

Reach for the stars

As 2018 begins, I would like to look back at 2017 highlight one very special book that was published this year. This book instantly made the New York Times' best-seller list and also put West Orange on the map, making its residents proud once again. The book I'm talking about is "Endurance: A Year in Space, a Lifetime of Discovery," written by astronaut Scott Kelly.

Scott and his twin brother, Mark, grew up in West Orange on Mitchell Street. In his memoir, Scott talks about his uneasy childhood, and the challenges life threw at him from the early age. It's really mind-blowing to think how many failures he went through on his way to success. You start to feel how this book's title is so perfectly fitting.

This book is truly a gem among many inspirational stories. There are plenty of biographies that show how very successful people came to be. Many of them highlight the qualities that were present and obvious from the early age, among which being an academically talented is basically given. Scott, however, was an underachiever in his earlier years. He didn't want to learn and had problems studying in school, and also had a very poor attention span. Later in life he was told that he might be in the wrong field when he couldn't land an airplane properly.

To think that this person went on to become a world-famous astronaut who broke the record for spending the most time

LIBRARY MATTERS

BY LANA PEKER

in space is enormously inspirational in many aspects. I believe that this is the kind of book that if given to young and not-so-young adults will make a huge difference in their lives and in how they see themselves. The realization that the lives of so many accomplished people are actually full of failures and obstacles is reassuring. To witness through this memoir how important it is to find your own passion in life and devote all the time and efforts to pursuing it and how persistence works wonders should be a very stimulating lesson for many people looking to find themselves.

And one more, not-so-obvious lesson that people might take away from this memoir is a lesson very dear to my librarian's heart. Scott writes about the huge impact that one particular book made on his life and his choice to become a pilot first and then astronaut. When he was a first-year student at the University of Maryland, he found his calling in the pages of Tom Wolfe's 1979 book "The Right Stuff." The book tells the story of people who joined Project Mercury, the first American space program, in 1959. The impact was so profound that, during the last days of his own mission, Scott Kelly felt the need to call the author of the book to tell him that his book See **INSPIRATION**, Page 10

Healthy nutrition for seniors

ADVICE ON AGING

BY DONNA LAZARTIC

The National Council on Aging states: "More than 10 million older Americans are at risk of hunger." Weight management in seniors can be affected by reduced physical activity and a slower rate of metabolism. Seniors may experience digestive changes, chewing issues, swallowing changes, and a reduced absorption of some vitamins and minerals. Medication may affect appetite and taste buds. Social isolation and emotional health can affect hunger and the desire to eat. Shopping and cooking can be prohibitive for older adults who may not have access to transportation, have physical or cognitive impairments, or issues with financial security.

In 2018, let's make a commitment to ensuring that our senior citizens have nutritious diets. Here are a few healthy eating tips seniors should keep in mind for optimal nutrition habits:

Eat nutrient-dense foods

To maintain good nutritional health, seniors should focus on nutrient-dense foods. Nutrient-dense foods include whole grains; lean meats; low-fat, enriched dairy products; fruits and berries; and vegetables, including potatoes and leafy greens, beans, nuts and seeds. Fruit and yogurt smoothies, canned fruits and vegetables, mashed potatoes, whole grain cooked pasta with blended vegetable and protein sauces, puddings and egg custards can provide high levels of nutrition.

Stay hydrated

Seniors should drink plenty of liquids

throughout the day. General guidelines note that 64 ounces per day of water is optimal. Remember that there is water in fruits and vegetables too. Hundred-percent juices or low-fat milk are nutrient-dense liquids to incorporate into the daily diet. Do not drink sodas, energy waters, excessive caffeine drinks or beverages with added sugars.

Make dining a social event

Age, medical issues and medication can lessen the desire to eat regularly. Creating social events around eating and mealtime can increase interest in food, encourages eating and provides important nutrition.

Plan ahead for healthy meals

Elders and caregivers should plan ahead to create meals with healthy ingredients and increase nutritional success. Make an activity of clipping and trading coupons, and reviewing circulars for the best prices on food. Volunteer to drive seniors to the grocery store or assist in setting up a grocery delivery system for them online.

Add healthy snacks

A routine of eating healthy snacks is an important part of both an effective nutritional plan and social activity that enhances a senior's day. It can also balance one's metabolism and sugar levels throughout See **HEALTHY**, Page 10

Christie's legacy is hardly in doubt

THE EMPTY NEST

BY JOHN TIERNEY

raw deal financially. Maybe that particular plan was the worst of several options but was selected because of some unfortunate sausage-making political compromise.

But to simply stop it? Just about everyone in Washington and New Jersey was pleading with Christie to keep the project. The Obama administration and every sentient New Jersey politician desperately wanted the jobs and stimulus that the project would bring. Plus, this was critical infrastructure. It wasn't some pork barrel bridge to nowhere project.

There was no better window of opportunity to renegotiate a better deal. But, true to form, since everyone wanted it, Christie fought like mad against it, with no plan B to replace it. After eight long years there is — finally — the proposed Gateway Tunnel project. It will take 10 years to complete and cost twice as much as the ARC Tunnel would have. But work has yet to start because Christie couldn't get Trump to sign off on federal funding.

And then there is 2012, when Republicans tried to get Christie to run for president. Even if the timing from a personal

standpoint wasn't ideal, someone with some sense of political savviness and vision might have perceived that the heavens and stars and moon had somehow aligned themselves in a very special way. He couldn't see that and passed on the opportunity. Then he tried to strong-arm Democratic mayors throughout New Jersey into endorsing him for a second term. Never mind that he was polling off the charts. We all know that did not end well.

Christie's high point was the crisis part of Superstorm Sandy. In retrospect that was just another manifestation of showmanship rather than his political skills or vision. His handling of the aftermath has been, as The Donald would say, sad. He failed to procure enough federal money to properly address the disaster. He channeled Sandy money to his political allies rather than where it was needed. He hired inept contractors to handle the cleanup and failed to take prompt action as the problems became known.

Five years on, people are still waiting for the Sandy recovery. This could have been a golden opportunity for Christie to show his ability to run the government and get things done. Instead, he just showed that he is all talk and no action.

Christie gets good marks for pushing through pension reforms in his first term. It is

true that the pension black hole would otherwise be deeper and blacker now. But his reforms did not turn the tide — only slowed it, in part because they were based largely on made-up assumptions about economic growth and tax revenue, and provided no fallback should those assumptions not hold up. It has been said politics is the art of the possible, and it may be that Christie accomplished what was possible at the time. More likely, Christie lacked any sense of vision about what needed to be done and, in any case, he was focused primarily on the schoolyard game of scoring cheap debating points. He probably squandered a genuine opportunity to make some tough decisions and choices that might have been more than a Band-Aid.

Christie says we'll miss him. He's confident that his legacy is secure even if we don't seem to appreciate it now. He's probably right. As we spend coming decades dealing with the full ramifications of the mess he left behind, we will come to appreciate his legacy for what it is.

John Tierney is a longtime resident of South Orange, and New York City commuter when the trains are running. His two children graduated from Columbia High School a few years back.

Tom Moran, editorial writer at the Star-Ledger, calls Chris Christie the most talented politician he's ever seen, one who could have accomplished great things and gone on to the White House had he not been done in by his overreaching ambition. You know, like those heroes in Greek tragedies that accomplish great things to great acclaim, only to be done in by one character flaw.

I beg to differ. If Christie is a talented politician, it's in the sense the Donald Trump is — that is, he can rouse a crowd, and keep the focus on and about him.

But leadership? Political savvy? Great accomplishments? Christie has a fatal flaw but he is a caricature of a tragic figure.

Christie can't think more than 30 seconds ahead to figure out how to score the next debating point. He's the kind of guy who, if some adversary favors option A he fights for option B. Then, if the next person favors point B, Christie fights tooth and nail for point A, just for the pleasure of the win. And if someone starts getting the better of him, he fights dirty — bullying, insults, ad hominem attacks.

More broadly, he lacks any sense of vision or ability to see the bigger picture. How else to explain his disastrous decision to can the ARC Tunnel project in 2010? Maybe New Jersey was getting a bit of a

Archbishop of Newark: Byrne loved for authenticity, honesty

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Court. As an assignment judge, he served Morris, Sussex and Warren counties. He left the position in 1973 to run for office for the first time in a N.J. gubernatorial election that he won.

In his first term, Byrne fought to push legislation enacting an income tax through the state Senate, viewing the state income tax as the sole stable and long-term revenue source for New Jersey. He fought for this legislation through two years of disagreement in the Legislature, which ultimately resulted in a July 1976 N.J. government shutdown. But he persisted and the legislation was passed.

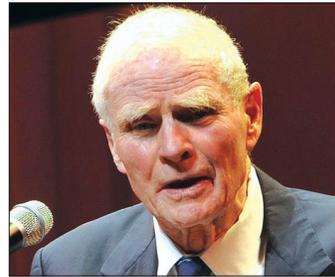
Byrne went on to beat Republican state Sen. Raymond Bateman and was re-elected in 1977, with 57 percent of the vote. In his second term, he focused on environmental protection, passing the Pinelands Protection Act in 1979. The legislation continues to protect the natural resources in the Pine Barrens region, and the Pinelands Commission preserves the area

and oversees land development.

"In the midst of what many optimists considered a bleak situation, we have pulled through with legislation which will provide for a comprehensive planning and management system for the Pinelands," Byrne said before he signed the bill June 28, 1979. He added that this legislation "is testimony to our civilization and future generations that amid rapid progress we have enough foresight to protect beauty."

In addition to all he did on the state level, Byrne remained concerned with Essex County and his hometown of West Orange. In light of this, there is a statue of him in Newark's Hall of Records Complex.

"Gov. Brendan Byrne was a statesman to whom we could all look up to and a regular guy who was quick with a joke. As a prosecutor and a governor, he was ahead of his time in how well he understood the issues affecting our state, and his integrity and honesty could never be questioned," Essex County Executive Joseph DiVincenzo Jr. said in a Jan. 5 statement. "To honor this



great man and make sure future generations learn about his impact on Essex County and New Jersey, we dedicated a statue and plaza in his honor at our Hall of Records Complex. He was a great friend who will be missed. Our condolences go out to his family."

Byrne is survived by his wife Ruth, six children and nine grandchildren. In 2012, referring to dead voters left on election rolls and used to manipulate election results in Hudson County, Byrne joked to

the Star-Ledger that he wanted to be "buried in Jersey City so I can remain active in politics." According to his son, Tom Byrne, however, Brendan Byrne's body will be cremated and the ashes spread in the Pinelands, though he said that some may make their way to Hudson County.

Tom Byrne spoke of his father's legacy at a memorial service held for Byrne at the Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn on Jan. 8.

"He wanted every kid to have that hope that comes from having a good education. He expressed hopes for New Jersey's urban areas," Tom Byrne said at the memorial service. "He advanced the hope that politics could be good and decent."

In addition to Tom Byrne, the former governor was eulogized at the Paper Mill Playhouse memorial service by Christie, former Gov. Thomas Kean and the archbishop of Newark Cardinal Joseph Tobin, among others.

"New Jersey loved him — most of the time," Tobin said. "New Jersey loved him for his authenticity and honesty."

Inspiration at the library

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was the spark that lit his career. So the inspiration here is to read more books as you don't know which book might become your lift off!

Pleasantdale Elementary School in West Orange has recently been renamed Kelly Elementary School. Children of this and other elementary schools around the country will be very happy to know that Scott Kelly also wrote the children's book "My Journey to the Stars" intended for their age group. The book is illustrated by Brazilian artist Andre Ceolin and was published on the same day as the book for adults: Oct. 17.

There is also a documentary made in collaboration with PBS and Time Inc. called "A Year in Space" that follows Kelly's 12-month mission on the International Space Station, from launch to landing. Both the book and the documentary also talk about NASA's

Twin Study, a project of 12 universities that documents differences and charts the effects of long-duration spaceflight by comparing Scott, who has spent a long period of time in space, to his identical twin Mark. The brothers will be tested every year for the rest of their lives. This documentary won a 2017 News & Documentary Emmy Award in the Outstanding Science and Technology Documentary category. You can currently watch this documentary on PBS's website for free at <http://www.pbs.org/video/year-space-year-space-full-episode>.

So, whether you are looking for a particular book or searching for inspiration, come to the library. We have what you need to ignite your dreams.

Lana Peker is the head of technical services at the West Orange Public Library.

Healthy eating

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the day. Three to four snacks per day, approximately 100 calories each, can easily be incorporated into an 1,800 to 2,400 daily calorie meal plan.

Add vitamins and nutritional supplements

As we age we need more vitamin B12, calcium, vitamin D and vitamin B6 than can be consumed by food alone. Medications and chronic diseases can impede the

body's ability to maximize the benefits of one's nutritional intake. Vitamins and liquid nutritional supplements can be an effective way to consume the calories and nutrients a senior may need. Check with your physician before using any meal or nutritional supplements.

Donna Lazartic is the executive director and president of Green Hill in West Orange.

WOSEPAC to meet Jan. 15 at Kelly School

The West Orange Special Education Parent Advisory Council will meet at 7 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 15, in the Kelly Elementary School Gymnasium; on Wednesday, Feb. 7, in the Gregory Elementary School Cafeteria; on Tuesday, March 6, in the Mt. Pleasant Elementary School Gymnasium; on Thursday, April 26, in the Hazel Elementary School Multipurpose Room; on Tuesday, May 15, in the Redwood Elementary School Gymnasium; and on Tuesday, June 5, in the Washington Elementary School Gymnasium.

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