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Americans are having too few kids. The GOP made the problem worse.

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For the most part, these policies have had little success at boosting birthrates, including in countries with more egalitarian gender norms. They're still worth adopting, in my view, to improve the lives of those who have or wish to have children. (Some might also prove more effective with better design.)

In any event, the United States fares terribly on almost all family-friendly measures. For instance, we're one of just three countries globally without mandatory paid maternity leave.

So maybe there's more low-hanging fruit here, fertility-wise, than in a place such as Finland. One idea: Slash the tax burden for families with young kids, a traditionally bipartisan policy that a few Republican senators are currently blocking.

Another option: Provide better access to reproductive care. Unfortunately, some hospitals are now winding down in vitro fertilization programs because of continued "litigation risk," thanks to Alabama's Supreme Court, which ruled this year that embryos are considered people. Providers remain jittery even (BEG after Alabama lawmakers claimed to have fixed the problem.

Perhaps counterintuitively, better reproductive care also includes more reliable access to abortion care, especially in emergencies.

Post-Dobbs, pregnancies in red states - including wanted pregnancies - have become much more dangerous, especially when things go wrong. In Texas, women with pregnancy complications have gone into sepsis before doctors would provide treatment. In Louisiana and Ohio, women have seen their fallopian tubes rupture as a result of untreated ectopic pregnancies, compromising their ability to have children in the future. In Florida and North Carolina, pregnant women have been turned away from emergency rooms and left to miscarry in a lobby bathroom or the back of a car. In Idaho, as the Supreme Court recently heard, pregnant women are being airlifted to other states for emergency care.

OB/GYNs are understandably fleeing these states. Some hospitals are shutting down their obstetrics wings entirely.

Such stories are horrifying and traumatic for the women involved. They also likely discourage women on the fence about having kids from deliberately conceiving, especially if those women have existing medical vulnerabilities. Perhaps unsurprisingly, procedures for permanent contraception (vasectomies, tube-tying) spiked last year.

If we've given up on encouraging Americans to voluntarily have more kids, there are other ways to avoid the economic damages associated with population shrinkage. A sudden surge in productivity, for instance. Or hey, more immigration! You know, politically easy stuff.

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Reach Catherine Rampell at crampell@washpost.com.

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OBITUARIES

Patricia Carter

Patricia "Patsy" was the only child born to Robert T. and Christine Miller. Patsy grew up in Winslow, and graduated from Winslow High School in 1959. She attended Flagstaff College, now known as Northern Arizona University (NAU).

She married Walter M., Carter in 1959. Patricia was the pianist for the senior choir at Zion MBC then relocated to Los Angeles, Calif., in the mid 60's. She served as a choir member and deaconess at True Gospel MBC. The family later moved to Carson, Calif., and Patricia became pianist for the junior and senior choirs, as well as the "Carter 5," a family singing group. She was a Girl Scout leader, Cub Scout leader, and baseball coach.

Patricia returned to Winslow to care for her mother until her passing. Four of her six children followed her to Winslow. She became the pianist at Zion MBC and played for the senior and youth choirs. Patricia also played for Northern AZ District choir, and District Brotherhood. She said, "God gave me this gift and I'm going to use it", never turning down the opportunity.

A celebration of Life will be held at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 18, at Zion Baptist Church in Winslow.

Greer's Mortuary of Winslow handled the arrangements. make Calabasitas.

Maxine Bushman

Maxine Cox Bushman passed away at her home in Snowflake, on April 24, 2024. Maxine was born Oct. 5, 1931, in Nampa, Idaho, to Earl D. Cox and Hattie Jane Higginson. She married Nephi Wallace Bushman, on June 26, 1952.

She loved the Lord, her family, friends and neighbors. She was a brilliant pianist and organist.

Her greatest gift and joy was being an accompanist and making others shine.

Viewings will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. on Friday, May 17, and from 9 to 9:45 a.m. on Saturday, May 18, at the Main Street Chapel of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, located at 48 N. Main St. in Snowflake. Funeral Services will follow at 10 a.m., with interment at Mike Ramsay Memorial Cemetery. Zoom link: https://zoom.us/j/97992811004.

Owens Livingston Mortuary of Snowflake handled the arrangements.

Joan Allen Turley

Joan Allen Turley, 88, passed away Friday, May 3, 2024, at her home surrounded by family. Joan was born July 15, 1935, in Woodruff, where she resided her whole life.

Joan was the daughter of Sessel and Charlotte Allen. She was the last surviving sibling of eight children. Joan was a long-time employee of Holbrook School District, working in the cafeteria. She married Leo LeGrande Turley on June 16, 1953, in the Mesa, Arizona Temple.

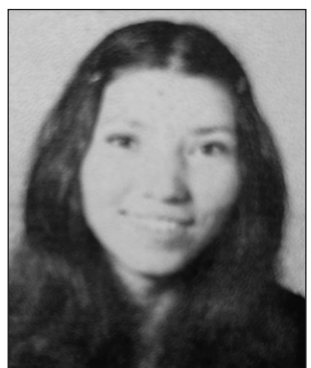
Joan was an avid gardener and genealogist. She was known for her baking and sewing skills. She was very active and faithful in her church assignments and callings. She loved to study the gospel daily.

Joan is survived by her son, Todd (Tracy) Turley of Winslow; daughter, Leann Turley of Woodruff; granddaughters, Katie (Jeff) Medina and Laurel (Weston) Turley; and great-grandchildren, Jayden, Leo, Kiera and Brodie.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Sessel and Charlotte Allen; husband, Leo LeGrande Turley; her children, Milo, Charl, Darl and Jan; and great-grandchildren, Jackson and Ada Grace.

She was loved by all and will be greatly missed.

Silver Creek Mortuary of Taylor handled the arrangements.



Henrietta Kelchner

Henrietta "Henrie" G. Sanchez was born May 11, 1956, in Holbrook. She died March 21, 2024, in Phoenix, and was cremated in Phoenix.

Henrie graduated from Holbrook High School in 1974. She collected Betty Boop items. She liked to draw and had several scrap books. Her love of music was from the 1960's and 70's mostly, with her favorite band being The Doors.

Henrie was preceded in death by her parents Reyes C. and Dolores G. "Lola" Sanchez; brothers, Andy, Raymond and Robert Sanchez; and sisters, Linda, MaryAnn and Josephine Poole.

Henrie is survived by her children, Kimberly (Chris), Harms, Bryan McCormick and P.J. Kelchner; brothers, Joe, Gilbert (Rita), Ross and James Sanchez; sister, Adeline (Donald) Evans; and lots of nephews, nieces, cousins and grandchildren.

City logo sought for Route 66 celebration

The City of Holbrook is looking for talented individuals to submit a logo design for use by the City of Holbrook, Chamber of Commerce and local businesses for the 2026 Route 66 centennial celebration. The creator of the selected logo will receive a $150 cash prize and design credit.

The logo must represent the Holbrook area and incorporate the Route 66 shield. It must be submitted in vector format and the creator must sign a release for the logo to be used for any and all purposes, which may include advertisement, promotion, merchandise and media. No claim can be made on use of the logo once submitted. All entries must be submitted by May 30 to director@holbrookazchamber.org., or dropped off at the chamber office at the Historic Navajo County Courthouse, located at 100 E. Arizona St.

City preparing for levee inspection

Holbrook Levee Superintendent Tim Kelley is asking for the community's assistance as the city prepares for its five-year inspection by the Army Corps of Engineers to take place in May or June. Kelley is currently conducting maintenance of the levees, which protects downtown Holbrook and McLaws Road homes from a swollen Little Colorado River.

There are numerous signs posted at both levees stating that only authorized vehicles are allowed but time and again, fences are cut and ATV tracks can be seen tearing through the walls of the levee. People are encouraged to walk, run and ride their bicycles atop the levee, but not to ride ATVs on its banks. Riding ATVs on levee banks causes ruts. Then when there is a heavy rain, it starts to erode the tire tracks and they become deeper, which in turn severely jeopardizes the levee's integrity and could lead to decertification by the Corps of Engineers.

Citizens are encouraged to protect their community and avoid costly insurance increases for residents by respecting the rules and report anyone riding unauthorized motorized vehicles on the levee to the city or the police department. Violators will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.