Hello to you! We hope your weather is a little warmer now, but remember, we'll always be thinking warm thoughts about you! And also remember that God is always there for you, and you are only a prayer away. We send our love. Have a wonderful month! (And remember to dig out your kite to have some March fun!)
Aiden drew in his breath as his dad’s plane rocketed towards the ground. At the last minute it pulled up, and his dad tipped the wing at the audience. Aiden had seen the same stunt over and over in practice, but with hundreds of people at the air show around him watching, it was more exciting than ever.

“And that, ladies and gentlemen, was Don Donaldson,” blared the announcer. “Let’s give him a big hand.”

After landing, the airplane rolled to a stop, and Aiden’s dad jumped out. Aiden ran over to help his dad check out the airplane. It was Aiden’s first time on the ground crew, and he wanted to do a good job.

“No problem, Dad,” Aiden said. “There better not be, kid.” Aiden turned around and saw Big Jake standing behind him. Jake had been his dad’s mechanic since Aiden was a baby, and he had always played with Aiden. But today he wasn’t happy that Aiden was on the crew.

“Let’s get this bird ready for the new stunt,” his dad said. “I don’t want anything to go wrong today.”

“No problem, Dad,” Aiden said. “There better not be, kid.”

Aiden ran over to help his dad check out the airplane. It was Aiden’s first time on the ground crew, and he wanted to do a good job.

“You did a great job, son,” his dad said as he turned to Jake. “What do you think about the job he did, Jake?”

Jake came out from under the airplane and grunted. “He did okay.”

Aiden’s dad laughed and patted Aiden on the shoulder. “Why don’t you go and get yourself a good seat for my stunt, son,” said his dad.

Thanks, Dad,” Aiden said. “Good luck!”

There’s no luck in this business, son,” said his dad. “It takes precision and skill. Don’t you forget it.”

Aiden ran over to the ropes that were set up for the spectators so that he could get a good view of the field. A clown was busy entertaining the crowd and handing out balloons. The crowd was having a good time, but Aiden’s mind was on his father’s upcoming stunt.

His dad had been practicing this stunt and getting it just right for the last six months. It took split-second timing, and his dad had to have complete concentration.

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“Ladies and gentlemen,” the voice blared out over the heads of the crowd. “The event you’ve all been waiting for—Daring Don Donaldson, one of the leading stunt men in the world, will now perform, for the very first time, his most difficult and death-defying feat. Keep your eyes open, ladies and gentlemen. Here comes Don!”

Right on cue the plane lifted off the runway and did three rolls right before the crowd. The crowd let out a cheer that almost drowned out the music that was playing over the loud speaker.

A little boy started screaming. Aiden looked and saw that the boy’s balloon had gotten away from him, and he wanted it back. Poor kid, thought Aiden, he’s going to miss the best part.

Aiden’s attention was drawn back to his dad’s plane as it approached the runway again.

He held his breath. The stunt went off without a hitch!
Aiden saw the little boy out of the corner of his eye. While everyone’s attention, including that of the boy’s mother, was on the plane, the boy had run towards the runway, trying to catch his balloon.

Aiden stared in horror as his dad’s plane came down out of the loop and did its turn.

The little boy was closer to the runway. If he wasn’t stopped, he would run right in front of the plane’s wing. The boy’s mother finally saw him and screamed. Several men started out after him. Aiden started running too.

But it was too late. Aiden’s dad’s plane was heading right for the boy.

Aiden watched in horror as the right wing hit the ground. The plane’s nose dug into the ground and then the plane fell back onto its belly.

Aiden was almost to the little boy when the plane went down. He changed direction and began running to his father’s plane. In the distance he could hear the fire engines and other emergency vehicles, but he didn’t pay any attention. He just knew that he had to get to his dad.

Aiden could see the fuel leaking from the plane as he approached.

And there was smoke coming from the engine.


Aiden looked into the cockpit, spotted the extinguisher that his father had strapped to the dash and saw that his dad’s leg was twisted and pinned.

“Don’t worry, Dad,” Aiden said as he grabbed the extinguisher.

Flames leapt out as Aiden opened access to the engine. He immediately aimed the extinguisher at the flames and let loose. The fire was out in seconds.

Aiden hurried back to his father. “Are you okay, Dad?” he asked. “It’s just my leg, but I’m alive,” his dad answered. “What about that little boy?”

“Aiden could see fuel leaking and smoke was coming from the engine. “Dad!” he yelled.

“Scared is all, which is better than I can say for you,” a gruff voice said behind Aiden.

Aiden turned around, and there stood Jake—and he was wearing a huge grin on his face. Behind him was the ambulance crew.

“This kid of yours got here a lot quicker than I did,” said Jake. “And a good thing, too. That fire would have spread to the fuel leak before the fire crew could have gotten here.”

“I guess this is my lucky day,” Aiden’s dad said.
Clubhouse Kids

MAJESTIC WATERS

The sparkling water brushes the shore as the sun sinks softly, behind the golden-colored water. The wind whips around me as sound of water splashing on the rocks fills my ears. A beach tree moves slowly, as if swaying to a rhythm. I breathe in deeply and inhale the smell of salt water. I am at the place I love—the Atlantic’s majestic waters. As I watch the sun dip below the water I sigh and turn away, content and at peace.

—By Amanda Stieneman

Send your poem, drawing or joke to: Clubhouse, P. O. Box 15, Berrien Springs, MI 49103. (If you submit a picture, be sure it is on white paper without lines. Otherwise we won’t be able to use it.)

Jokes and riddles sent in by readers. Send yours to: Clubhouse P.O., Box 15 Berrien Springs, MI 49103

Q: What can you hold without your hands?
   A: Your breath.
   By Victoria Bigelow

Q: Who built the first underground tunnel?
   A: A worm.

Q: How do you say cafeteria in French?
   A: Cafeteria in French

Q: What goes up, but never comes down?
   A: Your age.

Jim: Did you hear what the blind carpenter did?
Tim: No, what did he do?
Jim: He picked up his hammer and saw!

Q: In what section of the choir do most fish sing?
   A: In the bass section!

Q: Why did the teenager hold a stone and a hot dog bun up to her ears?
   A: Because she wanted to hear rock and roll.

Q: What section of the choir do most fish sing?
   A: In the bass section!

By Victoria Bigelow

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—By Amanda Stieneman
Where to find the story: Genesis 27 & 28.

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**Puzzle Power**

Find the correct answer on the ladder, then put its first letter in the blank by the question.

___ Jacob was runaway from whom?
___ What was Jacob?
___ What night event showed Jacob that God still loved him?
___ What did Jacob see on the ladder in his dream?
___ What was God ready to give Jacob (or any sinner) who confesses?
___ What name did Jacob give to the place where he dreamed?

(Solution on pg. 19.)

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Jacob was running away from Esau, his twin brother, because he had lied and cheated Esau out of his birthright. Why had he done it? He knew better. Could God forgive him... would God even forgive him if he prayed?

He had never felt so alone in all his life. Finally, worn out and homesick he threw himself to the ground. Taking a stone for his pillow he wept and confessed his sin, begging God not to leave him. Finally, he slept.

As he slept he dreamed of a beautiful, shining ladder reaching all the way up to heaven on which angels were coming and going. Above the ladder stood the Lord, with the reassurance of forgiveness for his sins.

For the rest of his life Jacob would remember the beautiful dream, and he made up his mind to live a better life. He set a stone as a marker and named this special place Bethel, “The House of God.”
Jessica was used to her parents opening their home to strangers. After all, their house was big, their hearts were big, and they lived close to Children’s Hospital. Since she was 4 years old, they’d had 12 families stay with them. Some stayed months, others only a week or so. It all depended on the type of illness their child had. Father and Mother said it was the least they could do since their own daughter was so healthy.

The little girl who had traveled so far from home this time was only 5 years old. When she arrived, she looked weak, the whites of her eyes were yellow, and she clung to her mother desperately. Her name was Sabrina.

As always, Jessica tried to make her feel welcome and at ease. “Can she come see my room?” she asked.

Sabrina’s mother looked down at her daughter who sat with her head on her mother’s shoulder. “If she wants to,” Sabrina only clung tighter. “She still feels strange,” her mother explained.

Jessica smiled at Sabrina. “If you change your mind, I’ll show you my doll collection. I’ve saved every one I’ve ever gotten, so I have a lot of them,” Jessica said.

Sabrina just shook her head and disappeared further into her mother’s arms.

Later, as Jessica drank hot chocolate with her parents, she asked, “Did Sabrina and her mother go to bed already?”

Mother nodded. “Yes, they were very tired, but aren’t they lovely people?”

Father nodded. “They certainly are. I just pray that they find a donor in time.”

Mother smiled. “I’m sure they will. God provided the money for the trip and operation. He’ll provide a donor too.”

“If it were me, I’d want my dad here too,” Jessica said as she bobbed the marshmallow in her cup.

“He would be here,” Father replied, “but he can’t afford to miss that much work. Their town cared enough to raise the money for Sabrina’s operation, and when they have a donor, Sabrina’s father will be here.”

“Isn’t it wonderful how people help each other–especially in difficult times?” Mother asked.

Jessica nodded and sipped her hot chocolate.

The following week, Jessica was changing sheets on her bed when she looked up and saw Sabrina standing shyly at the doorway looking in at the shelves of dolls. “Hi,” Jessica greeted. “Come on in—it’s all right. Which doll do you want to hold? I’ll get it down for you,” she offered.

Sabrina stepped into the room and stood with her finger in her mouth, thinking. “That’s one,” she said, pointing to one on the top shelf.

Jessica laughed. “You would have to pick one way up there!” She pulled a chair over to the shelf and climbed up to reach it. In a minute, Sabrina was holding a beautiful doll in her arms. “My grandmother gave me that one when I was 5 years old,” Jessica explained. “That means, let’s see...she’s 7 years old now. She’s older than you are!”

“What’s her name?” Sabrina asked.

“Pidge...short for Pigeon.”

“My brother has pigeons.” Jessica spread the top sheet over the fitted one. “How many?”

“Fourteen,” Sabrina replied.

Jessica pulled the blankets and spread up. “Wow, that’s a lot. I had a turtle once, but I took him out to the garden and lost him. He’s probably living somewhere out there now.” Jessica tucked her tattered stuffed bear between the pillows on her bed. “There, that job is done,” she said.
Instantly, Sabrina’s eyes widened, and she held the doll toward Jessica. “No, you can still play with Pidge,” Jessica insisted generously.

Sabrina shook her head and pointed at the stuffed bear. “What’s his name?”

Jessica turned to look at her most prized possession. “Oh, that’s Andy Pandy,” she said. “He was my grandma Lucile’s, and he’s been sleeping with me since I was born.” Jessica looked at Sabrina. She could play with any of the dolls. Why did she have to want Andy Pandy? “Oh, well,” she sighed. “I guess you want to hold him.”

Sabrina’s eyes sparkled, and she nodded. Jessica lovingly touched Andy Pandy and handed him to Sabrina, who cuddled him close to her cheek, rocking him gently. “I suppose you can play with him,” Jessica said. “If you’re careful! Just make sure you give him back to me at night...I can’t sleep without him.”

That night, as Sabrina’s mother talked to Jessica’s parents, Jessica slipped into Sabrina’s room looking for Andy Pandy. She went to the side of the bed and looked down at Sabrina, fast asleep with the bear cuddled in her arms. Sabrina looked so peaceful that Jessica didn’t have the heart to disturb her. Quietly she left the room.

After that, Sabrina slept with the old bear while Jessica slept alone. Jessica would say her prayers, then toss and turn, missing the old bear who had slept with her all her life. Somehow she managed to fall asleep.

Then one snowy day when Jessica returned home from school, a small suitcase sat in the hall. “What’s up?” Jessica asked curiously.

Mother took a shawl from the closet. “Wonderful news,” she announced happily. “They’ve found a donor for Sabrina.”


Then Sabrina and her mother came from their room. Sabrina’s mouth was turned down at both ends, and her eyes watered. “I’m afraid,” she whimpered. “I don’t want any old operation.”

Jessica’s mother’s eyes clouded. “God will take care of you, honey,” she promised. Still Sabrina buried her face in her mother’s coat and sobbed pitifully.

Jessica wiped her own eyes and turned quickly away. In the room Sabrina and her mother used, she looked around quickly, then hurried to her own room. There she found what she was looking for. Back in the hall, she knelt and tugged at Sabrina’s sleeve. “No wonder you’re afraid,” she laughed. “You forgot Andy Pandy!”

Sabrina wiped her tear-streaked face. Gently she pulled Andy Pandy close, then brushed the back of her hand across her nose.

Sabrina’s mouth smiled, picked up the suitcase and opened the door. Outside a taxi waited, and Jessica and her mother waved as Sabrina and her mother drove away. Finally, they turned from the door.

As they walked toward the kitchen, Jessica’s mother slid an arm around Jessica’s shoulders. “That was one of the kindest things I’ve ever seen you do, honey,” she said proudly.

Jessica only shrugged. She didn’t trust herself to speak. After all, she reasoned, it was only an old stuffed bear. She blinked away her tears, then looked up at her mother and smiled.
John Darragh and his mother walked through the hallway to their front door. As John started to lift the latch, his mother put her hand over his, and he turned to face her.

“John, I know you’ve done this before, but it’s easy to get careless. The guards…”

“Don’t worry, Mother. I know you and Father are counting on me. I’ll get through.”

Mrs. Darragh studied John a moment and then nodded her head.

John smiled at her, opened the door and stepped out onto the cobblestone pavement to face a cold November wind. The boy turned up the collar on his dark gray jacket with its matching cloth-covered buttons and pulled his woolen cap down over his ears. Shoving his hands into his pockets, he headed toward Front Street and the northern road out of Philadelphia.

As he walked along, he watched British soldiers in their bright red coats going here and there. They had occupied the city for almost two months now, and their numbers seemed to increase daily. John’s heart sank a little at the sight of them. He was so busy watching redcoats that he didn’t notice Thaddeus Winston behind him until he heard the big bully’s all-too-familiar voice.

“Why, it’s little Johnny Darragh! Where are you going, Johnny D.?”

John’s heart sank even lower. Maybe I can ignore him, and he’ll go away, he thought. But in practically no time, Thaddeus was walking beside him.

“I asked you where you were going, Johnny. You didn’t answer.”

“Why do I have to answer you?”

“Why? Johnny, look around.” Thaddeus pointed to the redcoats. “The king’s troops and loyalists like my family, the Winstons, are in control, and the so-called patriots–he dragged the word out as long as he could while he sneered–are out. We mean to keep it that way. My father suspects that your family might try to help the rebels, so I’m–”

John stopped walking. He turned to face Thaddeus, and looking up–it seemed like a long way up–he challenged him.

“And why do you think we’d help them?”

“Because your brother Charles joined up with General Washington.”

John swung around and started to walk away. All of a sudden, he felt himself being jerked backward! As he tried to get his balance, the top button popped off his jacket. John held his breath while his eyes followed the button’s path until it stopped in a crack of the cobblestone pavement.

“Let go of me!”

It seemed like forever before it happened, but Thaddeus did let go. John squared his shoulders and turned to face the bully once more.

“When the British headquarters is crowded, officers come across the street to use our back room for meetings. How could we possibly help the rebels? We have redcoats around us all the time.”

Thaddeus jabbed at John. “Since when?”

“Since last week.”

“How do I know you’re not lying? How–”

John didn’t wait for the rest. He went to get his button. Then, looking back at a confused Thaddeus, he headed north again muttering, “And I thought getting through the guards was rough.”

As he neared Vine Street and the
city’s outskirts, he saw a small group of redcoats in the distance guarding the road. Looking at them gave him a funny feeling in his stomach and a lump in his throat that got stronger and bigger. As he neared the guards, he started to tremble a little, but not from the cold.

When he finally reached them, he dug around in his pocket, pulled out a new pass and handed it to the first guard.

“Where do you want to go, son?”

John swallowed hard before answering. “I want to visit relatives in the country, sir.”

“How did you get this pass?”

“General Howe gave it to my mother. Our house became too crowded when officers took one of the rooms for meetings, so Mother sent my younger brother and sister to stay with Aunt Sally for awhile. The general gave Mother a pass, so we could go to see them.”

“When does your aunt live?”

“North of here along Frankfort Road.”

“When will you be coming back?”

“Late this afternoon.”

As the guard studied John. John looked back at him wondering, “Will you let me through?”

After a brief pause, the guard motioned him through.

With a soft, “Thank you sir,” he was on his way with a slow, steady gait. But, oh, how he wanted to run.

John sighed with relief when he reached Aunt Sally’s and smiled with happiness when he saw her at the window watching for him. Behind her stood his older brother Charles. Once again he had made the trip from Washington’s nearby camp safely.

John got a big hug from Aunt Sally, a handshake from Charles and greetings of “John’s here! John’s here!” from his younger brother William and his sister Susannah. When all the hellos were properly taken care of, Charles put his arm around John’s shoulder and took him to a small room where they could be alone.

A pair of scissors, needle, thread, and four cloth-covered buttons, identical to John’s lay on a small table. John slipped off his jacket and gave it to Charles, who cut off the three remaining buttons. He placed them, and the one that had popped off, in order—the top button first, the bottom one last.

While Charles carefully removed the fabric from the old ones, so he could use them again, John sewed on the new buttons. He interrupted his work once in awhile to watch Charles remove the slips of paper that had been wound around the button forms. When all of the pieces were straightened out and in order, Charles began to translate the code in English, squinting at the tiny script and muttering, “I wish Father would write a little larger.”

When he finished, he nodded as if he were in agreement with what his father had said. “It’s true then. We don’t know where or when yet, but it’s clear the redcoats are going to make one big attack before winter sets in. I wonder…”

John reached out to touch his brother’s arm. “We’ll find out and get the information to you.”

“It’s dangerous, John. I worry that they’ll catch you.”

“Everybody worries about me, but I’m the least likely to be suspected. The guards think I’m just a little boy. I want to help. I want the redcoats to go home as much as you do. And when they do, I’ll be able to walk up to Thaddeus Winston, the great loyalist, and tell him that his father was right. Our family—the Darraghs—did help the patriots. We did everything we could to help them win.”

Editors Note:

John Darragh really carried messages wrapped around his buttons during the Revolutionary War. Most of the information he smuggled to Charles came from eavesdropping on meetings held in the Darragh home or by watching activities across the street.

A major battle did take place before winter set in, just as Charles had predicted. The Darragh family, among others, told the patriots when and where the attack would come. Because of the warnings, the patriots were able to defeat the redcoats in the last major battle of 1777.
TOGETHER AGAIN
By O. J. Robertson

Ten words have been divided to make twenty words. Take a word from column one and add it to a word in column two, and you’ll have the ten original words.

1. MAY  DENT
2. FAT   OR
3. HE    ATE
4. BE    ME
5. ROT   IT
6. SO    HER
7. RAM   AT
8. LEG   PAGE
9. PEN   ART
10. DIG   END

The Jitter Bug Rap
By Wm. C. Fletcher, M.Ed.
Illustrated by Dave Carpenter

This beetle boogies right through the door, Then down the hall and across the floor. He can’t stop shaking, He won’t sit down. He heebie jeebies ‘round the town. With his big bright smile has no time to talk. Waves his hand, then he shimmies down the block. He hardly ever pauses. He’s gotta keep movin’. This wiggling, jiggling bug’s a groovin’. He’s a crazy prancin’, dancin’ critter, A jivin’ old beetle just born to jitter.

The Crash cont.
Aiden’s dad said, as he reached out and patted Aiden on the shoulder. “There’s no such thing as luck, remember,” said Aiden with a grin. And even with the pain from his leg, his father couldn’t help laughing.

Puzzle Power
E. Jacob was runaway from whom?
C. What was Jacob?
D. What night event showed Jacob that God still loved him?
A. What did Jacob see on the ladder in his dream?
F. What was God ready to give Jacob (or any sinner) who confesses?
B. What name did Jacob give to the place where he dreamed?

Jr. Detective
Can you find another place in the puzzle where the word “wet” appears?