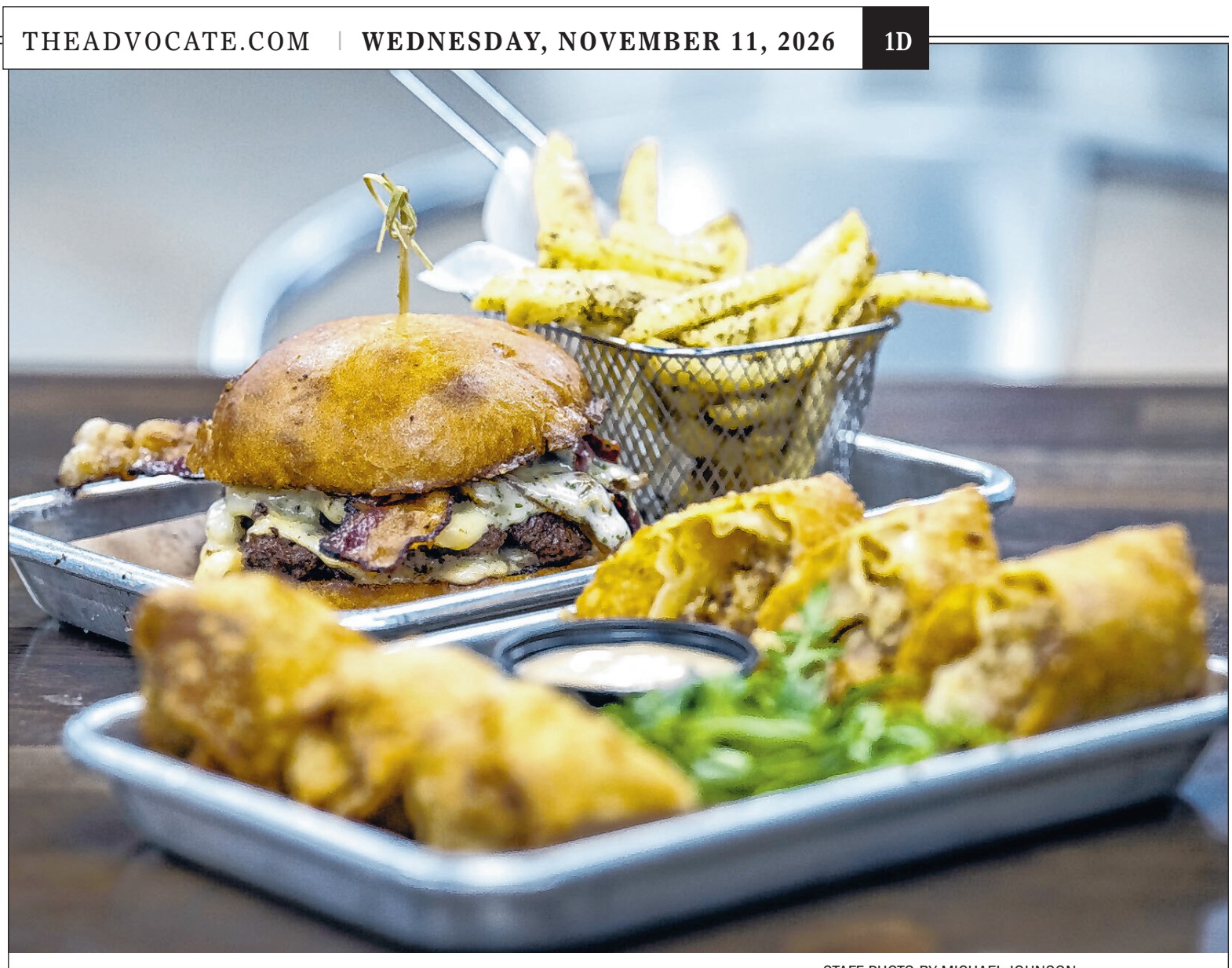


STAFF PHOTO BY MICHAEL JOHNSON
The Wagyulicious Burgers and Brews' specialty sandwich the Mad Cow sits on a table with boudin egg rolls.

DAILY GRIND

How a family-owned restaurant turns beef trim into Wagyu burgers. Welcome to Wagyulicious.

BY MADDIE SCOTT
Staff writer

When first generation cattle farmer Jeremy Free needed a way to sell his farm's beef trim, he decided to open a burger business in Baton Rouge.

In came Wagyulicious, beginning as a food trailer in 2022 parked outside local breweries, businesses and at various local events. Three years later, Free opened a brick-and-mortar restaurant at 11950 Cloverland Ave., a spot formerly occupied by the original location of Willie's Restaurant.

"The hardest thing to sell is the trim, because you end up with so much of it," Free said. "Sometimes half the animal is trim or grind."

Evident by the name, this isn't your typical burger joint. Prized for its melt-in-the-mouth marbling, Wagyu is defined as the beef of a Japanese cow. It's often attached to a hefty price tag, but at Wagyulicious, farm-to-table specialty burgers run in more affordable prices — most ranging $10 to $16.



PROVIDED PHOTO
Jeremy and Malancy Free pose with their three children for a family selfie.

Burgers and breakfast

This year, the restaurant won first place in the "best new restaurant" category in the newspaper's 2026 Best of Baton Rouge contest. The menu features several types of burgers dressed with a wide range of flavors, some simple with just American cheese, others more out-of-the-box with pepper jelly and goat cheese.

General manager Thor Debetaz, 23, is the culinary mastermind behind the breakfast menu and weekly burger specials, a mix of new and returning favorites. The son of a chef, Debetaz was raised around kitchen expertise and began working at the restaurant three months after it opened.

The start of Wagyulicious takes shape as two Wagyu patties and American cheese on a toasted bun, called the "Double Smash," a classic that was first served at the food trailer. Some customers like to take a chance on a new burger, Debetaz said, and that's where the weekly burger specials come in, which have totaled to about 120 different

➤ See **WAGYULICIOUS,** page **2D**



Lauren Cheramie
BON VIVANT

Jed's Local serves up special Thanksgiving po-boy

Bon vi·vant /noun/ a sociable person who has cultivated and refined tastes, especially with respect to food and drink.

New food on the block

The November po-boy of the month at **Jed's Local**, 672 Jefferson Highway, Baton Rouge, is the Thanksgiving po-boy. It's made with hand-carved roasted turkey breast, crawfish and cornbread dressing, satsuma-cranberry sauce and housemade gravy, served with sweet potato fries for $18. For every purchase, Jed's will donate $1 to the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank.

Jed's is also introducing Kids Night from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. every Tuesday. Families can enjoy a free kids' meal with the purchase of a regular entree — for children 12 and under and dine-in only. The kids' menu includes gluten-free fried shrimp, catfish, chicken tenders, grilled cheese po-boys, ham and cheese po-boys and cheeseburgers.



PROVIDED PHOTO
The November po-boy of the month at Jed's Local is the Thanksgiving po-boy, made with hand-carved roasted turkey breast, crawfish and cornbread dressing, satsuma-cranberry sauce and housemade gravy.

Sicily has made its way to **Mulberry Market**, 8201 Village Plaza Court, Baton Rouge, in the form of "The Sicilian," a pizza slice with homemade vodka sauce, mozzarella, parmesan, pesto, pepperoni and hot honey.

Try the November roll of the month at **Rock-n-Sake**, 3043 Perkins Road, Baton Rouge. On Tuesdays only, order the "Grape Expectations," made with yellowtail, tempura shrimp, snow crab, red grapes, avocado, cilantro, jalapeño, garlic, white ponzu-truffle oil and sriracha. Dine in to get the special for $6 when you purchase any regular-priced roll.

In the know

Every Thursday night is ladies night at **Ruffinos**, 18811 Highland Road, Baton Rouge. Enjoy half-priced bubble bath cocktails and half-priced 1792 old fashioneds.

White Light Night: 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Friday, Nov. 20, along Government Street in Mid City

Get ready for Mid City's largest art festival featuring artists, makers and more. The night includes live music, local vendors and restaurant specials. Some of the participating restaurants include Barracuda Taco Stand, Daruma Ramen Bar and Grill, Superior Grill and Rocca Pizzeria.

Wine and spirits

French wine tasting: 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Thursday at Proverbial Wine Bistro, 9659 Antioch Road, Baton Rouge

Spend an evening exploring French wine on the patio

➤ See **BON VIVANT,** page **3D**

THE BEST THINGS WE ATE THIS WEEK

Smoked ribs, nigiri and more of our favorites

Nigiri, salmon roll and salad from Umami Japanese Bistro



STAFF PHOTO BY MADDIE SCOTT

Staff report

Nigiri lunch special

■ Umami Japanese Bistro, 3930 Burbank Drive, Baton Rouge

I love a good deal, and the lunch menu at Umami Japanese Bistro has many to choose from. The nigiri lunch special comes with a variety of chef's picks, plus a sushi roll and choice of soup or salad for $17. For sushi, that's a great deal.

The meal started with a salad doused in creamy cilantro dressing, which was delicious, coming from someone who loves cilantro. Then came the main plate with octopus, mackerel, yellowfin, tuna and salmon nigiri. I don't usually order nigiri, so I appreciated the variety and opportunity to try each piece. The mackerel and salmon were winners in my book.

➤ See **BEST,** page **3D**

TODAY IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press

Today is Wednesday, Nov. 11, the 315th day of 2026. There are 50 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Nov. 11, 1918, fighting in World War I ended as the Allies and Germany signed an armistice aboard a railroad car in the Forest of Compiègne in northern France.

Also on this date:

In 1620, 41 Pilgrims aboard the Mayflower, anchored off Massachusetts, signed the Mayflower Compact, creating a local government for the colony that called for a "civil body politick, for our better ordering and preservation."

In 1831, Nat Turner, an enslaved man who led dozens of followers in a bloody revolt in Virginia that resulted in nearly 60 deaths, was executed by hanging. Although authorities quickly quelled the uprising, Turner evaded capture for several weeks before being captured.

In 1889, Washington was admitted to the Union as the nation's 42nd state.

In 1921, the remains of an unidentified American service member were interred in a Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery in a ceremony presided over by President Warren G. Harding.

In 1926, the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads launched the nation's first federal highway system, marking the official start of famed Route 66, which first stretched from Chicago to Los Angeles but later spanned the entire country.

In 1938, Irish-born cook Mary Mallon, who'd gained notoriety as the disease-carrying "Typhoid Mary" blamed for the deaths of three people, died on North Brother Island in New York's East River at age 69 after 23 years of mandatory quarantine.

In 1966, Gemini 12 blasted off on a four-day mission with astronauts James A. Lovell and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin Jr. aboard; it was the 10th and final crewed flight of NASA's Gemini program.

In 1987, following the failure of two Supreme Court nominations, President Ronald Reagan announced his choice of Judge Anthony M. Kennedy, who went on to win confirmation.

In 2022, Sam Bankman-Fried's FTX crypto exchange platform filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection amid a collapse of its assets; Bankman-Fried was convicted in November 2023 of seven counts of wire fraud and conspiracy to commit fraud and was sentenced to 25 years in prison.

Today's birthdays: Nicaraguan leader Daniel Ortega is 81. Music producer Mutt Lange is 78. Actor Stanley Tucci is 66. Actor Demi Moore is 64. Actor Calista Flockhart is 62. TV personality Carson Kressley is 57. Actor David DeLuise is 55. Actor Leonardo DiCaprio is 52. Actor Scoot McNairy is 49. Musician Jon Batiste is 40. Former NFL quarterback Mark Sanchez is 40. Retired American figure skater Adam Rippon is 37. Actor Tye Sheridan is 30. WNBA player Azzi Fudd is 24. Actor Oakes Fegley is 22.

Reader worries about daughter's love for wrestling



Harriette Cole
SENSE AND SENSITIVITY

Dear Harriette: My 10-year-old daughter wanted to start wrestling, and after a lot of deliberation, I signed her up for a club team. I was hesitant for her to play a sport where she may often have to wrestle boys; I don't want her to have an unfair disadvantage or to feel uncomfortable.

Since joining the team, she has become increasingly excited about the sport and loves the challenge of competing. She has even told me she wants to continue wrestling as she gets older and hopes to compete at a higher level someday. While I am proud of her enthusiasm, I still have concerns about whether wrestling is the right environment for her at such a young age. I worry about the physical nature of the sport, the possibility of her getting hurt and whether she will be treated differently by her male teammates or opponents. My husband thinks I am overthinking the situation and believes I should let our daughter pursue whatever interests her. He says that if I keep worrying about every possible obstacle she might face, I could discourage her from trying new things and becoming more independent. Should I put my concerns aside and allow her to continue wrestling, or is it reasonable to have reservations about a young girl participating in a predominantly male sport? – **Female Wrestler**

Dear Female Wrestlerv: Every sport comes with its potential injuries and with requisite precautions. I'm sure she is learning how to wrestle safely and training her body accordingly. Does that mean she will never get hurt? Of course not. But I would recommend that you allow her to continue in the sport she loves. You don't want her to grow up to be afraid. Instead, she should learn how to be prepared to approach any situation with intelligence, focus and strength.

Send questions to askharriette@harriettecole.com.



STAFF PHOTO BY MICHAEL JOHNSON

Wagyulicious Burgers and Brews opened a brick-and-mortar restaurant at 11950 Cloverland Ave., a spot formerly occupied by the original location of Willie's Restaurant.

WAGYULICIOUS

Continued from page 1D

burgers.

Past specials include a Mediterranean burger with grilled feta, garlic hummus, arugula and house made feta sauce and the "Lunchbox Legend," with a Wagyu smash patty bacon, peanut butter, pepper jelly and cream cheese wedged between two Uncrustables.

The restaurant also makes boudin in-house, comprised of about half ground Wagyu and half a mixture of pork, rice and seasonings. It's particularly delicious in the boudin eggrolls, which have boudin and extra Wagyu added inside.

"We make it in the back," Debetaz said about the boudin. "We cut it up, cook it for almost a whole day, mix it with rice and grind it up after that."

The breakfast menu is relatively new, born about seven months ago. It features chicken and waffles, a country skillet, cinnamon roll pancakes and more. The most popular breakfast item is the Wagyu-loaded burrito stuffed with Wagyu steak, bacon, potatoes, eggs, cheese and spicy aioli.



PROVIDED PHOTO

Jeremy and Malancy Free's daughter, Finley, has her own Charolais cow at Hudley Cattle Co. in Centerville, Miss.

"I'm a breakfast burrito guy," Debetaz said. "We made one that I consider the best one."

The menu also has a chicken sandwich, chicken Caesar salad wrap, fried cheese, Cajun potatoes and Wagyu loaded fries with cheese, thin sliced Wagyu steak, bacon, grilled peppers, onions, habanero ranch and garlic aioli.

Against the grain

Free, a first-generation cattle farmer, grew up in the suburbs of Jackson. The farm life called to him, and he liked the idea of raising his family with the lifestyle.

"If I told you I was from East Feliciana Parish, you'd be like 'Oh, well, you're country,'" Free said. "I am, but I grew up in a subdivision."

In 2013, Free started Hudley Cattle Co., based in Centerville, Mississippi. He currently travels between California and Louisiana for his other job as a nurse, and his wife Malancy Free stays in Baton Rouge to run the restaurant. The couple has three children ranging in ages 3 to 8, and his 7-year-old daughter, Finley, has her own Charolais cow as a pet.

"It's her cow," Jeremy Free said. "She will come across the pasture every day of the week as soon as she hears Finley's voice."

Cattle farmers usually have to pay more attention to grass than cattle, the Wagyulicious owner said. Quality beef is made by ensuring cows are living their best life, and that starts with grass and soil management.

Jeremy Free raises cows starting when they're about 10 months old, and when they're about a year old, he said he sends them to a feed lot at a processing facility in Manhattan, Kansas, and are killed around 26 to 30 months old. The whole process takes about three years.

Cattle farming comes with challenges nowadays. It's not a viable business in itself, Free said, unless it's something niche that everybody else isn't doing. His farm includes Japanese cows that are DNA-verified to the first cows imported from Japan to the United States in the 1970s, Free said.

"You just got to go against the grain," he said. "So that's how I got into Wagyu."





The creepy case of the sneaky sidler

Dear Miss Manners: We have a sidler in our family!

Whether at my house or hers, my daughter-in-law will silently sidle into a room behind me, and watch me from out of sight. I may be working in the kitchen or playing with a grandchild when I have a sudden feeling of being watched — then I turn around and there she is, having silently walked into the room behind me.



I may say something like, "Oh, I didn't know you were there," and then she might engage in conversation, or she might just smile and walk away.

I have never encountered this behavior before, and I feel it is somewhat creepy. No one wants to feel like they are being spied on. If I enter a room where someone else is, I will acknowledge the other person.

I am not sure what to do. Should I say something about how it makes me feel when she is silently spying on me? Or should I just let it go and chalk it up to the quirks that we all have?

Gentle reader: The behavior may be creepy, but Miss Manners advises against sharing your feelings on the subject, as that will inevitably mean criticizing her behavior — which would also be rude.

If you are unwilling to overlook it, then that leaves two options. If you scream when you see her (because she surprised you), she may decide it is better to warn you of her arrival. Or you could always sit facing the door when she is over, and then say "hello" first.

Dear Miss Manners: After extensive genealogy research, I wrote a family history, including photos, official records, newspaper clippings, etc.

One of the newspaper clippings reported the accident that killed my great-grandfather, a railroad switchman, in 1890. The gruesome details weren't spared. Members of my parents' generation (his grandchildren, who never knew him, since he died at 25) were very upset that I included the clipping.

I'm still not sure how I should have handled it — not included the information? Let people know how they could access the newspaper account if they wished?

Gentle reader: Ah, but once your family history was written, where did it appear? The phrasing suggests a published book, but there are also magazines, websites, blogs and any number of methods of private distribution — and that assumes it did not appear as video or audio content.

Miss Manners asks because the etiquette answer to your question depends on the publication format. A family history written for and distributed only to family members should, as a matter of tact and taste, omit gory details that would offend the recipients. However, a scholarly work might conclude it was a necessary part of the record.

In the latter case, the etiquette would be to warn your aunt that she might wish to skip the article in chapter four when you give her copy. Know your audience.

Send questions to Miss Manners at her website, www.missmanners.com; to her email, dearmissmanners@gmail.com; or through postal mail to Miss Manners, Universal Uclick, 1130 Walnut St., Kansas City, MO 64106.



PROVIDED PHOTO
A lunch plate from Johnson's Boucanière

BEST

Continued from page 1D

For the roll of choice, I chose salmon. It's a fresh, simple roll that Umami has perfected.

— Maddie Scott, features reporter

Lunch plate

■ Johnson's Boucanière, 1111 Saint John St., Lafayette

Known for its smoked meats and barbecue, Johnson's Boucanière did not disappoint. The restaurant also offers a lunch plate special 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday.

I decided to try the build-your-own lunch plate, which allows customers to choose a protein and two sides. I chose the boneless smoked country-style ribs as my main protein, along with their original family-recipe boudin link and mac and cheese.

Overall, if you're looking for a good smoked barbecue plate, I'd recommend Johnson's Boucanière. Between the quality of the food and the affordable lunch special, it's worth a visit.

— Jakori Madison, features reporter



STAFF PHOTO BY JOY HOLDEN
The 3 Sisters pressed sandwich is made with fig spread, brie, capi ham and arugula.

Three Sisters sandwich

■ The Vintage, 333 Laurel St., Baton Rouge

After the Louisiana Book Festival on Halloween, my friend and I walked to The Vintage for a bite to eat and some air conditioning. The place was buzzing with energy, and our barista was dressed up with a purple wig.

I ordered the Three Sisters pressed sandwich because I will almost always order the fig and brie choice no matter where I am. My friend told me that the building used to be a women's department store called Three Sisters, hence the sandwich's name.

The sandwich was pressed and warm, surrounded by the best fries downtown. The fig spread, brie, capi ham and arugula all combined for savory and sweet goodness. The sandwich was exactly what I needed after a busy few hours at the book festival. The Vintage's parmesan truffle fries are thin, but not quite shoestring, and crispy, dusted with magic seasoning. I had enough to bring home and even snuck a few fries on the way back to my house.

— Joy Holden, features reporter

BON VIVANT

Continued from page 1D

at Proverbial Wine Bistro. The night will feature seven wines from six regions of France, including:

■ NV Andre Clouet Champagne
■ 2023 Kuentz-Bas Riesling, Alsace
■ 2024 Pascal Janvier Chenin Blanc Jasnieres, Loire Valley
■ 2023 Domaine Jean-Jacques Girard chardonnay, Burgundy
■ 2022 Domaine Rapet pinot noir, Burgundy
■ 2020 Maison Stephan Cote Rotie, Rhone Valley
■ 2022 Château Lascombes '2er Cru' cabernet sauvignon Margaux, Bordeaux

Food will be sold separately upon request. These wines will be available for purchase at a special rate from Proverbial Wine Bistro. Tickets are $75 per person, available for purchase at proverbialwinebistro.com.

If you have an upcoming food event or a kitchen question, email lauren.cheramie@theadvocate.com. Cheers!

Cleaning a dryer vent screen

Dear Heloise: The easiest way to clean a dryer vent screen is to put it on the upper rack in your dishwasher. **— Kate, in Texas**



Kate, this does sound simple. Thank you so much for this tip! I'm sure that many of our readers will appreciate it. **— Heloise**

Hard water stains

Dear Heloise: I have a side-by-side refrigerator with the ice and water dispenser on the door. It has a fingerprint-resistant stainless steel coating, but it now has hard water streaks running down the front of the freezer door. The manufacturer only recommends cleaning with gentle soap, water, and a microfiber cloth. But this doesn't remove the hard water stains. Help! **— Joanne, via email**

Joanne, hard water stains can be stubborn, especially on a fingerprint-resistant finish. Since the manufacturer recommends a gentle approach, you can try using a diluted solution of white vinegar and water with a soft microfiber cloth. Please test a small, inconspicuous area first to ensure that it doesn't affect the coating. Buffing the area immediately after cleaning will also help prevent streaking. Good luck! **— Heloise**

Teaching skills at home

Dear Heloise: In response to the Loyal Reader, who bemoaned that their grandson hadn't been taught money-handling skills in school, I'd point out that these are skills that can also be modeled and taught at home. Responsibly managing credit cards and bank accounts are good topics for dinnertime conversations and one-one-one sessions with a parent or another adult family member. **— Teach By Doing**

Teach By Doing, I agree. Money conversations belong in the home, where parents or guardians can use experience and common sense to show children how easy it is to charge items on credit cards and find yourself deep in debt. (This is one reason why I advocate for summer work for teenagers.)

It doesn't take long to learn that you can't have everything you want (at least not all at once), and once they have a job, they also learn to appreciate how hard their parents had to work for the things they have. **— Heloise**

Send a hint to heloise@heloise.com.

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