narrative."

That's the force that drove Judith Graves to create "The ANNethology: A Collection of Kindred Spirits Inspired by the Canadian Icon." In a collection of short stories, "Anne" is reimagined as a robot in one, a girl from Jamaica who's been trafficked in another. "The idea was to take this universal character and see how she can shift in different cultures with different genders and in different time periods," says Ms. Graves.

The local author has received some pushback from those defensive about "their island treasure," she says.

"Just leave her alone," she heard.

### "I feel like I'm Anne"

A visit to Green Gables Heritage Place should assuage anyone worried about an overmodernization of the storyline: The "kindred spirit" that many feel with Anne is enduring.

"I try to explain," says Harriet Nicholson, an Australian on a 10-day trip of a lifetime. "I am Anne. I feel like I'm Anne."

It's more than just their shared red hair, or the "scrapes" that both got into as youngsters. When Ms. Nicholson would be late getting home as a child, her mother always knew to look "up" in the trees instead of "down." At first, she didn't see herself in the books. She was "sporty" growing up and thought the series was "too princessy." Then her mom, whose own mother put it into her hands, tried a few years later, opening to the middle of the book when Anne shatters a chalk slate over the head of Gilbert, a classmate.

Ever since, she's seen Anne as a trailblazer, reading the series every year. Now in her 20s, she finds 19th-century Anne the perfect "bosom buddy" for the 21st century. ■

## In 'A Real Pain,' a road trip whose emotional power sneaks up on you

Two cousins embark on a trip to honor their late grandmother.

"A Real Pain," written by, directed by, and co-starring Jesse Eisenberg, is the kind of movie that creeps up on you. When I first saw it, I found it smart and engaging but also a tad tenuous. A road movie about two New York cousins who embark on a Holocaust history tour in Poland, it feels shaggy and discursive at the outset. But all that looseness is a decoy. A lot of emotional weight is packed into this seriocomic ramble if you know where to look.

David (Eisenberg) and his cousin Benji (Kieran Culkin) were close as kids but haven't seen each other in years. The death of their beloved grandmother, a Holocaust survivor, prompts a reunion. Their plan is to fly to Warsaw and eventually split off from the tour to visit their grandmother's childhood home.

It's clear from the start that these two are a classic odd couple. David, a husband and father, holds down an unexciting but lucrative tech job. As is true of most of the characters Eisenberg has played in the movies, he's sharp and tightly wound, and speaks in staccato sentences. Benji, by contrast, is a gregarious oversharer with no real job. His spiritedness is unsettling because it also carries an edge of hysteria.

Both men, in their own way, are visibly distressed. David mostly keeps his discontents locked inside; Benji holds nothing back. He prides himself on being a truth-teller. He loves David but thinks he's "kind of a lightweight." He says he misses the kid "who used to cry all the time." David has a great residual affection for Benji, but what he finds exasperating is that this truth-teller can't really confront the troubling truths about himself.

As a writer-director, Eisenberg is attuned to register the absurd in even the direst situations. It's a way of seeing that, in its own modest way, perhaps owes something to the Yiddish sensibility that also informed storytellers like Bernard Malamud and Isaac Bashevis Singer. "A Real Pain," despite its dark undercurrents, is often very funny.

The tour is headed by James (Will Sharpe), a young, Oxford-educated Brit who, despite not being Jewish, prides himself on his knowledge of Polish Holocaust lore. The group also includes a recently divorced woman, Marcia (Jennifer Grey), and Elogé (Kurt Egyiawan), a Canadian resident who escaped the Rwandan genocide and has converted to Judaism. Among many other stops along the way, they visit the Warsaw Ghetto, posing before its monument, and, near the town of Lublin, the Majdanek concentration camp.

In between jaunts, they stay in deluxe hotels and ride in first-class train compartments. The juxtaposition between such comforts and the horrendous history underscoring the trip spins Benji around. He refuses to travel in style and tries, without much success, to make everyone else feel guilty. His carryings-on are not misplaced exactly, but there's an air of one-upmanship at work, too. He wants everybody to know that he



ON FILM

BY PETER  
RAINER



feels more than they do. David finds himself apologizing to the group for Benji's outbursts, but we can see that, on some level, he wishes he could be as unfettered.

What's distinctive about "A Real Pain," which I was slow to grasp, is that none of these scenes is intended to be cathartic, including the moment when the cousins finally encounter their grandmother's house. This film is saying that you can't will catharsis. It happens when it happens. Or it doesn't. This seems to me a more honest view of experience than what we are accustomed to seeing in the movies.

Eisenberg, whose family fled Poland in 1938, drew on his personal experiences for this film. As an actor, he does well by David, though the performance is not much of a stretch for him. Culkín is rightly the film's star. He makes Benji's obnoxiousness both deplorable and deeply touching. Benji revels in his own suffering and, for companionship if nothing else, wants others to suffer alongside him. He's a wayfarer who embarks on this trip because, without fully realizing it, he is yearning for a foundation. He may be a real pain, but he's also in real pain. The movie doesn't diminish his woe.

■ "A Real Pain" is rated R for language throughout and some drug use.

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## BOOKS FOR GLOBAL READERS

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# Autumn children's books

By Tegan Tegani / Contributor

**D**uring dark or difficult times, reading aloud to children can help both adults and young ones recognize good things in the world around them. The books featured here offer delightful ways to augment appreciation, reinforce enthusiasm, inspire creativity, create community, and bolster courage.

### Many ways to express love

Although no one in her extended family uses the phrase "I love you," the child who narrates "When Love Is More Than Words" understands the affection behind their actions. Author Jocelyn Chung and illustrator Julia Kuo, both Taiwanese Americans, touch on their own cultural experience, but the overall emotional experience is universal.

The book opens with the young narrator saying, "Some people say they love you with hugs, kisses, and three special words. But in my family, we do something different."

Her grandparents, parents, aunts, and uncles demonstrate love through dancing, making meals, and reading together. The warm scenes of family life are surrounded by motifs that foreshadow specifics of love languages that we will learn in the pages that follow: the iris bulbs planted by her grandpa to bloom on her birthday; a jar of Tiger Balm her mama uses to care for her when she's sick; the lima beans her great-grandmother grows.

Everyone can bask in the sense of loving care among the family – and even the wider community – assured that, like the narrator, "I know I have a village of people around me who love me."

### A year's worth of dino delights

Do you have a favorite dinosaur? Have you ever asked the young people in your life about their favorite dinosaurs? Dino trivia is a love language for some people. "A Dinosaur a Day," written by Miranda Smith and illustrated by Jenny Wren, Xuan Le, Max Rambaldi, Juan Calle, and Olga Baumert guarantees a year's worth of paleontological pleasures, if you can limit yourself to just one entry

a day. There really are 365 dinosaurs, with their key characteristics, behaviors, and habitats gloriously and meticulously rendered. I highly recommend dipping into the book at random to stimulate curiosity and satisfy the craving for knowledge. A dinosaur can make any day special.

### Stepping out of one's comfort zone

Sometimes new experiences can feel uncomfortable or overwhelming. The main character in "A Little Like Magic," written and illustrated by Sarah Kurpiel, is not a fan of the cold or of scratchy winter clothes, so an ice sculpture festival outdoors does not seem like something they will enjoy. The opening line, "I do not want to go," probably resonates with a lot of us at one time or another. Bundling up doesn't feel worth the trouble, especially if it means leaving a cozy home and devoted dog. Anxiety might outweigh our sense of adventure.

"We follow a loud whirring, brr-ing, buzzing sound I hear even in my chest," the narrator says. Mother and child brave the weather and the crowd. They see the talent on display in a landscape of gorgeous frozen creations, but the narrator leaves behind a special toy. This leads to the painfully honest statement "I wish we'd never gone." Despite that, the pair return the next night, when they both appreciate the ephemeral beauty and the lingering power of memory. Sometimes trying new things to stretch beyond our comfort zones can bring great rewards.

### Acts of cooperation

In a year when everyone has seen images of, or experienced, real-life climate disasters, "A Roof!," written by Stephanie Ellen Sy and illustrated by Daniel Tingcungco, feels like a particularly healing story.

The book opens with a dramatic storm spreading ominously across the page, above a little house and tree: "HOWL RUMBLE WEEWOOOOHH!" On the next page, we see someone peeking out of the lit window of that house: young Maya, who discovers that the typhoon has deposited someone else's roof in her backyard. She and her father set out to return the roof to the address written on it. This book chronicles their journey and the many acts of cooperation that overcome obstacles they face along the way.

The Filipino concept of *bayanihan*, a sense of working together that the author translates as "being in a community," is depicted beautifully. Maya leads the way, but everyone she encounters joins in to assist, support, and repair. "Together, they rebuild. Nail after nail, board after board, heart after heart." Through this gorgeous, loving book, readers see how one person's instinct to help the community inspires others to pitch in, too.

### Learning to ask for help

"A Voice in the Storm," written and illustrated by Karl James Mountford, is lovely and affirming, offering ways to deal with the storms inside us (and the ones outside, too). The main characters, Rat and Bear, show how much courage it can take to ask for help and to receive it.

Several well-intentioned animal friends recognize that Rat is not doing well, but Rat tries to run away from her feelings, despite the intensifying storm outside. "The storm screamed with loneliness, sang loudly of sadness, and seemed to sigh in between. It reminded Rat of how she felt." The natural world echoes Rat's tempestuous inner world.

When Rat stumbles upon a big and perhaps intimidating stranger, readers might be worried (especially after her near-devastating encounter with a snake). But rather than threatening the vulnerable Rat, Bear offers understanding and support.

This book exemplifies how to be gentle with yourself and strong for others. The pictures offer reassurance. Bear's solid bulk looks comforting. The whorls of tree stumps provide a place to rest, proof

that even things that are broken still have use. Snails are present throughout Rat’s journey, slow and steady. Mushrooms and flowers grow, sometimes side by side, showing that life can flourish in both shade and light. Raindrops and tears can be visually similar, both representing catharsis. After the storm, the sun emerges and stays for the rest of the book – an enduring symbol of hope. ■

SUDOKU

Sudoku difficulty: ★★☆☆

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

How to do Sudoku

Fill in the grid so the numbers 1 through 9 appear just once in each column, row, and three-by-three block.

.....

Crossword and Sudoku solutions

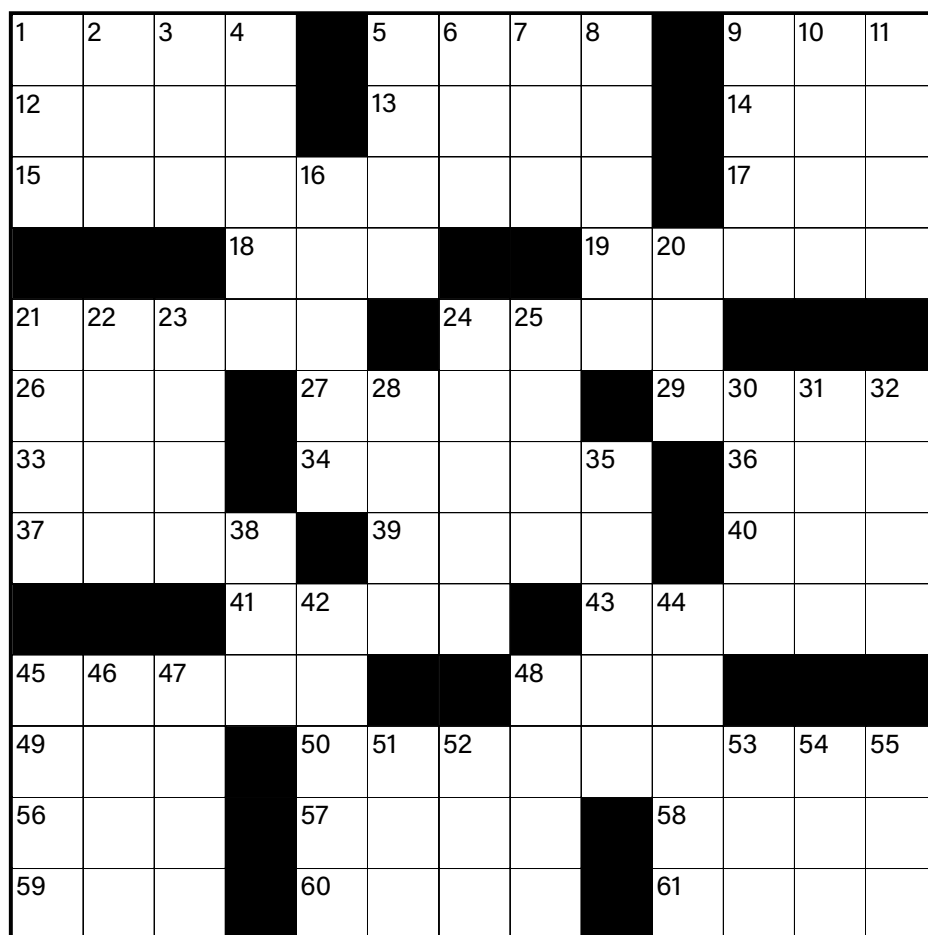
R	O	P	E	F	I	D	E	E	A	R		
O	V	A	L	L	O	U	D	D	N	A		
B	A	R	G	A	I	N	E	D	G	O	T	
A	C	T	I	R	E	N	E					
E	N	T	R	E	J	O	E	Y				
M	O	O	R	E	A	P	E	A	C	H		
I	N	S		B	A	N	A	L	T	O		
R	E	S	T	R	E	L	Y		O	W	L	
				H	A	L	T	R	E	P	L	Y
L	I	B	Y	A	L	L	I	D				
A	D	O	R	E	D	U	C	I	B	L	E	
W	O	N	O	M	I	T	S	T	A	I	L	
S	L	Y		N	U	D	E					

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

# Crossword

## Across

1. Cable alternative
5. With bona, it's authentic
9. Corny bit?
12. Cricket field shape
13. Thunderous
14. The tiniest bit of evidence?
15. Negotiated a price
17. Perceived
18. Make a scene?
19. Actress and singer Cara
21. \_\_\_ nous (just between us)
24. Little 'roo
26. Dairy murmur
27. Cut grain
29. Respectively
33. Ending for run, sit, or stand
34. Predictably trite
36. Furthermore
37. Word with chin or head
39. Lean (on)
40. It gives a hoot, really
41. What things may grind to
43. Talk back?
45. Land of Tripoli
48. Jar sealer
49. Without further \_\_\_
50. Capable of being decreased
56. Placed first
57. Opposite of include
58. Eeyore's loss
59. Not obvious
60. Skin-colored
61. Daisy supporter



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## Down

1. Deprive (of)
2. Russian name ending
3. Standard
4. "Pomp and Circumstance" composer
5. Move erratically
6. It's charged and ready to go
7. Directly
8. 50s crooner \_\_\_ Fisher
9. Rim
10. Coming up shortly
11. Have standing
16. Sharply bitter, as a comment
20. Ham surround
21. Prince of Persia?
22. Vacuous number
23. Use a Frisbee
24. One of the Jacksons
25. Fiery gemstone
28. Countess's spouse
30. Right at one's peak
31. Monk's hood
32. Divine
35. Sung line
38. 'Love \_\_\_ neighbor'
42. Mouthpiece for Moses
44. Does paper work
45. Legal statutes
46. Teen heartthrob
47. Thin as a rail
48. Baroque instrument
51. Cousin of an ostrich
52. Past do?
53. Cave creature
54. Be recumbent
55. Timber wood