

# Andy Andrews

What could this one man possibly have to say that is important enough for the commander of the Allied Air Forces to ask his help? Why did every senior leader the U.S. Air Force has in Europe and the Middle East recently assemble in one location — at one time — to hear him speak?

Who is this man, that he would walk the golf course with Hall-of-Famer Nancy Lopez as she played her last tournament as a touring professional? Why was he invited to spend an afternoon with General Norman Schwarzkopf and his son, who was about to depart for college? What would he be asked to discuss with 91-year-old Bob Hope, alone by the swimming pool in the entertainer's backyard? Why would Augusta National Golf Club—Home of The Masters—require every single employee (from dishwashers to executives) to listen to this man talk for three hours?

Hailed by *The New York Times* as a “modern-day Will Rogers who has quietly become one of the most influential people in America,” Andy Andrews is an internationally known speaker and novelist whose combined works have sold millions of copies worldwide. He has been received at the White House and has spoken at the request of four different U.S. presidents. His second PBS special, “Andy Andrews: The Traveler’s Gift,” is now airing nationally to incredible reviews.

Andrews’ best-selling book, *The Traveler’s Gift: Seven Decisions that Determine Personal Success*, is an international sensation, remaining on *The New York Times* bestseller list for four and a half months and being translated into nearly 20 languages. Featured on ABC’s *Good Morning America* as a book-of-the-month selection, *The Traveler’s Gift* is the stunning story of one man’s search for meaning and success in life by traveling back into time and conversing with seven historic individuals. Its message of hope, faith, and perseverance is transforming thousands of lives worldwide every day, spawning a teen version, *The Young Traveler’s Gift*; *The Traveler’s Gift Journal*; a home-study audio program, *Timeless Wisdom from the Traveler*; and life-study curriculums in high schools, mental-health organizations, and prisons nationwide.

Andrews lived a relatively normal life until the age of 19, when both his parents died — his mother from cancer, his father in an automobile accident. “I took a bad situation and made it much worse,” Andrews says with a rueful smile, referring to choices he made during this tragic period of his life. Within a span of several years, the young man found himself literally homeless (“before that was even a word!” he says), sleeping occasionally under a pier on the Gulf Coast or in someone’s garage.

It was then that Andrews asked the question that would focus his search for what would ultimately affect millions of people. The question? “Is life just a lottery ticket, or are there choices one can make to direct his future?” To find the answer, he first went to the library. Over time, he read more than 200 biographies of great men and women. *How did they become the people they were?* he wondered. *Were they born that way, or were there decisions made at critical junctures in their lives that led to their success?* The young Andrews finally determined that there were seven characteristics that each person had in common. “What will happen,” he mused, “if I study these seven common denominators and harness them in my own life?”

The rest is history. The “Seven Decisions,” as he calls them, were the engines used to carry Andrews’ life in a different direction. And more than 20 years later, those same Seven Decisions became the outline for *The Traveler’s Gift* and the basis of his PBS Special.

*The Traveler’s Gift* has become a publishing phenomenon, coexisting simultaneously on the bestseller lists of *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, *Publishers Weekly*, Barnes & Noble, and Amazon.com. And in a stunning, unheard-of display of such wide appeal, *The Traveler’s Gift* was placed (again simultaneously) on these lists as fiction, nonfiction, business, religion, self-help, and literature!

The book has been required reading for some of America’s high schools. It’s also been used as an aid to “principled rehabilitation” by the Supreme Court of Tennessee and a “life skills” tool for the members of several franchises of Major League Baseball and the National Football League. *The Traveler’s Gift* is used extensively in corporate climates all over the world by such companies as Microsoft, Wachovia Securities, General Motors, AIG, Chick-fil-A, Legg Mason, and KFC. In fact, *The Traveler’s Gift* has been hailed by some critics as “the business book of the century!” With a disarming grin and humble shrug, Andrews notes, “Well...it has been a very short century!”

Perhaps the most astounding fact about *The Traveler’s Gift* might be that for all its success, the manuscript was turned down by 51 publishers before it was finally accepted after more than three years by Thomas Nelson Publishers. Now, of course, Andrews can laugh. “The seventh decision,” he says, “is ‘I will persist without exception.’ If anyone knew how many times I locked myself in my office and read my own book, they’d be amazed.”

The success of *The Traveler’s Gift* spawned Andrews’ next book, *Mastering the Seven Decisions* — a nonfiction answer to the public cry for more about the principles contained within *The Traveler’s Gift*. Elegantly blending riveting stories with his powerful message of hope, Andrews further explores those life-changing principles in *Mastering the Seven Decisions*. Like its predecessor, it has already found a home in the bedrooms, classrooms, and boardrooms of America. Robert Silvers, executive publisher of *The Saturday Evening Post*, says that reading Andy Andrews’ work is an “unforgettable experience.”

But Andrews is more than just a successful author — much more. He is in such demand for personal appearances that he occasionally consents to speak to multiple audiences in the same city — on the same day! And still, his own schedule requires that he decline more engagements than he accepts.

Corporations, associations, civic groups — even entire cities — have invited Andy Andrews to address their employees, clients, or members. For those who have seen him on stage, there are three things that differentiate Andrews from any other speaker they have seen.

- 1) He is that extremely rare communicator who can hold an audience spellbound for as long as he remains on stage. Andrews sometimes speaks for only an hour, but often for more than four, as corporate clients demand his multimedia seminars — complete with music, movie clips, and a beautiful workbook for each member of the audience. Frequently,

groups continue to applaud long after he leaves the podium. Andrews often returns to answer questions and always stays afterward to talk and shake hands.

- 2) Corporations insist that “Andrews is *not* a motivational speaker! He is a teacher.” And the stories he uses to teach the principles dramatically affect people’s climate, culture . . . and even income. “Our employees’ lives have been changed,” exclaimed one executive. “And this undeniable shift in their level of knowledge, even how they value each other, translates financially to the company’s bottom line.”
- 3) He is funny! Andy Andrews’ speaking style is notably filled with humor. And it should be. After all, more than 1,000 colleges and universities twice voted a somewhat younger Andrews “Comedian of the Year” in 1985 and 1986. Also in 1986, the National Association for Campus Activities named him its overall “Entertainer of the Year.”

And therein lies the answer for those who wonder how a serious novelist and corporate guru could ever hope to list the main rooms at Caesar’s Palace and The Mirage in Las Vegas as credits. It was while touring as a comedian with such stars as Joan Rivers, Garth Brooks, Cher, and Kenny Rogers that Andrews began to shift his onstage focus. He started by sprinkling his material with life principles — specifically, the Seven Decisions — and audiences ate it up.

In any case, Andrews continues to use all his talents in amazingly diverse areas. Recently, he worked with the LPGA superstar golfers of America’s Solheim Cup team at the request of their captain, Nancy Lopez, in their winning effort against Annika Sorenstam and the European team. Andy also works with Hal Sutton, former Ryder Cup captain, and many other collegiate and professional teams.

Andy serves on behalf of our nation’s military. He is a continuing presence in the lives of Special Operations squadron commanders. In fact, he is the last person to formally address the men *and their spouses* before they are deployed. Three-star general and U.S. Air Force Special Operations Commander Mike Wooley says “Andy Andrews’ words — both written and spoken — are a significant and enduring presence in the lives of our squadron commanders around the world.” Overseas, speaking to the military’s leadership, Andrews has traveled in an armored car, a United States of America jet, and at one point even an F-16 Fighting Falcon! His military orders designate Andrews’ travel “in the primary interest of the Department of Defense.”

Since the success of *The Traveler’s Gift* and *Mastering the Seven Decisions*, Andrews has released an array of well-received literature, including the *New York Times* bestseller *The Noticer*. Offering a fresh and insightful perspective on how people can change their view of the world, and their place within it, *The Noticer* has succeeded tremendously in furthering Andrews’ prevailing message of finding hope in the face of adversity. Based on the remarkable true story of Andrews’ own life, the book teaches its readers that, “Sometimes, all a person needs is a little perspective.”

Released in the same year, *Return to Sawyerton Springs* features Andrews’ trademark wit and humor as he weaves tales around an enchanting town that can be found in the hearts of those who long to take a deep breath, relax, and find time for the humor and meaning in everyday life. “I dare you to read the first chapter aloud to a friend and not fall on the floor laughing,” said Mark

Victor Hansen, creator of the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* series. By reflecting on the seemingly ordinary aspects of everyday life, Andrews reveals them for what they truly are — extraordinary aspects of something much greater.

As we move into 2010, readers can look forward to three upcoming releases from Andrews that are sure to please. Slated for a Spring release, *The Heartmender* is a novel that contains a tale of war, faith, and ultimately, forgiveness and reconciliation. Within its pages, Andrews confronts the timeless dilemma of how to coexist in a world torn apart by anger and hatred by examining history through the lens of his own insight. Those hungry for a renewal of spirit will be amazed by the power of this book. “The principle woven into this incredible story has changed my life,” said CBS Sports host and commentator Tim Brando.

Fall of 2010 will bring the release of two new works, *The Butterfly Effect*, a book exploring a scientific theory based on physics within the context of our own lives, and *The Boy Who Changed the World*, Andrews’ first children’s book. *The Butterfly Effect* shows readers that every action, however big or small, matters. Andrews accomplishes this by introducing historical examples that illustrate how one person can set off a spark that, in turn, ignites the lives of unforeseen others. *The Boy Who Changed the World* illustrates this same principle to children, enabling them to see how they can have a meaningful impact on the world around them.

Driven by his own personal, moving story, Andy Andrews communicates to his audience through the heart — an uncommon style in today’s media-driven world. Arguably, there is no single person on the planet better at weaving subtle yet life-changing lessons into riveting tales of adventure and intrigue — both on paper and on stage.

Andrews lives in Orange Beach, Alabama, with his wife, Polly, and their two sons.