

LIFE IN POETRY

Finding A Balance With Your Inner Child

BY TED KOOSER

U.S. Poet Laureate, 2004-2006

Here's a moving poem about parenthood, about finding one's self to be an adult but still trying to care for the child within. Mark Jarman teaches at Vanderbilt University.

AFTER DISAPPOINTMENT

To lie in your child's bed when she is gone
Is calming as anything I know. To fall
Asleep, her books arranged above your head,
Is to admit that you have never been
So tired, so enchanted by the spell
Of your grown body. To feel small instead
Of blocking out the light, to feel alone,
Not knowing what you should or shouldn't feel,
Is to find out, no matter what you've said
About the cramped escapes and obstacles
You plan and face and have to call the world,
That there remain these places, occupied
By children, yours if lucky, like the girl
Who finds you here and lies down by your side.

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AAA Expects To Be Busy During Holiday Season

SIoux FALLS — AAA South Dakota anticipates it will come to the aid of 1,350 stranded motorists in South Dakota during the year-end holiday period, as 260,015 South Dakotans take to the highways for holiday trips between Dec. 23 and Jan. 2, 2012.

Last year during the same period AAA had 1,855 stranded motorist calls, and the Christmas blizzard of 2009 produced slightly higher numbers with 1,872 rescue calls. The auto club will be replacing batteries, performing jump starts, changing tires, extricating cars from ditches, towing vehicles to repair shops and providing other services.

Nationwide, AAA expects to come to the aid of more than 800,000 stranded members during the 11-day period.

"Whether you are planning a local day trip or long distance year-end holiday travel, breaking down is a real mood-buster," said Mark Madeja, spokesman for AAA South Dakota. "Timely vehicle maintenance is the solution."

AAA projects its roadside problem-solvers will be able to remedy the issues of more than three out of five stranded motorists at the scene of the breakdown and send them on their way, but almost 40 percent will need a tow.

After the need for a tow, the second most common roadside rescue service AAA anticipates performing is replacing or jump starting dead batteries, followed by getting members back into locked cars, changing flat tires, performing extrications and delivering fuel.

Motorists can avoid the causes of many roadside breakdowns by simply keeping their vehicles prop-

erly maintained. Check the strength of batteries, make sure tires have adequate tread and are properly inflated, top off all fluids under the hood, and make sure belts and hoses are not worn or cracked. Follow the vehicle manufacturer's recommended maintenance schedule and make sure the car is ready for the rigors of year-end holiday driving.

To locate a reliable repair shop that can help prepare vehicles for winter driving, visit one of AAA's more than 8,000 Approved Auto Repair (AAR) facilities nationwide, including 4 across South Dakota. AAA's network of AAR shops is a free public service that enables consumers to identify professional auto shops staffed by certified technicians who are equipped with the proper tools and equipment to service today's high-tech automobiles. Motorists can find AAR facilities online under Automotive at AAA.com <<http://www.aaa.com/>>.

AAA members who are Android and iPhone users can download AAA Roadside

<<http://www.aaa.com/roadside>>, a mobile smartphone application that enables motorists in need of a roadside rescue to request help without making a phone call. The user simply enters the details of their situation and clicks an on-screen button. AAA Roadside <<http://www.aaa.com/roadside>> then transmits the information and the user's location as established by the phone's GPS technology directly to AAA Roadside Assistance. The app also displays nearby AAA Approved Auto Repair locations so members can decide where to have their vehicle towed, if they so choose.

BY TOM AND RAY MAGLIOZZI

www.cartalk.com

Dear Tom and Ray:

I drive a 2005 Honda Accord. Recently, I started getting a "check fuel cap" message on my dash. When I checked it, it was properly tightened, but the message kept appearing. I went so far as to remove the cap completely to check and make sure everything looked normal, at which time I noticed that the metal flap that normally covers the opening of the tank was missing. How this happened is beyond me. How serious a problem is this? Am I going to explode driving down the highway, get 2 mpg, contribute even more to global warming? Is this going to cost my life savings to fix? — **Kate**

TOM: The answers to your questions are no, no, maybe and no.

RAY: I've never seen the little flap fall off, but I suppose it's possible. It's just a flimsy, hinged piece of sheet metal to prevent back-splash when you remove the gas cap to add fuel. And I had no idea the flap had any connection to the emissions system or the "check engine" light.

TOM: I don't think it DOES have any connection. Nor would the flap do any harm if it happened to fall into the gas tank. It would just sit at the bottom of the tank forever. But



CAR TALK

Tom and Ray Magliozzi

we DO know that if your gas cap is faulty or not tightened completely, that WILL make the "check engine" light come on (or the "check gas cap" message in your car, Kate).

RAY: That's because a poorly fitting or loose gas cap allows fuel vapors to escape into the atmosphere, which creates smog, which turns Los Angeles into Beijing.

TOM: And despite the mystery of the missing flap, you may just have a bad fuel cap. So here's what I'd do. Go to the Honda dealer and buy a brand-new gas cap for \$25.

Install it and see if the light goes off after a few days. If it does, you just needed a gas cap, and the whole flap "flap" was just a distraction.

RAY: If the new cap doesn't solve the problem, then you'll need to have a mechanic look at it for you. Perhaps the top of the fuel filler neck got damaged somehow, and that's preventing the cap from making a proper seal. Or maybe there's something else preventing the fuel system from maintaining proper pressure.

TOM: But rather than start by paying \$150 for the dealer to scan your car and do a bunch of tests, start with a gas cap. It's cheap. It's easy to install yourself. And it may be all you need. Good luck, Kate.

Tom and Ray share secrets on how you can save tens of thousands of dollars on your cars over the next 20 years in their pamphlet "Should I Buy, Lease, or Steal My Next Car?" Send \$4.75 (check or money order) to Next Car, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475.

Get more Click and Clack in their new book, "Ask Click and Clack: Answers from Car Talk." Got a question about cars? Write to Click and Clack in care of this newspaper, or email them by visiting the Car Talk website at www.cartalk.com.

BBB Announces 'Student Of Integrity' Awards

The Better Business Bureau (BBB) Foundation invites high school juniors and seniors to apply for its annual BBB Scott Mechem Student of Integrity Awards. In 2012, six students will each be granted \$2,000 college scholarships: two from metro Omaha and southwest Iowa, two from metro Lincoln and greater Nebraska, and two from South Dakota.

The Student of Integrity Award Scholarships were created in 2007 to recognize and nurture future ethical business leaders and to honor the memory of Mr. Mechem, who served as BBB president from 1991 until January 2006. The winners are se-

lected by three panels of independent judges representing the academic and business communities in Omaha, Lincoln and Sioux Falls. They consider each student's leadership qualities, academic performance and character. The students who win the awards, best demonstrate their commitment to honesty and accountability both inside and outside the classroom.

The award Winners will be announced in April 2012 and recognized at the BBB's Integrity Awards Luncheons in October. This year approximately 400 students from Nebraska, South Dakota and southwest Iowa competed for these awards.

"It is so gratifying to see so many outstanding, community-oriented students apply, and it is always a very difficult task for the judges to choose winners because of the fine quality of the applications. Now more than ever, it is important to reward our young leaders. It gives us great hope to know that high moral character and the understanding of ethics are alive and well in students throughout our BBB's service area!" stated Jim Hegarty, BBB president and CEO.

More information and the required forms for these scholarships are available online at bbb.org or by calling Margo Riekes BBB Communications Di-

rector at 402-898-8526 or 800-649-6814 #8526. The application deadline is Friday, March 9, 2012.

The 2011 Student of Integrity Award Scholarship winners are:

- Ellen Klitgaard — Harlan Community High School, Harlan, Iowa;
- Matthew Goracke — Red Oak Community High School, Red Oak, Iowa;
- Gabriel Connealy — Mullen High school, Whitman, Neb.;
- Stephanie Parks — Norfolk High School, Norfolk, Neb.
- Nicholas Kantack — Brookings High School, Brookings;
- Tatianna Podhradsky — Wagner Community high School, Wagner.

'Select Dakota' Website Links College, Workforce Initiatives

RAPID CITY — A new web portal aimed at aligning college preparation efforts with South Dakota workforce initiatives has debuted online.

The website, called Select Dakota (www.selectdakota.org), is a "comprehensive approach designed to foster postsecondary pathways for both traditional and non-traditional students," said Paul Turman, the South Dakota Board of Regents' associate vice president for academic affairs. The Board of Regents will manage the new web portal, which links the user to information about all public postsecondary education opportunities in South Dakota, including the six public universities and four technical institutes in the state.

Initial plans were to create a website reaching out to older students with significant college

credit who had stopped out of higher education before completing their degree. But as the work proceeded, it was determined that a more comprehensive approach would be best, directing college readiness advice to current K-12 students and recent high school graduates, as well as to the older non-traditional student.

"The idea is to seamlessly align college-prep efforts with a number of the governor's workforce initiatives, by encouraging South Dakota high school graduates and residents to pursue public post-secondary education opportunities," Turman said.

Select Dakota has five primary objectives:

- Encourage South Dakota high school students to attend one of the public postsecondary institutions in the state;
- Provide middle and high

school students with information emphasizing how and why they should pursue postsecondary degree completion;

- Promote avenues for transfer students to return to public institutions in South Dakota;
- Persuade adult learners to either begin their postsecondary experience or return to a public

institution to complete their degree; and

- Offer parents and counselors a variety of resources that aid in their students' postsecondary preparation.

The Select Dakota web portal may be accessed at www.selectdakota.org.

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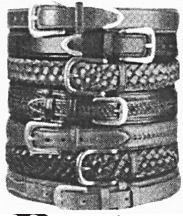
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