Great American Smoke Out set for Nov. 19

LCDHD

The Great American Smokeout is a national event dedicated to encouraging smokers to quit smoking and raising awareness about the health risks associated with tobacco use. Celebrated on the third Thursday of November, this annual initiative, spearheaded by the American Cancer Society, is a powerful reminder of the benefits of quitting smoking and the resources available to help individuals take that step toward better health. This year, the event falls on November 19.

Smoking remains the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), nearly 480,000 deaths each year, or about one in every five, are attributed to cigarette smoking, including more than 41,000 deaths resulting from secondhand smoke exposure. Smoking is linked to numerous health issues, including lung cancer, heart disease, stroke, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

Moreover, smoking not only affects the smoker but also poses significant risks to those around them. Secondhand smoke can cause serious health problems in non-smokers, especially children and pregnant women. By participating in the Great American Smokeout, individuals can contribute to a broader movement that protects public health and encourages a culture of wellness.

The decision to quit smoking can lead to immediate and long-term health benefits. Within just 20 minutes of quitting, heart rate and blood pressure drop. After a few days, carbon monoxide levels in the blood return to normal, and within a year, the risk of heart disease is significantly reduced. Over time, the lungs begin to heal, reducing the risk of lung cancer and other respiratory issues.

Beyond the health benefits, quitting smoking can also lead to significant financial savings. Smokers often spend thousands of dollars annually on cigarettes, and quitting can free up funds for healthier alternatives, hobbies, or family activities.

For those considering quitting, the Great American Smokeout serves as a launchpad for a smoke-free journey. Numerous resources are available, including quitlines, support groups, and online programs that provide the necessary tools and encouragement to help individuals succeed. The American Cancer Society offers a wealth of information, including tips for managing cravings, finding support, and understanding the various cessation aids available. Free help is available from Quit Now Kentucky by calling 1-800-QUIT-NOW(784-8669).

The Great American Smokeout is more than just a single day on the calendar; it's a call to action for smokers to take control of their health and combat the smoking epidemic. By participating in this initiative, individuals improve their health and contribute to a healthier community. Whether you're a smoker looking to quit or a supporter of someone on their journey, this event encourages us all to envision a smoke-free future—one step at a time.

Grandma's jewelry may be lost, but her love isn't



ANNIE'S MAILBOX

Annie Lane

Dear Annie: My 15-year-old daughter was given a piece of sentimental jewelry on the day of her grandmother's funeral. It had belonged to her grandmother, and the gesture was meant to be a beautiful way for my daughter to carry a piece of her with her.

At the time, my daughter seemed touched. She wore it a few times, and I remember feeling comforted seeing it on her, as if this small object helped connect the generations during a very sad time.

Now, only a few months later, I fear the jewelry has been lost. We have searched drawers, jewelry boxes, backpacks, coat pockets, bathroom counters and all the usual teenage "black holes," but so far, nothing has turned up.

I feel awful. Part of me is sad about the loss itself, and part of me is anxious about what it represents. I worry that other family members may ask about it someday, or notice she is not wearing it. They may never bring it up, but I know it is missing, and the guilt is weighing on me.

My daughter feels bad, too, but she is 15, and I do not want to make her feel as if she has failed her grandmother's memory. At the same time, I want her to understand the importance of caring for meaningful things.

How do I handle this with compassion, honesty and perspective, especially if the family asks where the jewelry is? — Missing More than My Jewelry

Dear Missing: The jewelry matters because it was a symbol of love. But the necklace is not the love itself. At 15, even meaningful things can disappear into a backpack, a bathroom drawer or that mysterious teenage cave known as "my room."

Keep looking, but do not turn grief into guilt.

Tell your daughter gently: "I know this meant something special. Let's keep searching, and next time, we'll make a safer place for sentimental things."

If family asks what happened, be honest and calm: "She wore it and treasured it, but sadly it seems to be misplaced. We are still hoping it turns up."

In the meantime, offer your daughter grace. No shame. No trial. She does not need a lecture nearly as much as she needs the reassurance that one mistake does not define her character. She is already learning that some things are precious. The most precious thing her grandmother left her is not the jewelry. It is the love that still stays.

And don't give up hope just yet. Lost items have a funny way of reappearing months or even years later in the least expected places.

"Out of Bounds: Estrangement, Boundaries and the Search for Forgiveness" is out now! Annie Lane's third anthology is for anyone who has lived with anger, estrangement or the deep ache of being wronged — because forgiveness isn't for them. It's for you. Visit http://www.creatorspublishing.com for more information. Follow Annie Lane on Instagram at @dearannieofficial. Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com.

Debbie Pyles



Debbie Pyles, age 70, passed away on November 8, 2026.

Debbie leaves behind her husband, Timmy Pyles; her three children, Autumn (Yoel), Greg (Sarah), and Brandy; her two sisters, Vicki (Will) and Cathy; her brother, Johnny Bennett; her nine grandchildren, Caitlin, Charlie, Haleigh, Griffin, Elizabeth, Whitney, Jonathan, Courtney, and Kayla; and seven great-grandchildren, who brought even more love and joy into her life.

She is also survived by her stepfather, Donald Lyon, and most importantly, her beloved mother, Glenna Potts, who held an incredibly special place in her heart.

Debbie was preceded in death by her father, Hubert Bennett; her stepfather, Harold Potts; and her nephew, Donald Roe. Though they are no longer here, their memories remain part of the family she loved so dearly.

Debbie was a loving wife, devoted mother, and proud grandmother. She was known for her loving heart and wonderful sense of humor. She had a special way of bringing laughter and happiness to those around her.

Debbie will be deeply missed, forever loved, and never forgotten.

Rodney Phelps

Rodney D. Phelps, age 54, of Somerset, KY, passed away Nov. 8, 2026. Visitation: Nov. 12th 11am-1pm. Funeral: Nov. 12th at 1pm at Southern Oaks Funeral Home. Burial: Piney Grove #1 Baptist Church Cemetery. Southern Oaks Funeral Home is entrusted with arrangements.

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