

The Herald-Star

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Our opinion

Fathers face a difficult task

Father's Day brings good thoughts for many, hopefully most, people of a dedicated worker, a patient taskmaster, an adviser for life.

That's not the case for everyone, so, today, for those who do have such positive thoughts, be sure to let your father know what he means to you.

Fathers get a bad rap in the world. They're often portrayed in entertainment as inept, or aloof or clueless or far worse.

But a good father is the one who lights up from the moment his child is born, or who feels a rise of love when taking on stepchildren. He knows he's got to at least appear to be a font of knowledge and a role model, or at least to be able to find the answers the child seeks.

He knows in his heart he's got to be patient, that the kids weren't born filled with knowledge any more than Dad has all the answers now. But he's got to feel his way through any situation.

He's got to be tough enough to apply discipline, but gentle enough to know when it's best to be a disciplinarian.

He should be gentle enough to provide a kind word after a child has a bad day in school or at home plate or with a boyfriend or girlfriend, no matter how awful his own day has been.

He must instill good values, a good work ethic, a thirst for knowledge,

and then one day he's got to allow his children to move on into the world to make their missteps, despite his best efforts in their upbringing.

Fathers must serve as baseball coach, football coach, basketball coach, mechanic, dance and vocal instructor, math expert, carpenter, school principal, referee, financier, psychologist, therapist, religious educator, fighter and lover, boss and employee.

He must listen, but he's got to know just the right words to say when it's time to speak.

He's got less margin for error than a NASA flight controller, but he's got no handbook, no rules, no guides, only his instincts and, if he's lucky, a template from a prior generation.

A man who chooses to try to be all of that must be full of love.

If your father has played and is playing an important role in your life, tell him thanks today. If your relationship with your father isn't all you hoped it would be, a possible route to improvement would begin by trying to figure out how you would deal with all the pressures of the job of father.

Not all men are meant to be fathers. There are those who ruin the word "father" for the rest of men who try their best.

Honor those who try their best today.

Happy Father's Day.

Call your congressman

Ohio Senators

Sen. Sherrod Brown, 713 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C., 20510; telephone (202) 224-2315

Sen. Rob Portman, 448 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C., 20510; telephone (202) 224-3353



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Bringing us together

One off the biggest disappointments in what turned out to be a year of one big disappointment after another had to be the cancellation of the 2020 Greek Food Festival.

It's been one of the most-anticipated events of the late spring and early summer calendar for more than 30 years. While the food will never disappoint, the annual gathering lets residents from the Tri-State Area and beyond enjoy a couple of hours with friends and family members, maybe learn a little bit about Greek culture and even make a new friend or two.

That experience fell victim to the coronavirus last year, and that's one of the reasons organizers at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church are holding nothing back while making plans for this year's festival.

"People are anxious to be able to get back out and be involved with events and with one another," Anthony Mougianis said June 10 during a press conference and tasting held at the church.

"There are a couple of examples I can give," said Mougianis, who serves as the parish president and will chair the 35th festival.

"Just look — a couple of weeks ago they had a carnival in the parking lot at the Fort Steuben Mall. It was packed. I really like carnival stuff — you know, it's a lot of fun — but it's not the same as the food festival.

"And then, just look at the First Fridays on Fourth that they held in downtown Steubenville on June 4 — that was packed, too. It shows that people want to get out, that they want to have a good time. They have really been missing that."

Joining Mougianis as co-chairs are another couple of guys whose faces should be familiar to everyone who has attended the event for the past several years — Nick Riley and Nick Demitras. They will be directing a staff of volunteers who have been working tirelessly in preparation for



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the festival and will continue to work well past 9 p.m. on Friday, the scheduled closing of the three-day event.

"I've always said that you win with people," Mougianis explained. "It doesn't matter if it is a festival, a church or a football team — you win with people. Without their support and the sponsorships from local businesses and organizations, we wouldn't be able to have such a spectacular event."

Scheduled to be open from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, the festival again will allow the spotlight to shine on Greek food and pastries. There will be music and dancing, tours of the church and vendors set up in the lot across from the church, which sits at the corner of South Fourth and South streets.

While all of the culinary offerings have large followings, one of the most sought-after items again will be the humble gyro, that staple of Greek festivals that features roasted meat on a pita served with tomatoes, onions and tzatziki sauce, that wonderful blend of yogurt, cucumbers, garlic and olive oil.

They always are in demand, and Mougianis says this year will be no different.

"I think we will be able to do in three days what we did in four days in 2019 — and maybe beyond," he predicted. "We sold 8,000 gyros in the four days of the 2019 festival. For three days this year, we are prepared to make 10,000."

Even more important than the food, though, is that the festival brings people from all walks of life together just to sit back, relax and appreciate good food and, more important, one another.

"This is what I think differentiates our area from any other," Mougianis said. "We have our problems. We can talk about and look at all of the negatives all of the time. And then there are these kinds of events, where they are a melting pot, and people come together to help one another, to enjoy and celebrate one another — to me, that is invaluable."

The festival comes at the beginning of one of the biggest weeks of the year in the city — the Dean Martin Hometown Celebration opens Thursday and runs through Saturday. There will be plenty of activities between the area around Historic Fort Steuben and the 200 block of South Fourth Street, where there will be vendors and live music in front of the Spot Bar. Martin tribute performances are scheduled at the Spot on Friday and Saturday.

You'll be hard-pressed to find anyone downtown this week who will honestly be able to say they were not able to enjoy themselves. And it will be because of a lot of hard work put in by organizers, members of their staffs and volunteers. Being able to see that so many people are able to have a great time makes that effort worthwhile.

"I'm not going to tell you it doesn't get tiresome or it doesn't get hard," Mougianis said about the Greek festival. "It gets harder every year. But somehow, somehow, with God's help, we can continue to forge ahead and make it bigger and better every year. You're going to see a great event, so come hungry and tell your friends. Come and enjoy."

(Gallabrese, a resident of Steubenville, is executive editor of the Herald-Star and The Weirton Daily Times.)

Leftists writing social studies lessons for children

It's hard to know what's worse — brainwashing kids or lying about it.

Parents worried their kids are being indoctrinated with critical race theory can't get straight answers. Local school boards and principals lie to them, claiming children are merely being taught to be "critical thinkers."

On June 12, the truth came out. Teachers unions and activists held rallies in 22 cities to support critical race theory. What they said was eye-popping. They unabashedly declared that their goal is indoctrinating students in far-left causes.

The Zinn Education Project, which organized the June 22 events, produces race-centric material for junior high and high schools across the country. Lesson plans are offered free for teachers to download. Parents wondering where the critical race theory their children are getting comes from can go to the website. They'll be shocked.

Zinn was founded by the late Howard Zinn, a Marxist historian who said that teaching social studies wasn't about dates and events. It was to make students want to change the world, overthrowing the status quo.

A Zinn lesson called "Students Design a Reparations Bill" explains that students will be asked to improve on the "flimsy" reparations bills currently in Congress. Critical



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thinking isn't encouraged. This isn't a debate about whether there should be reparations. This is one-sided indoctrination. "As racial justice activists, student are all on the 'same side,' in this role play," says the Zinn website.

Other extreme left groups supplying social studies materials for schools include the Southern Poverty Law Center and Black Lives Matter at School. SPLC tells educators to stand their ground against parents "and vigorously resist efforts to maintain the status quo."

No wonder parents are getting the run around.

It's not just white families protesting. Keisha King, a Black mother from Duval County, Fla., warned the Florida Board of Education that telling a child he's the victim of oppression is "the essence of holding a child back."

Michael Rivera, a Virginian,

explains that he "married a wonderful woman who happens to be white. My son is white." He objects that "according to critical race theory, my son should have white guilt and white privilege."

More than 500 people have signed a petition demanding a curriculum that allows students to learn "without the titles of racist and victim" in Guilford, Conn., a small town outside of New Haven. Yet the Guilford school superintendent insists schools aren't teaching critical race theory. Does he think parents are lying about the homework in their kids' backpacks?

In Greenwich, Conn., parents went to the microphone at a May 20 school board meeting, parents to quote materials their children had brought home, including a "white bias" survey for seventh-graders. The school board members and school superintendent sat silently.

Last week, the superintendent sent out an e-mail to parents explaining that Greenwich wants students to be "critical thinkers" but deftly denying that critical race theory is part of the curriculum.

That may be technically true. Critical race theory originated in law schools. But what's being taught in elementary and secondary schools across the country is a simplified version.

Since school administrators will lie and obfuscate to

push ahead with critical race theory, parents have only one choice. They have to organize and run candidates to replace the local school boards. School board elections are usually quiet, because unions and other insiders like it that way. Now's the time for parents to grab control.

Twenty states with Republican legislative majorities are trying to ban critical race theory.

They're not calling for whitewashing American history, as some activists claim, but they require diversity of viewpoints and prohibit lessons that would shame students for their

"privilege."

Even so, state bans are not ideal. They may run afoul of the First Amendment. And it's hard to know what's going on in each school. That's what local school boards are for.

Even in blue states, Republican candidates who challenge local school boards will make inroads and gain converts to the GOP. This is a winning issue.

Parents — whether Democrats or Republicans, Black or white — want their children to be educated, not indoctrinated.

(McCaughey is a columnist with Creators Syndicate.)

Have something on your mind?

The Herald-Star welcomes letters to the editor. Letters are published each weekend. Letters must be signed and include your name, address and telephone number where you can be reached during the day to confirm information. Phone numbers will not be published. The deadline to submit letters is noon each Thursday.

We appreciate typing and writers who stick to the issues. We do not publish letters that are personal attacks on individuals or businesses. Letters should be of general interest to all readers, and no more than 500 words. Letters should be written to the

editor, not a public official or someone else. We reserve the right to edit or reject any letter submitted for publication.

In order to give as many readers as possible the chance to have a letter published, we limit individual submissions to one every four weeks.

We do not knowingly accept form letters or petitions or print multiple-signature letters represented as the opinion of a group. You can send letters to: Editor, 401 Herald Square, Steubenville, Ohio 43952; through e-mail to newsroom@heraldstaronline.com; or through our Virtual Newsroom site.