

And The Best Mothers Are.....

By Mary Ann Urda

Some time ago I read Joe Queenan's article that was published in the Wall Street Journal, entitled "Why Italian Moms Are The Best"

I've read the article "Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother" written by Yale professor Amy Chua.

In Queenan's article he also mentions the book by Pamela Druckerman on "Bringing Up Bebe", also books on the Bolivian mothers, the Welsh mothers, Super-Moms from Fiji, "The Best Moms in the World Come from La Paz", "Matriarchs of the Yurt". He also mentions Canadian moms, Ukrainian, Norwegian the Tasmanians and the Kenyan moms.

All great moms to be sure.

It's a nonpaying, unrewarding, no 401's.....no vacations and all these mothers do it out of love.

I thought about what type of mother I was.....but they were all taken. I was and still am the mother of adopted children and a stepmom. A double roll that would be quite a challenge to all the above types of mothers.

My babies cried for 5 minutes or more; they survived falling from trees; not being first all the time; boys learned to cook, girls learned to change car oil and change a flat tire, with no help from parent, and by golly, no sleepovers. They had their choirs, no allowances and learned to negotiate with their siblings.

They had to do their homework, read books, very little TV, and above all.....eat what was served! And no snacking between meals....,that I knew of.

When I married my husband my children were 3, 6, and 9. My husband's children were 8 and 10. Their mother had died 2 years perilously before our marriage.

That's 5 children, and you can figure out that at one time we had 5 kids in college all at the same time.

When one was "doing" pot, down to the police dept. he went. Another was caught with pot, so I substituted a combination of oregano and red hot chili powder.

It wasn't until she was 22 that she found out.....but hasn't smoked it since.

Seventh grade was when each child had to do their own laundry.....boys Saturdays and Sundays. Girls Mondays

They were on high school swim team, diving team, golf, and cheerleading. One loved the flute and had 1st seat in Jr. High. All driven to the events, out of state and in state by Mom.

It was a well planned, organized and controlled family.

Ah, but when they reached high school and wanted to drive: the oldest child first and each year after that each of the rest had their shot. The rule: honor roll, pay for gas, insurance and since they had to use MY car, the car was only available on weekends. The oldest boy often talks even to this day about being picked up for dates by his girlfriend because he couldn't get the car. It worked out very well. His problem was his curfew. On weekends it was 11:00 PM, the girls curfew was later.

When the swimmers and divers reached the age of 12 they would take their bikes to practice. It was a 10 mile uphill pedal from our house to the club. The return home was much easier....all down hill. There were no cell phones then, but they were told where to stop for help if needed: Uncle Joe's, Dr.'s I did worry, but I wanted my children to be responsible, independent people.....which they now are. All had part time jobs when they reach 16.....saving for college.

They also had part time jobs while in college.

One went to U. Va., Norte Dame, and American U., one went to U. of Conn, another to U. of West Virginia, one went to Miami of Ohio, and the U. of Vermont.....the youngest attended Queens College in NC.

The oldest daughter adopted 2 children, the oldest boy married a woman with 2 children, the next boy is a single dad, the next girl is a personal chef, single, and the youngest daughter, divorced with 3 children works for Hospice.

Tiger mom, yes, no TV, homework first; Bebe, no eating between meals, and don't climb too high....it's a long way down, and I, too, just like the Jewish mom would get into the ring to defend these kids; Dragon mom, no sleepover, and no giving in, do the best you can in all you do. My kids think I might be the Irish-American mom.

What I've learned about Irish moms.....their cooking isn't all that good.

With the diverse mixture of our family, we were just the plain all around American family.

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