

REVIEW

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Ms. Marvel is here

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The colours of
tough times

MY STORY

The uncertainty
of home

The path less visible

An invitation to rethink and reset our direction

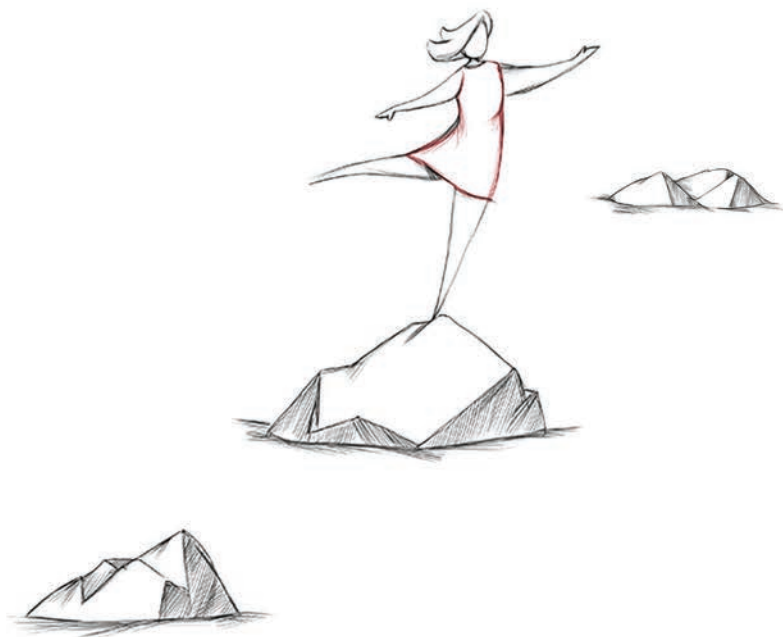


SALVOS

MAGAZINE



“I see failures as stepping stones.”
Albert Einstein





The Salvation Army is about giving hope where it's needed most.

What is The Salvation Army?

The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church.

Vision Statement

Wherever there is hardship or injustice, Salvos will live, love and fight alongside others to transform Australia one life at a time with the love of Jesus.

Mission Statement

The Salvation Army is a Christian movement dedicated to sharing the love of Jesus by:

- Caring for people
- Creating faith pathways
- Building healthy communities
- Working for justice



The Salvation Army Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet and work and pay our respect to Elders, past, present, and future. We value and include people of all cultures, languages, abilities, sexual orientations, gender identities, gender expressions, and intersex status. We are committed to providing programs that are fully inclusive. We are committed to the safety and well-being of people of all ages, particularly children.

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New directions

Sometimes we all get stuck in a particular way of looking at the world and going about our daily lives. It's what we've always done, and it works for us. Or does it always? Is there room for something different, something deeper, something more?

In this edition, Jo Brown looks at the often less considered paths we can take to intentionally rethink where we are going in life, and the direction we want to move in. This may take effort and the willingness to reset some old habits, but it can refresh our minds, bodies and souls and bring new energy and purpose to our lives.

Belinda Davis continues this theme in Faith Talk. When we experience tough times, she writes, we can choose to stay in a dark place or allow God to 'colour' our lives and bring hope and new direction to our brokenness.

In My Story, Louise shares her difficult and ongoing journey through homelessness and rental insecurity. She took a new step, sought help from the Salvos, and now receives assistance and increased security.

For these stories and more, go to salvosmagazine.com.au

Simone Worthing **Assistant Editor**

The path less visible

An invitation to rethink and reset our direction

WORDS Jo-anne Brown

I caught sight of it once, just a glimpse, as we drove past on our way to somewhere else. Actually, it was the person I saw that made me notice the path he was on. It was just a track through the bush, and if I hadn't seen someone hiking along it, I might never have noticed the path. Now I always look for it. Sometimes I see the narrow pedestrian bridge that crosses over a gully, and sometimes I see a break in the fence that marks an entrance point, but I've only once seen someone walking there.

“

**Sometimes it seems that
the choices we once made
are now making us!**

”

There is something mysterious about this parallel path, hidden in the bush on the side of the main road. It invites me to slow down, stop the vehicle I'm in and pause for a while. This hidden pathway calls me to connect with nature, to let my hands brush against the trees, to smell the scent of eucalyptus, hear the crunch of leaves beneath my feet and maybe catch a glimpse of a kookaburra or kangaroo. My destination will still be there when I resume the journey – and sometimes, it really doesn't matter if it takes half an hour longer.

I'm grateful for good roads and reliable vehicles that help us to get where we need to go. I'm also aware that life is more than simply arriving

at a destination – whatever that destination might be. In the world we live in, we have certain commitments to work, family, sports or whatever else is needed to keep our lives and ourselves running smoothly. These are often important and worthwhile commitments and are frequently held within some time frame.

SOMETHING MORE

Yet most of us yearn for something more, to occasionally break free from obligations, hurrying, or simply getting from one point to another. I once read a quote comparing modern life to an automatic car wash. Once you get pulled into the system or process, you just have to keep going. You are locked into the track you have chosen, and there are no detours or deviations. You keep going until you are finished and pushed out the other side.

Sometimes it seems that the choices we once made are now making us! We may want, even need, to change how we do things, but feel committed to going a certain way and don't know how to change paths. Perhaps we're vaguely aware of a desire for things to be different but feel we don't really have what it takes to make such a significant change. Or maybe we don't even know how to stop the quickly moving vehicle we are in to even look at another path!

And that, I find, might well be the hardest thing – to simply slow down enough, to pause, so we can pay attention to where we are going and discern if that is still the right direction for us. We might need to ask ourselves: “Is this still where I want to go? Am I really content with this direction?”



TAKING STOCK

When we pull over, just for a short time, we allow ourselves to take stock, breathe deep and notice things we simply don't see when rushing past. It is in the pausing that we give ourselves the mental space to reflect on how we are living our lives and if there are other ways, other paths, we can choose. Simply because a pathway or a destination was right once doesn't mean it will be right for us always. The parallel path, the less visible one, may be an invitation to rethink and reset our direction. It may be an opportunity to give some attention to our mental, physical or emotional wellbeing so we can continue our journey refreshed and renewed.

This is better than blindly continuing to drive when we no longer know where we are. I have often been lost when driving in unfamiliar places, yet I remain convinced that if I keep going, I'll eventually find the right way. Very occasionally, this strategy does work. More often, however, I end up farther and farther away from where I want to be, in quite another place altogether, which takes a great deal of time (and patience) to correct!

Learning to pull over, take stock, and check where I am and where I'm going has often made life much easier than it otherwise might have been.

Learning to pull over, pause, notice what else is there and choose to take time to explore can lead to discoveries of delight and moments of refreshment. These experiences are so good for our souls!

And sometimes, the detours or unintentional pathways I have taken have turned out to be just the right way for me at that time!

I come back to the less visible path running beside the main road. It's shady and cool, winding amongst the trees beside a stream. A bird sings. I think it's time to stop the vehicle, get out, breathe deep and do something good for my soul.



Scan here for more on finding meaning.

Homelessness and housing affordability at crisis point

Working together to break down the barriers

Homelessness is a widespread and serious issue in Australia – well over 100,000 people are homeless in Australia. The risk of homelessness is highest for those who have experienced family and domestic violence, young people, children on care and protection orders, Indigenous Australians, people leaving health or social care arrangements and Australians aged 55 or older – particularly women.

People experiencing homelessness are among the most socially and economically disadvantaged in our society. Homelessness leads to increased impact and complexity of existing trauma, substance use and mental ill-health.

The cost of homelessness to individuals, our community and the economy is enormous and increases the longer the individual remains homeless. Homelessness results from systemic and structural issues, such as poverty, low income and a lack of safe, affordable housing.

Housing affordability relates to how much money a person spends on housing (mortgage payments or rent) relative to their household income. Any type of housing (including rental/home ownership, permanent/temporary, for-profit/non-profit) is considered affordable if it costs less than 30 per cent of household income.

Access to appropriate, affordable and secure housing is the foundation of any family or individual's engagement in work, education and social relations. It's also the single most critical exit point from homelessness services.

The lack of affordable housing is one of the main factors for increasing homelessness

nationwide. Housing prices in Australia have steadily risen since the mid-1980s, while wages and support payments have not increased at nearly the same rate. This is a significant factor driving the crisis of housing affordability.

The superficial solution to addressing homelessness and housing affordability is to build more houses (or appropriate accommodation of any kind). Of course, it's a bit more complicated than that, but addressing the housing supply, especially ensuring there are enough suitable accommodation options available, is a solid start. Eradicating homelessness and addressing housing affordability issues are possible in Australia, but it will take concerted efforts.



One in 200 people are homeless on any given night.



Social housing, as a proportion of housing, has **dropped from 4.6 per cent to 4.2 per cent** between 2014 and 2020.



In 2020, approximately one in three **women and children escaping family violence** seeking homelessness services were **turned away** due to a lack of accommodation.



One-third of people experiencing **homelessness** in Australia are **under 18 years of age**.



Rents have increased nationally by **8.2 per cent over the 12 months** ending August 2021, the largest rise in rents since 2008.



A survey considering **74,266 rental listings** showed that:

- zero per cent of rentals** were affordable for a single person on either JobSeeker or Youth Allowance anywhere in the country
- only two per cent of rentals** were affordable for a couple living on the age pension (the most generous of government payments)



What we can do?

AS A NATION

- » **We can commit to eradicate homelessness.** Making the end of homelessness a key measure of the success of governments will drive action to address the structural causes of homelessness – poverty, low income and the lack of social and affordable housing. Accountability will also encourage governments at all levels to work together.

AS A STATE OR TERRITORY

- » **We can focus on transparent population health and infrastructure planning.** One of the barriers to effective action is that there hasn't been enough focus on building evidence around the housing needs of Australians. There is more than enough evidence to get started on increasing social and affordable housing right now, but we also need to be looking at how to ensure that accommodation options meet the needs of the people who will actually live in them.

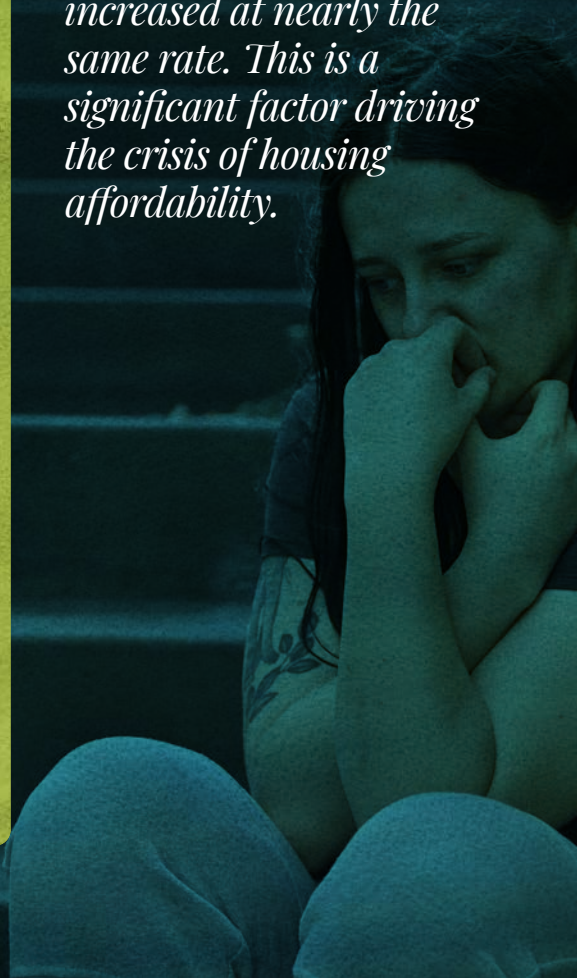
AS A COMMUNITY

- » **We can give people who are experiencing (or have experienced) homelessness a voice.** Being homeless causes such extraordinary personal stress and disengagement that survival is the individual focus, rather than advocacy for structural reform. As a community, we can support groups that assist people experiencing homelessness – we can fundraise, volunteer and advocate.

AS INDIVIDUALS

- » **We can treat people experiencing homelessness or housing stress with dignity and respect.** If we see someone in the street experiencing homelessness, we can smile and say hello. If we are in the position of owning an investment property, we can be ethical landlords.

Housing prices in Australia have been steadily increasing since the mid-1980s, while wages and support payments have not increased at nearly the same rate. This is a significant factor driving the crisis of housing affordability.



Fly away Thor, Ms. Marvel is here

When it comes to the latest instalment of the *Thor* franchise, Marvel pulls out one of their most camp and comedic releases to date.

But does the world really need another bedazzled, aged, male Anglo-Saxon superhero (Chris Hemsworth)? If the nuance of *Love and Thunder* is anything to go by, maybe – so long as there is an equally powered female hero by his side. And with the return of Jane Foster (Natalie Portman) as Mighty Thor, we see Marvel remedy the gender inequality of their early days. But if you dare to take a superhero-sized leap back from the screen, we see something larger at play.



Natalie Portman, left, as Mighty Thor and Chris Hemsworth as Thor. Photo by Jasin Boland. ©Marvel Studios 2022.

Superheroes of the world, make way for **MS. MARVEL**. A series released on streaming service Disney Plus a month before *Thor: Love and Thunder* hit theatres, this everyday hero is a trailblazer. The character of Kamala Khan (Iman Vellani) – her alter ego being a 16-year-old girl from Jersey City in North America. A first-generation Pakistani-American, she is Muslim and, according to comic-book canon, queer. In her own words, “it’s not really the brown girls from Jersey City who save the world.”

Ms. Marvel’s power comes from her heritage – and as we find out, events intrinsically linked to the Indian Partition, when millions of

Muslim refugees fled a now-Independent India in 1947 and formed the nation of Pakistan.



Iman Vellani as Ms. Marvel/Kamala Khan. Photo courtesy of Marvel Studios.

The complexity of Thor’s pain in *Love and Thunder* gives depth to an otherwise egotistical and brawny character. But that doesn’t hold a candle to the reality of a teenage immigrant who still lives with the generational trauma of colonisation and Islamophobia that haunts her people to this day.

In 2022, in a world where gun violence, racism, inequality, the loss of human rights and environmental disasters are happening by humanity’s own hand, Generation Z have become the superheroes we so often persecute or misunderstand.

In the Bible’s book of 1 Timothy, chapter four, verse 12, Paul says, “Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young.” As adults, we must remember: Generation Z’s ways may be unusual, new and sometimes imperfect – but their passion for doing good is the very thing God will use to change the world post COVID-19. How’s that for a thunderbolt? – **Jessica Morris**

Thor: Love and Thunder is rated **M** for fantasy themes and action violence.

Ms. Marvel is rated **M** for language and action sequences. It is streaming on Disney Plus.

Tasmanian Salvos reach out to rough sleepers

The Salvos in Tasmania have partnered with the Launceston Benevolent Society and the Rotary Club of Tamar Sunrise to provide \$8000 worth of Winter Care Packs to those doing it tough. Locals can purchase a pack for \$10 and then pass it on to someone in need.

Each pack includes heat pads, toiletries, non-perishable food items and tea.

The Rotary Club of Tasmania has also partnered with the Salvos on a statewide level by donating 100 homelessness packs for people sleeping rough. To add a touch of home, Rotary also donated 200 knitted blankets. And in Glenorchy, north of Hobart, developments are underway for a 21-unit women's housing complex. The facility will



The Salvos' Amelia Natoli, far left, thanks Rotary Club of Tasmania members for 200 knitted blankets.

house women aged over 55 who are experiencing or are at risk of homelessness. The units are expected to be completed by mid-2023.

Cleaning kits for Sydney flood victims

Townships on the banks of the Hawkesbury River in Sydney's north-west have experienced three floods this year, so the Salvos team now know what the residents need. While they appreciated the food parcels, they really needed home-cleaning kits and drinking water while their water tanks were decontaminated.



Major Bill Geracia, left, delivers a home-cleaning kit to an Ebenezer resident and her son after the recent floods.

An army of volunteers put together about 900 home-cleaning kits for the outreach team.

"Basically, every day, we would turn up to Woolworths or Bunnings at 7am and grab whatever we could, such as gloves, buckets and brushes for the kits," said Major Bill Geracia, Salvos Norwest Region team leader. "The volunteers would then drive to affected communities and doorknock homes offering help."

A particular focus was the small town of Ebenezer. Bill went there almost every day for two weeks handing out kits and talking to the residents.

The teams will return to affected communities in a few weeks to check how they are going.

The colours of tough times

The broken pieces of our lives can make a beautiful whole

WORDS Belinda Davis

Some years ago, I was studying a chaplaincy course. The instructors set a creative assignment based on identifying how people and events had influenced our lives and impacted our faith. As soon as I heard the task parameters, I knew what I would make and what it would depict.

The picture on the right is the result of my creativity, and the following words are the explanation that goes with this quilted wall hanging:

One of the influential people in my life told me that tough times colour life, but the colour is up to me. I came to faith as a six-year-old, and so the cross in my wall hanging represents my connection to Jesus. This has been an integral part of my life for as long as I can remember. It takes the central position in my window, and the rest of my life experiences fit around it.

The broken pieces of glass represent things that have happened in my life – some good, some not so good. I could choose to view the broken pieces as rubbish and not worth very much, but they could also be seen as useful ingredients in the bigger picture of my faith journey.

Glass edges are sharp and can cause injury, so I need to take care when I piece these shards into the window. To work out where they fit into my spiritual journey, I need to turn them over and around and ponder how they help form the overall design of my life. This examination can cause further pain.

We can learn through every experience in life, but I have found that it's in the times of pain

and despair that I learn the most about who I am and how I view God and our relationship. There are gaps in the window to remind me that the journey is not yet over. There will still be moments of pain and, therefore, more opportunities to grow.

“

**Be assured that God can
use the broken pieces
of your life to make
something remarkable ...**

”

Basically, my creation demonstrates that Jesus is central in my life, and he helps my life make sense and be seen as a thing of beauty.

Be assured that God can use the broken pieces of your life to make something remarkable for others to see. He can do it for you because I am amazed every day that he has done it for me. I choose to allow tough times to bring colour to my life and share that beauty with others.

Major Belinda Davis is a Salvation Army officer (pastor) in South Australia. She blogs at a-blessed-life.com



Scan here for more
on finding meaning.



The uncertainty of home

Searching for keys to the rental housing crisis

WORDS Holly Reed and Naomi Singlehurst

Before Louise* was asked to vacate the house she was renting, she had no idea of the magnitude of the current rental housing crisis. As Homelessness Week (1-7 August 2022) draws to a close, Louise shares her story, and Brendan Fitzhenry – Salvation Army Senior National Homelessness Specialist – shines a light on the rental housing crisis in Australia.

Louise, who has a large family, had always successfully rented. However, as she applied for properties, she soon realised private rental options were severely limited and competition for those properties was fierce.

As application after application was rejected, Louise and her children faced the frightening prospect of moving into a tent. "I had no friends or family that could accommodate us all," she explains. "I felt extremely vulnerable and distressed at the fact that I couldn't provide a home for my children."



Women and children face an increasing risk of homelessness.

WORST IN DECADES

The current rental housing crisis in Australia is the result of low levels of available rental properties, plus surging rental costs.

"It is the worst we have seen in decades," says Brendan. "It is driving increasing numbers of individuals and families – even those with reasonable incomes – into homelessness."

Brendan explains that causes include large numbers of properties damaged or destroyed after years of fires, floods and storms; increasing numbers of properties being bought by investors for holiday rentals; surging city and regional property prices locking younger and low-income groups out of the homebuyer market; and a significant decrease in affordable national social housing.

This is compounded by an increase in family and domestic violence, struggles with accumulated rental arrears following COVID-19 lockdowns, low incomes and high cost of living, and the withdrawal of additional government supports that had been available through lockdowns.

Brendan says: "There has been historic under-investment by the government in social housing over the past few decades ... [and] a sharp rise in recent years of those in housing stress, so all of that means a dire situation."

In Louise's case, a call to the Salvos provided the family with the option of transitional accommodation.

TRANSITIONAL SUPPORT

They stored their belongings and moved into a transitional house late last year, just in time for Christmas. The Salvos also provided vouchers to buy food, some gifts for the kids and assistance with purchasing school uniforms for Louise's primary school-aged children.

"They were very supportive," Louise shares. "Obviously, I was quite upset and emotional, thinking I was going to be homeless, and they reassured me."

While she thought it would be temporary, Louise is still trying to lock in a private rental and says: "I applied for a big house [recently], and I thought that I'd be in for a good shot, and there were 60 applicants."

While she is still struggling, Louise says: "I was extremely appreciative of having the opportunity to be housed and to speak to people at The Salvation Army who were able to assist me. If it wasn't for them ... I don't know where I'd be to be honest ... I'm very, very grateful."

Life remains uncertain, though. Louise says: "I have a lot of fear and anxiety [because even] if I get approved for a property and I sign a 12-month lease or six-month lease, who's to know ... it's just scary that the house could be sold and then you're in the same position again."

As the largest provider of homelessness and housing services in Australia, The Salvation Army is working strategically to make the best use of resources and pinpoint the most urgent needs.

Brendan says: "In every state and territory, we undertake ongoing strategic planning, looking at where we most need to place our resources and efforts. In relation to families



Brendan Fitzhenry says secure housing for families is essential.

like Louise's, one of our strategic priorities is supporting children facing homelessness because we know what a devastating impact that can have on the mental health and future prospects of children.

"Secure housing for a family like Louise's is essential. It flows on into being able to find work, connect with a community, stability of children's schooling and much more."

** Name changed to protect family privacy.*

FIND SECURITY THROUGH THE SALVOS

Homelessness services:

salvationarmy.org.au/need-help/homelessness-support-services

Family and domestic violence services:

salvationarmy.org.au/need-help/family-and-domestic-violence

Housing:

salvationarmy.org.au/need-help/housing



Scan here for more information on Salvation Army homelessness support and services.

Apple crumble



PHOTO: STOCK / GETTY IMAGES

Ingredients

150g plain flour; 100g firmly packed brown sugar; 50g rolled oats; 100g chilled butter, chopped; 1 x 800g can pie apple; icing sugar for dusting; vanilla ice cream, to serve.

Method

- Preheat oven to 180C. Combine the flour, brown sugar, oats and butter in a bowl.
- Use your fingertips to rub the butter into the flour mixture until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs.
- Spoon the apple into a 1.5L (6-cup) capacity ovenproof dish. Scatter flour mixture evenly over the apples. Bake in oven for 20-25 minutes or until golden.
- Dust with icing sugar. Spoon into serving bowls. Serve with ice cream.

FUNNY THINGS KIDS PRAY



Dear God: Please help me in school. I need help in spelling, adding, history, geography and writing. I don't need help in anything else.

Dear God: This is my prayer. Could you please give my brother some brains? So far, he doesn't have any.

Dear God: I need a raise in my pocket money. Could you have one of your angels tell my father. Thank you.

SIGNING IN



PHOTO: STOCK / GETTY IMAGES

Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

								8
				9	6			
8		6						
				6				9
			3	4				
2				5		7		
	7			8	5	3		
6	1		4				9	7
					9		1	2



Quick quiz

PHOTO: STOCK / GETTY IMAGES

1. How many animal species are listed as threatened under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act?
2. Under the same Act, how many plant species are threatened?
3. How many of these threatened species were listed as endangered or critically endangered?
4. What are environmental scientists sometimes called?
5. Australia is home to approximately how many native animal (vertebrate) species?

Tum-Tum

On which page of this week's *Salvos Magazine* is Tum-Tum hiding?



Bible byte

God spoke: "Let us make human beings in our image ... so they can be responsible for the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, the cattle. And, yes, Earth itself ..."

Genesis chapter 1, verse 26
The Message Bible translation

DID YOU KNOW?

National Landcare Week is held 1-7 August.

The week celebrates the Landcare volunteers who care for our country's environment.

More than 100,000 people volunteer for Landcare projects.

Climate change is one of the major concerns for Australians.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
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46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54
55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63
64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72
73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81
82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99
100								

Quiz answers: 1. 533 2. 1385 3. More than half.
4. Ecologists. 5. 7358
Tum-Tum: is hiding behind in the table of contents on page 3.



Eva Burrows
College

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