

April 07 - April 20, 2023

# Athens Now

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**TROY ELMORE**  
REALTY AND AUCTION

See Our Listings Inside this edition...  
Pages 25 - 32

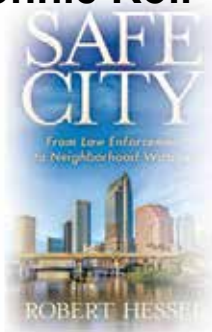
### Special Feature



**Powering Nonprofits That Work To Enhance Athens And Limestone County...**  
TVA and Athens Utilities are "powering" nonprofits with financial assistance so they can continue enhancing Athens and Limestone...  
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### Cooking With Anna



**God Be In My Head...**  
Many of you are familiar with the Serenity Prayer. It offers words of peace, calmness, and strength. This week, I read another beautiful prayer...  
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## BNI Limestone Leaders

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# Limestone Leaders BNI Chapter: Where Business Is Blooming

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

In 1985, a business consultant by the name of Dr. Ivan Misner found himself in a pickle. He had lost his biggest client, and he had to pay his mortgage and put food on the table. He came up with the idea of what is now known as referral marketing, and formed a small group that met weekly in order to find out what each person needed so they could help each other get business. And thus Business Network International (BNI) began. Nearly 10,000 chapters domestically and globally, generating billions of dollars through referrals, BNI and its core values have helped thousands of business owners do well and do good. During CO-

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**Publisher's Point**

**His Only Son -- Old, New, And Now**

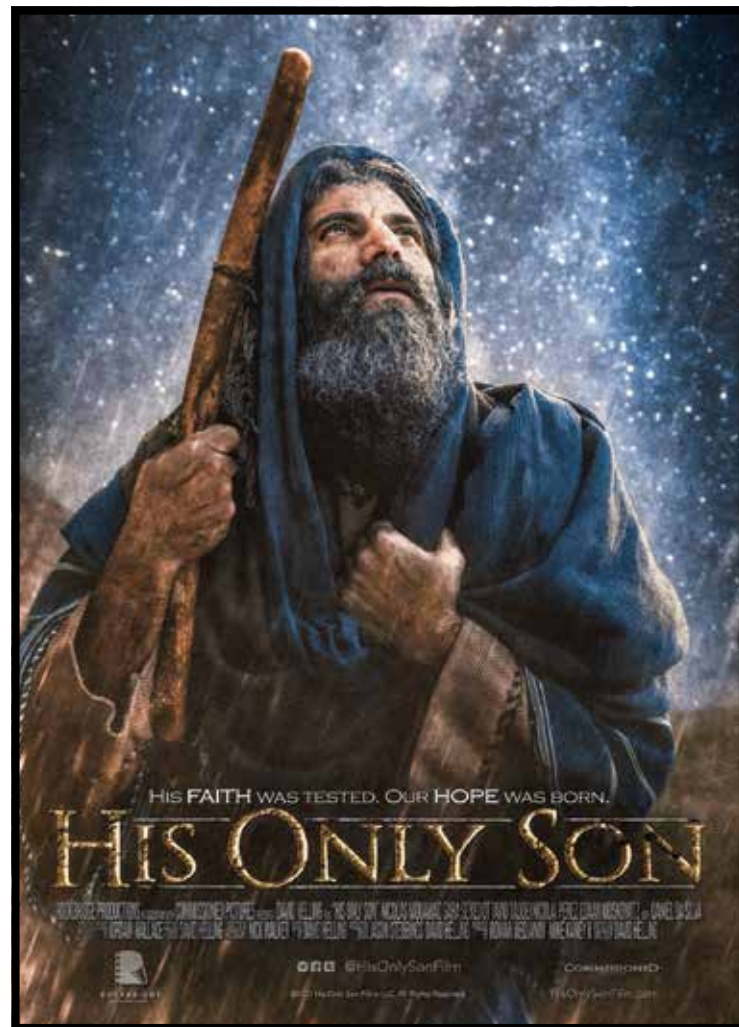
I especially love it when Passover and Resurrection happen at the same time, because for people who are believers, the Old flows into the New, which flows into the Now in a unique way during Holy Week. By that, I mean the stories that are the foundation of our faith, especially the difficult and controversial ones, confirm the most difficult and controversial story of all time, the life, death, and the resurrection of Jesus the Christ, and will pour into our fallen, broken world if we allow it.

We are in an unusual season when Hollywood is actually feeding the hunger of souls for the timeless stories that have the ability to change lives. In recent years, we have had films such as *Son of God, A.D.; I Can Only Imagine; Courageous; Breakthrough; and The Jesus Revolution;* and all of them shook up the box office. Currently, we also have the series, *The Chosen*, which is a runaway hit that is produced by Angel Studios, as is *His Only Son*. Both *Jesus Revolution* and *His Only Son* were number three in sales on their opening weekend, both of which are record-setting stats. I love the fact that *His Only Son* was produced for a slim \$250K, and rave reviews keep pouring in with regard to everything from the acting to the filming and more. Another record set by Angel Studios is the

amount of money raised by crowdfunding in order to produce it. Most of the time, people have to pitch a project to major studio and/or private investors, but this film is essentially a film of the people. It is completely accurate to say that thousands of people were the investors, and the irony of the David-and-Goliath analogy being used here is hopefully not lost on you, seeing as we are talking about biblical themes.

The actors who play the parts of Abraham and Sarah are originally from Lebanon and Iran respectively, they now live here in the States, and are open and emotional about their personal faith and the miracles behind their landing their roles. They are also quite transparent with regard to the impact making the film has had on them. Between them, they also have hefty résumés that in addition to being trained in Shakespearian theatre, they hold degrees in civil engineering and law. Their names are Nicolas Mouawad and Sara Seyed, and it is said that they found themselves weeping through the production of the film, as did the crew as they watched their performances. I hope that we will be seeing much more of them.

Angel Studios has also done something that is a first, and that is to offer a “pay-it-forward” feature. For people who want to



see *His Only Son* on the big screen in a movie theatre but can't afford it, viewers who have seen the film, are raving fans, and want to make it possible for others to also see the film can make that possible by purchasing a ticket that is distributed on a first come, first served basis. The donor buys a ticket to see the film at a particular movie theatre, and the recipient registers on a waiting list to see it. If you want to “pay it forward,” or want to see the film whose message is so timely this season, go to [angel.com/freeticket](http://angel.com/freeticket). *His*

*Only Son* is showing at several theatres in our area with a good selection of show times from which to choose.

The gritty portrayal of the faith of the Father of Nations, which is a picture of the love of God toward us by giving us His only Son, has the power to change your life. Let it.

*Ali Elizabeth Turner*

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# The Manning Mess

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



Once upon a time, there was a boy named Bradley Manning who joined the United States Army in 2007. One of the reasons he joined the Army was that he was suffering with gender dysphoria and had hoped that being in the Army would help with that struggle. He began basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, and would later disclose that he was not mentally or physically up to the task of being a soldier.

Eventually Bradley, whom you might now know better as Chelsea, became an Intelligence Analyst with a Top Secret clearance, and started self-destructing by describing the inside of a Secure Compartmentalized Information Facility (SCIF) on YouTube. A reprimand was given, and PVC Manning, who eventually became Spe-

cialist Manning, and then was busted back down to being a Private, went on to Baghdad in 2009. This proved to be a disaster, both for Manning and America, and the mess is by no means cleaned up.

There were mental health concerns that showed up often, outbursts of anger and destruction of property, but the decision was made to keep Manning in because there were so few intel analysts. Eventually Manning leaked what became known as The Iraq and Afghan War Logs to Wikileaks, was found out and arrested. Suicide was continually considered in part for reasons that began long before Baghdad, and sometimes was attempted.

Manning was eventually convicted of espionage and the prosecution chose not to



seek the death penalty. While in prison, Manning was given hormone treatments beginning in 2014, and also had gender reassignment surgery. Of that experience, Manning

says, "After almost a decade of fighting, through prison, the courts, a hunger strike, and through the insurance company—I finally got surgery this week."

The mess continued to mount. In 2017, Harvard University named Manning a visiting fellow who was hired to be someone who would be, according to Wikipedia, "Broadening the range and depth of opportunity for students to hear from and engage with experts, leaders, and policy-shapers (which) is a cornerstone of the Institute of Politics. We welcome the breadth of thought-provoking viewpoints on race, gender, politics and the media." Harvard said Manning would visit for a limited number of events meant to spark campus discussion, and in particular would engage students in discourse on "issues of LGBTQ identity in the military." According to online newspaper *PinkNews*, this marked "the only LGBT-related fellowship in Harvard history."

Due to the espionage conviction, the nation of Canada will not allow Manning into their country, but the nation of America allowed Manning to run for the U.S. Senate representing the State of Maryland. Manning actually got almost 6% of the vote. In addition, since getting out of prison, Manning has worked as a security analyst for a bit-coin type of company, and has also taken up being a DJ again, something that had been done before.

What do we say to all of this? Well, clearly times have changed. By contrast, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were convicted of passing secrets to Russia and were executed in 1953. Manning became a fellow at Harvard and from time to time is a DJ. Oh, and you may be interested to know that until certain aspects of the court-martial trial are finally decided, Manning has been reassigned to "active duty" in the U.S. Army at an undisclosed location due to privacy and security concerns. In a word, it's a mess.

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## Special Feature

# Powering Nonprofits That Work To Enhance Athens And Limestone County

by Holly Hollman

TVA and Athens Utilities are “powering” nonprofits with financial assistance so they can continue enhancing Athens and Limestone County.

The funded projects will impact students reading below grade level, people who need transportation for job training and those who want more access to the arts.

Today (Wednesday, April 5) TVA and Athens Utilities presented 10 nonprofits with TVA Cares funding to support a variety of projects based on TVA’s core priorities:

- Education
- Workforce development/training
- Arts & culture
- Diversity and inclusion
- Community enrichment
- Disaster relief & emergency response
- Health, hunger & housing
- Innovation & technology

This is the third round of TVA Cares funding. The first occurred in 2020 when TVA partnered with local power companies like Athens Utilities to provide funds to support local initiatives that addressed hardships created by the COVID-19 pandemic. TVA did a second round in late 2020.

For this third round, TVA allocated \$27,500 and asked Athens Utilities to match it, which the Electric Department did from its marketing budget. TVA required recipients to have nonprofit status and a project that meets one or more of TVA’s core priorities.

“The list of projects is phenomenal, and I’m thankful TVA recognizes the benefits our local nonprofits provide the community,” Athens May-

er to student, and a music and cultural arts festival.

According to Jeannette Mills, TVA’s executive vice president and chief External Relations officer, local power companies like Athens Utilities have the best understanding of the immediate needs of the people they serve.

“We appreciate their partnership in selecting which local nonprofit organizations would most benefit from the Community Care Fund, and together we provide matching funds to help those in most need,” she said.

Those receiving funds and their projects are:

### **Limestone County Churches Involved**

**\$5,000**

Will fund items for homeless clients such as personal hygiene packs, non-perishable food, and during colder months, a one to two-night stay in a hotel.

### **Athens Arts League**

**\$8,000**

Will fund art programs for the community and art education and cultural experiences, including art classes at Blue Springs Elementary, the annual Dia de Muertos celebration, a drumming circle at the Boys and Girls Club, live musicians at High Cotton, and support for the numerous small businesses (artists) located in High Cotton.

### **Athens-Limestone Community Association**

**\$6,000**

Will fund community events such as Spring Forward to Your Future, Summer Youth Activities at the historic Trinity/Fort Henderson site that tells the story of slave to solid-



er to student, and a music and cultural arts festival.

### **Athens-Limestone Hospital Foundation**

**\$5,000**

Will purchase a transport pump for Emergency Services that will allow paramedics and advanced EMTs to provide safe medication administration, reduce medicine errors due to preloaded dosages, use as a portable pump for pre-hospital transport, and provide multiple infusion therapies.

### **Athens City Schools Foundation**

**\$8,000**

Will fund the teacher grant program that rewards creative initiatives by teachers such as art supplies for art shows, technology equipment for science & engineering labs, supplies for hands-on student led projects, such as designing and constructing bird houses for use at the schools, etc.

### **Boys & Girls Club**

**\$5,000**

Will purchase supplies for its Level Up Literacy program for students in grades 1-3 reading below grade level; will buy reading books, white boards, dry erase markers, phonics workbooks, flash cards and kits; instruction will include a writing activity, sight word drills and reading phonics.

### **Athens-Limestone Family Resource Center**

**\$2,000**

Since there is no community transportation, FRC will provide \$25 gas cards to participants who need funding assistance to travel to a job interview, job training or classes that promote career goals, and to new jobs; will work through its workforce development program with community partners.

### **Athens Main Street**

**\$6,000**

Will provide local musicians for the Merchants Alley Music Series, which are free public events in a renovated downtown alley; will encourage visitors to downtown to shop and dine, supporting small business; will provide local musicians a venue to perform.

### **Athens-Limestone Public Library Foundation**

**\$9,000**

Will help purchase a transit van to use as a library vehicle for outreach services such as partnering with pre-schools and schools in more rural areas to provide programming. Van will have books, laptops, internet and printing capabilities; will provide services to those with transportation issues who cannot get to the main branch.

### **Athens Fire and Rescue Auxiliary**

**\$2,000**

Will support the Shop with a Firefighter program that provides on average 50 to 60 students in Athens and Limestone County schools the opportunity to have Christmas. Students will spend \$200 at Walmart, half on clothing and hygiene items and half on toys, electronics, etc. The students will learn to shop on a budget because they work with firefighters and volunteers to pick out and price items.

Athens Electric Department Manager Blair Davis said the TVA Cares program gives his department an avenue to make an impact in the community.

“We can partner with TVA to support projects that will reach numerous people in Athens and Limestone County,” Davis said.

### **About TVA Cares**

FY23 marks the fourth year of the program. Since its inception in April of 2020, 145 local power companies have joined with TVA to contribute \$18.5 million to local nonprofit organizations throughout the Valley Region. Originally established to provide services and relief to those most impacted by the pandemic, the program has expanded to seven giving pillars.

# Calendar of Events

## One Bag Challenge April 8-21

Pick up one full trash bag of litter and have your name entered into a drawing for cash prizes totaling \$1,000! First prize \$500. For guidelines, visit the Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful Facebook page, call 256-233-8000, or email KALBCares@gmail.com.

## Vidalia Onion Sale Through April 15

The Athens Ladies Civitan Club (ALCC) has opened its annual Vidalia Onion sale and will be accepting orders until April 15. The price is \$12 for 10 pounds. The freshly harvested onions will be delivered directly from a Georgia farm the first or second week of May. For more information or to order, call Carolyn Stair at 256-658-1985. Orders may also be placed with any Athens Ladies Civitan Club member or by mailing a check payable to Athens Ladies Civitan Club to ALCC, P.O. Box 1814, Athens, AL 35612. Please include name, address and phone as well as number of bags ordered. This important fundraiser supports the club's efforts to improve the lives of children and adults with developmental disabilities in Athens and Limestone County.

## Earth Day & Outdoor EXPO April 15

Athens State University Campus, 10 am-3 pm

Enjoy lots of free activities, shows including Steve Trash and Rise Raptors, new and exciting exhibits and vendors, door prizes and More! Info: 256-233-8000 or KALBCares @ gmail.com

## Plant Sale April 15

8am to 4pm. Perennials, annuals, shrubs, and vegetable plants. Silent auction, craft and food vendors, kids table and more.

## Senior Lunch Matinee Series Third Thursdays Monthly

We are back to full speed with our third Thursday Senior Lunch Matinees and first Saturday Early Dinner Shows, already scheduled through Dec 2023. Public events most often will sell out in advance, welcoming attendees from 17 adjacent counties, and 2 neighboring states. Our Senior Lunch Matinees provide guests with a complete lunch including drink and dessert, and a one hour live show featuring one of our roster of 8 of the best regional oldies groups and performers in rotation throughout the year. E-mail reservations are required in advance for all Lunch Matinees and Early Dinner Shows. web: [www.yesterdaysevents.com](http://www.yesterdaysevents.com)

FB: [www.facebook.com/YesterdaysEventCenter](http://www.facebook.com/YesterdaysEventCenter)

Limestone County Master Gardeners greenhouse behind Athens Middle School, Hwy 31, Athens. For more information visit <https://mastergardeners-limestonecountyalabama.org/>

## Guided Nature Walk April 15

8:00 a.m. Damien Simbeck of TVA will lead a walk at Marbut Bend Walking Trail. Damien is an expert in the history and wildlife of the area. Meet at trailhead at 8:00 a.m. Wear comfortable shoes and bring binoculars and a camera. Information: 256-233-8000 or KALBCares@gmail.com.

## Tribute Quartet April 16

The Tribute Quartet will be singing at Berea Baptist Church in Athens, AL on Sunday evening Apr 16 at 6PM. Admission is free. A love offering will be received. Berea Baptist is located at 16779 Lucas Ferry Rd, Athens, AL 35611. Contact is Gary Wilson, 256-497-9763.

## German Dinner Night at AMVETS Post 21 April 17

5:30pm - 7:30pm. AL AMVETS Post 21 Monthly Themed Dinner. The German dinner is April 17, 2023, 5:30-7:30 pm. Dinner is open to the public and the cost is \$15.00. Menu: Pork Schnitzel, Pan Fried German Potatoes, Cucumber Salad, German Green Bean Salad (Gruner Bohnensalat), German dessert TBD, Drink Choices - Water, Iced Tea or Coffee Please join us at the AMVETS Post 21, 22769 Black Road, Athens, AL 35613

## Silver Sneaker Flex™ Classes

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## Digital Literacy Classes

Athens-Limestone County Public Library will host a series of Digital Literacy Classes in conjunction with Calhoun Community College & Drake State Community & Technical College. Classes will boost your digital confidence & provide you with skills and training needed in today's job market. Courses include: Computer & Internet Basics, Email, Windows OS, & Microsoft Word®. M-W 9:00 – 12:00 or M-W 1:00 – 4:00. Classes start January 24th. Call us at (256) 306-2830 to learn more.



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# What Makes Ronnie Roll

## A Safe City

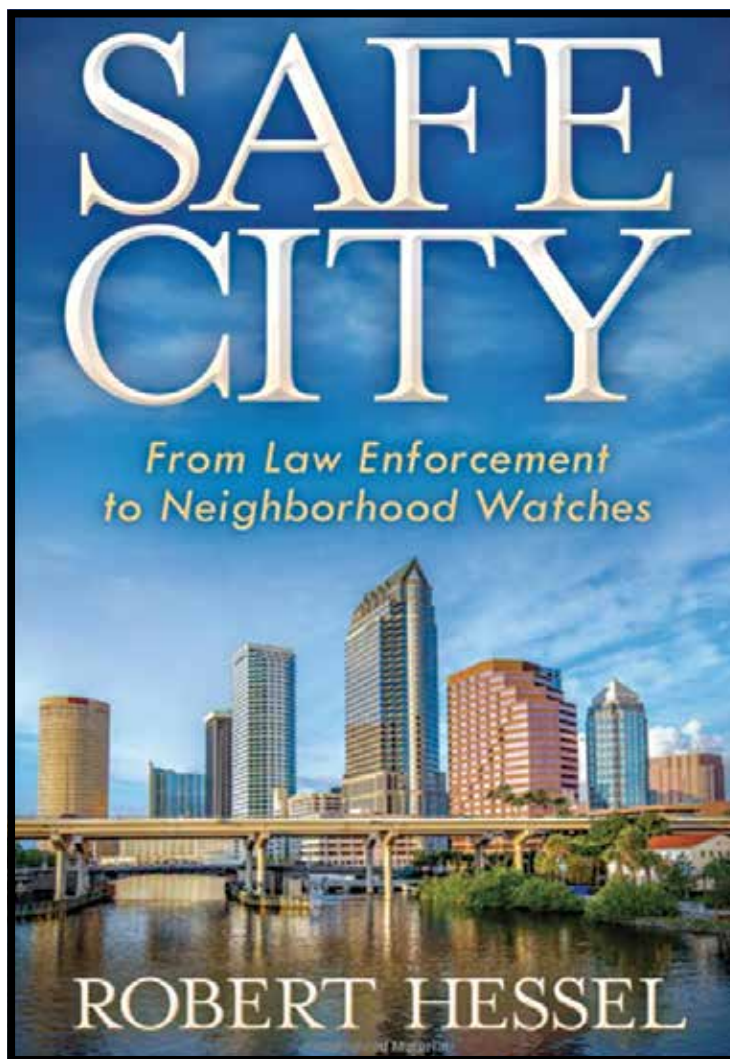
by Ali Elizabeth Turner

Mayor Ronnie came in with a sun-and-wind-burned face from sitting in the stands for his grandson Quinton's championship game, and in spite of it he was in good spirits. Emmett Moore had been hired by the family resource center as its new executive director, and more will be coming about him soon. The LSU women's basketball team was looking good to take the title, and they ended up doing a record-breaking job of it. Major retail projects are still being developed, and of course, spring is finally here in all its beauty. Quality of life is almost always a joyful part of our discussions and celebrations of how wonderful it is to live in Athens, Alabama. However, it was not long before Mayor Ronnie said, "Quality of life means nothing if we don't have

public safety."

We talked about the now well-known fact that Limestone County is the fastest growing county in the state of Alabama, and one of the fastest growing in the nation. "Growth is wonderful, and it is also so challenging," he said, and added, "How do we make a safe city and keep the quality of life high?"

On the south wall of the mayor's office is a bookcase packed with works from various authors, many of which Mayor Ronnie has had the chance to meet at conferences where mayors and civic leaders gather together to grapple with the issues that keep them from being, as Ronald Reagan said, "that shining city on a hill." One such work is entitled, *Safe City* and is written by Robert Hessel. Its subtitle is, *From Law*



Enforcement to Neighborhood Watches.

The book talks about the need for neighborhood watches, and talks about the potential use of tech-

nology to teach communities "...how to harden targets and protect your home, your business, your community, yourself and your loved ones.



It takes a community to help reduce and prevent crime."

Hessel's premise is that we need to blend the good old-fashioned concept of, "If you see something say something" that was popularized by the ad campaign starting in 1980 featuring McGruff the Crime Dog. McGruff was and is a hound dog in a rumpled Columbo-like trench coat who growls and says, "Take a bite out of crime." Forty years later, McGruff is alive and well, and according to Wikipedia, "the Ad Council and the National Crime Prevention Council still use McGruff in national campaigns to raise awareness about crime and crime prevention strategies."

While no one disputes the need to increase the level of safety and lower the rate of crime in Athens, and one of the challenges that arises is defining the legitimate role of technology in doing so. How do we defeat crime as well as protect our Constitutionally-guaranteed right to privacy?

The mayor chose to concentrate on the human element. He said, "Everyone has to work together, and we have to be alert. Things can happen so fast, and it doesn't take much for us to go backwards," he said. And then he asked and answered, "What does our community stand for? Love for everyone." So, that is what we prayed for, and then it was time for Ronnie to roll.

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*(For more information about Kadisha's music visit [kadishaonalbayeva.com](http://kadishaonalbayeva.com))*

# Lawfare

by Phil Williams



These are strange and often unprecedented times made all the more so as former President of the United States Donald Trump was indicted by District Attorney Alvin Bragg of Manhattan on allegations of campaign misconduct.

As of this writing we haven't seen the actual indictment yet. When it is unsealed, we will know for certain what the charges are. For now, the understanding is that there are alleged payments made to two women, both porn stars, who allegedly had affairs with Donald Trump in 2006.

DA Alvin Bragg, who has made no bones about his bias toward Trump, made waves soon after being elected to office by issuing word that he will not prosecute certain crimes, among them prostitution. Consider then that this DA will not prosecute paying for sex in the form of prostitution but he will prosecute paying someone not to talk about sex that was consensual. These are strange and unprecedented times indeed.

I am not unconcerned about the morality of a public office holder, especially of one who sits in the Oval Office. I don't care for such behavior one bit, but the original allegations of infidelity dating back to 2006 are denied by Trump. My chief concern in this writing is the alleged crime being prosecuted: namely that somehow Trump's campaign benefited from these women being paid for their

silence and that therefore a campaign finance reporting violation has occurred.

Such a legal theory then begs the question as to why Hillary Clinton merely paid a small fine for paying to have the infamous and discredited Steele Dossier prepared and disseminated to benefit her campaign. Shouldn't we also be concerned as to whether Joe Biden benefited from the shutdown of the Hunter Biden laptop story during his campaign?

There should be no wonder as to why conservatives feel like we are looking at two-tiered system of justice.

As an attorney myself, I have had clients who believed they were aggrieved by others but I had to advise them that the courts were not their true recourse.

I once had a client tell me he wanted to sue someone out of principal. I told him that I wouldn't do it. Lawyers have rules of professional conduct that govern our profession. Filing suit purely for the purpose of revenge is still no more than revenge.

Within the realm of civil law, the Alabama Code also contains the Litigation Accountability Act which allows someone to sue to recoup their own damages if they can prove that suit was filed against them frivolously.

On another occasion, a client correctly believed he had been wronged and we started the process of litigation, at which point he told me that he was going to file a police report and also try



to press criminal charges. I once again had to take a deep breath and tell my client what he did not want to hear. Namely, that the rules of professional conduct stipulate that a lawyer may not threaten criminal action against someone in order to gain the upper hand in a civil action. Sometime later, I found out that he filed a police report anyway without me knowing. Needless to say, I am not his attorney any more.

As an attorney, my job is to zealously pursue and defend my clients' interests, but I also know that sometimes I have to advise my clients that what they feel is not the same as what they can go to court for. It is for this very reason that lawyers are sometimes referred to as counselors, because we are actually giving counsel, both pro and con.

New York City may be a more liberal venue than beautiful North Alabama but, nonetheless, the even

and unbiased application of the law is still supposed to be the rule, and sometimes it is not just the client that needs to hear things that they don't want to hear. Sometimes the lawyer needs to be told things that go contrary to their own notions.

A good lawyer needs to occasionally step back, objectively look at a case or a prosecution, and make sure that they don't have their own grievances, emotions, politics, or prejudices wrapped up in it. Somebody should have done that with Alvin Bragg. Someone should have told him that the practice of law is not for vendettas and that lawyers should not be engaged in "lawfare."

I take pride in being a licensed officer of the court. Pride of profession is there for anyone who practices law and adheres to its legal and ethical standards. Alvin Bragg is supposed to be held to the same rigor-

ous standards and rules of conduct.

My sense is that DA Alvin Bragg may have a reckoning coming his way.

*Phil Williams is a former state senator, retired Army colonel and combat veteran, and a practicing attorney. He has served with the leadership of the Alabama Policy Institute and currently hosts the conservative news/talkshow Rightside Radio M-F 2-5 p.m. on multiple channels throughout north Alabama. (WVNN 92.5FM/770AM-Huntsville/Athens; WXJC 101.FM and WYDE 850AM - Birmingham/Cullman) His column appears every Monday in 1819 News. To contact Phil or request him for a speaking engagement go to [www.rightsideradio.org](http://www.rightsideradio.org). The views and opinions expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the policy or position of 1819 News. To comment, please*



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## Slinkard On Success

# Understanding The Priorities In Life

by D. A. Slinkard

*D.A. Slinkard would love your feedback. You can contact him at [da.slinkard@gmail.com](mailto:da.slinkard@gmail.com)*

What's the difference between successful people and unsuccessful people? What separates one from the other? What makes one group stand out from the other? How can a person who is down on their luck turn their life around? I have written before that success means different things to different people. In my studies, I have found the one thing that people struggle with in finding their so-called success is they do not know their priorities and what matters most to them.

When I see someone having a hard go at life, I think about what struggles a person might have that would prevent them from being able to achieve their goals. Many of us know what needs to be done; we know what actions need to be taken, yet we still fail to properly prioritize our life in order to achieve high levels of success.

Life is about finding balance. Life is about properly nurturing our bodies, our minds, our familial relationships, and even our work relationships. This sounds easy enough, but too often we do great at one thing and fail miserably at another. There are some people who do great with their home life and struggle at their work life or vice versa. How do we maximize on all levels?

Going back to the word priorities, what do we need to do in order to obtain life balance? Raising up my own family to be firm believers in God, I believe the first priority in anyone's life should be God. You may be nodding your head

in agreement right now as you read this, but let me ask you a question that was even tougher for me. Do you really make God priority number one? Many times, I fail here but guess what, the first step is to admit the problem.

The next priority on your list should be your family, and if you are married, it should definitely be your spouse. I hear people all the time who say their kids are their main priority. These are married people saying this, and I think maybe this could be one of the problems with their marriage. My wife and I have two beautiful girls (not allowed to date until they are 35 years old), and even though we may fight because I said or did

something dumb, regardless though, for our marriage to work, I must put her as priority number two. There have been times she has not been number two, and that is shame on me. Maybe you have done the same thing to your spouse, and if so, what are you going to do differently?

Priority number three then goes to your children and the importance of instilling discipline and respect into their daily lives. Discipline and respect are two words that are missing from many vocabularies of our youth. Parents need to realize the importance of this priority and train our future leaders.

Priority number four is our work. I am guilty of putting

this ahead of priority number three, number two, and even at times number one. Hard to admit it, but very liberating even though I put myself out there. It is okay to admit we have faults, even though we live in a world of Facebook in which if everyone's lives were as great as their status updates, there would be no need for anti-depressants. Yet, life isn't grand, it isn't as easy as the selfie picture would lead someone to believe. What we don't see is the 99 deleted pictures in our efforts to make life look perfect.

Life will never be perfect. There will be struggles, triumphs, and even tears along the way. We have one shot at life – to make the most of it.

Though we will make mistakes, we must first learn to minimize our errors.

How we do that is to take the time daily to write out our priorities in order of what is important to us. Mine is God, Mindy, my girls, work. Yours will look different because we are different. When you make your list, don't just write down words, but include what specifically you will do that day for that priority so you can come closer to perfection.

This is how we seize the day, this is how we get our lives back on track, and this is how we know at the end of the day, we have done all we could possibly do for ourselves and our loved ones.





Clean, Green And Beautiful

# Earth Day & Outdoor Expo

## And One-Bag Challenge With Cash Prizes

by Lynne Hart - KALB Commission Member, Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful

Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful and Athens State University are so excited to bring this year's Earth Day & Outdoor EXPO to our community! There are so many new and exciting things in store.

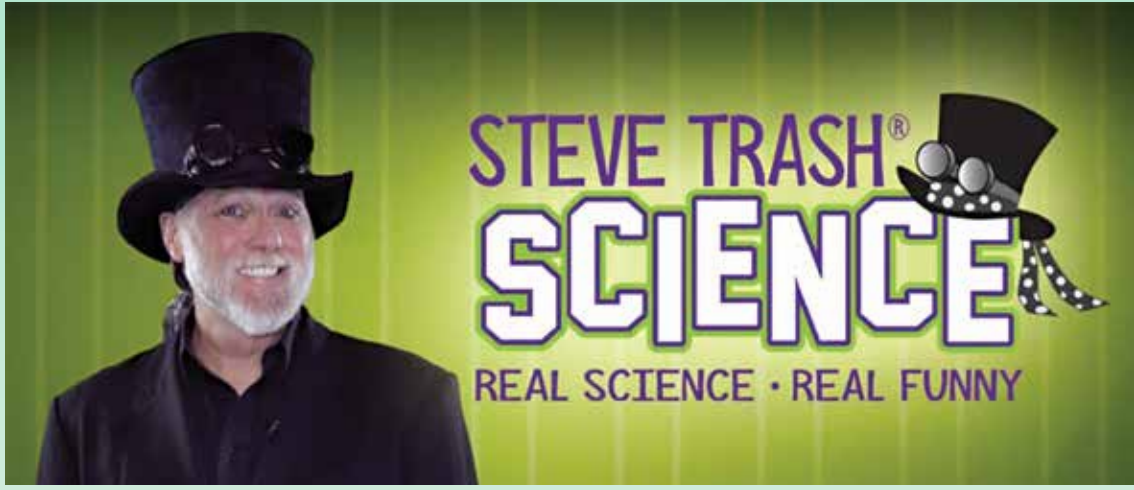
Our Earth Day event will be held on Saturday, April 15, from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. on the campus of Athens State University. Admission is FREE. A \$1.00 donation is suggested to help support KALB programs. A list of activities will be provided at entry points.

The day will begin with a **guided walk at Marbut Bend Walking Trail** in West Limestone. This is a unique walking trail with diverse wildlife. The walk will be led by Damien Simbeck with TVA who is an expert in the history of this trail and all the wildlife that call the area home. There are boardwalks over the ponds and decks with beautiful river views. Participants will meet at the trailhead at 8 a.m. Wear comfortable walking shoes, bring your camera, and use sunscreen and/or insect repellent depending on the weather.

Our office manager, Claire Tribble, has been instrumental in bringing several new

exhibitors and vendors to this year's event. She has created a nice variety that will be of interest to children and adults. Here are just a few!

- **Steve Trash, Rockin' Eco Hero and Magician**, will have stage performances in McCandless Hall at 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.
- **Rise Raptors** will bring their birds of prey for a presentation in the gym.
- **The Science Guys** - hands-on experiments.
- **Scott Clem, PhD, Research Entomologist** - a variety of insects to study (and hold?)
- **Beth Haney Face Painting** - Beautiful face painting designs FREE for children.
- **Athens State University** will provide a tour of historic trees on the campus. They will also have reptiles on display, activities for the kids, and the opportunity to purchase and tie-dye t-shirts.
- **Limestone County Master Gardeners** - answer gardening questions and plants for sale.
- **Athens-Limestone Beautification Board** - plant cuttings to give away.
- **Fly High Worms** - worm castings and worm tea fertilizer.



- **Fig Brew** - an alternative to coffee and offering samples.
- **Food Trucks** - Smashed (specializing in burgers), Kona Ice, Popcorn, and Cotton Candy
- **Bitte-Waffle** - samples of their prepared waffle mix.

There are too many more exhibitors and vendors to mention, so you'll just have to come out and see for yourselves!

### EARTH DAY ONE-BAG CHALLENGE

KALB and Athens State University are thrilled to educate; however, we also want to encourage our community to get involved in cleaning up our city and county. So we are offering this opportunity to not only clean up the community, but also to clean up with cash prizes **totaling \$1,000!**

KALB will provide trash bags and lend litter grabbers, buckets, gloves, and safety vests to anyone who would

like to use our supplies. Participants must completely fill one trash bag and dispose of it properly. Photos of the cleanup and trash collected must be provided to KALB by posting it on the Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful Facebook page or emailing them to [KALBCares@gmail.com](mailto:KALBCares@gmail.com). Name and contact information must be provided to be entered into the drawing for cash prizes.

One entry will be placed in the drawing in a participant's name for EACH FULL bag of trash collected.

Names will be drawn on Saturday, April 22 (official Earth Day) and winners notified. The first name drawn will receive \$500 with several additional cash prizes to be won!

### THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

Earth Day & Outdoor EXPO



Become a Fan



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[KALBCares@gmail.com](mailto:KALBCares@gmail.com)

[www.KALBCares.com](http://www.KALBCares.com)





## Cooking with Anna

# God Be In My Head

by Anna Hamilton

*Many of you are familiar with the Serenity Prayer. It offers words of peace, calmness, and strength. This week, I read another beautiful prayer that was originally found in the Old Sarum Primer, a book of prayers written in 1558. It is a short prayer that offers a closer connection with God. It helps you feel and become closer to God.*

### God Be In My Head

*God be in my head, and in my understanding;*

*God be in my eyes, and in my looking;*

*God be in my mouth, and in my speaking;*

*God be in my heart, and in my thinking;*

*God be at my end, and at my departing.*

*It is only five lines, five simple lines that asks God to be in every part of your life. It is such a simple prayer, such*

*a simple concept, but when the Gospel is broken down to the bare minimum, it is simple. God made following Him, at its core, simple. Easy enough for a child to follow and understand.*

*The older we get, we tend to forget how simple life can be. We let life cloud our eyes. We let worry creep in and take control, and our childlike belief and wonder is snuffed out. In the New Testament, Jesus tells us that to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, we have to become like little children.*

*This beautiful, simple prayer helps keep your focus on making sure God is in every aspect of your life. When God is in every part of your life, God will spill out of you. We are called as Christians to stand out from the crowd. We are supposed to look different. When Christ is*

*continued on page 23*

## Sausage Frittata

### Ingredients:

*1 lb. ground turkey sausage*

*1 small onion, chopped*

*2 cloves garlic, minced*

*1 (5 oz.) pkg baby spinach*

*12 large eggs, lightly beaten*

*1 cup shredded Colby jack cheese*

*1/3 cup heavy cream, or milk*

*Salt and pepper to taste*

*1 tbsp Cajun seasoning*

*1/2 cup grape tomatoes, halved*

### Directions:

*Preheat oven to 375°F. Cook sausage in an ovenproof skillet over medium heat until browned and fully cooked. Remove from skillet, reserving 1 Tbsp of fat in skillet. Add onion and garlic to hot drippings; sauté for 5 minutes. Add spinach and cook until wilted. Whisk together eggs, cheese, cream, salt, pepper, and Cajun seasoning in a large*



*bowl. Pour into the skillet over spinach mixture. Transfer skillet to oven. Bake 20 minutes or until set and top begins to brown. Top with halved tomatoes.*

# Saturday Walking Tours

by Tina Morrison, Tourism Athens



Please join The Athens-Limestone County Tourism Association as we offer FREE guided tours through our historic city. Every Saturday in April, meet at The Athens Visitors Center at 100 N. Beaty St., Athens, AL at 9:45 a.m. for a one-hour guided walking tour. Saturday, April 8, we will explore the Historic Beaty District with tour guide Billy Ward. On April 15, we will explore the Downtown District with tour guide William Pepper. The final tour, on April 22, will be determined by the attendees' choice. The Saturday April Historic Walking Tours are part of an Alabama state-wide historic walk promotion. For more information, please go to our website: [www.VisitAthensAL.com](http://www.VisitAthensAL.com)

Also, visit the Tourism booth at the Earth Day EXPO at Athens State University on April 15, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. We will be making bird feeders from reusable and recyclable materials. Admission is free.



# Americans Aren't Eating Enough Fruits And Veggies. Why?

from Brandpoint Content

(BPT) - Most people know that fruits and vegetables are key to a healthy diet, but they may not know exactly how many, and the amounts, they should be eating daily. Some may believe they are on the right track but are surprised to learn they are underestimating the amount needed to meet nutrition recommendations.

A survey conducted by the International Fresh Produce Association (IFPA) confirms that Americans are largely underestimating how many fruits and vegetables they need to eat on a daily basis. Consumers surveyed estimate the daily number of recommended servings to be 3-4 servings a day, short of the actual recommended 5 servings per day defined by the World Health Organization. For consumers to work toward achieving a healthier lifestyle, accurate nutrition information must be available and accessible.

According to experts at IFPA's Foundation for Fresh Produce's [fruit-sandveggies.org](http://fruit-sandveggies.org), widespread misinformation and disinformation online and during the shopping experience contributes to Americans' confusion over what, and how much, they are supposed to eat. Products across the marketplace can be marketed to make food and beverages appear more healthful than they are by depict-

ing images of fruits and vegetables despite containing no or minimal amounts of them.

"Consumers constantly face an overwhelming amount of information online and in stores, whether the information is correct or not," said Emily Holdorf, a registered dietitian at The Foundation. "When people hear conflicting messages of 'eat this' and 'don't eat that,' they become understandably frustrated. By instead sharing a more inclusive approach to eating nutritious foods, consumers will feel empowered to choose fruits and vegetables at more meals and snacks throughout the day."

To this end, IFPA and the Foundation are galvanizing the fresh produce industry and influential nutrition educators to help

eliminate all barriers to consumption, including tackling misinformation.

"We are dedicated to finding solutions that make accurate nutrition recommendations easily accessible no matter what zip code an American resides in," said IFPA CEO Cathy Burns. "We are exploring initiatives like providing dietary guidelines to shoppers in the store and asking the government to crack down on deceptive nutrition labeling. These are places where we can make a real impact on how consumers think about their own nutrition and ultimately achieve a positive change at kitchen tables across America."

According to WHO, eating the recommended intake of fruits and vegetables as part of a healthy diet improves overall

health and reduces risk of certain diseases including cardiovascular diseases and certain types of cancer.

Many fruits and vegetables are plentiful in soluble fiber, which can lower LDL cholesterol, blood pressure and inflammation.

Even the colors of fruits and vegetables play a key role in health. The variety of colors within produce are known as "phytochemicals" that have been shown to potentially reduce the risk of certain cancers, heart disease and diabetes.

"Diet-related diseases including heart disease, diabetes and hypertension add \$1.4 trillion to the nation's debt to treat annually, yet even with more than a trillion dollars going toward treatment, these diseases are still among the leading

causes of death in the U.S.," said Burns. "Fortunately, each of these can be prevented by having a healthier diet."

Here are three tips for getting started:

\* Start small - Don't bite off more than you can chew with an extremely aspirational goal. Stir fruit into cereal or yogurt, add bagged salad to pizza night, top sandwiches with extra veggies, throw greens into your favorite pasta dish. Small wins build momentum and positive habits.

\* Make it easy - Cut and prep fruits and vegetables up right away so they are quick to grab. Keep all forms of produce on hand for low- and no-cook ways to add fruits and vegetables to the meals and snacks you already have planned. The easier it is, the more likely it will get eaten.

\* Focus on the flavor - When something makes you feel good, you want to do it again. When something tastes good, you want to eat it again. Utilize dips, herbs, spices and juices to add flavor and enjoyment to fruits and vegetables. Eating healthy doesn't have to be boring!

"There are countless eating occasions that occur throughout our days, weeks, months. Asking, 'What fruit or veggie can I add to this?' is a great first step to adding more, one bite at a time," said Holdorf.



# Limestone Leaders BNI Chapter: Where Business Is Blooming

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

continued from page 1

VID, they pivoted beautifully and made it possible to “Zoom” all over the planet, and business continued to grow during the shut-down.

So, who are the BNI Limestone Leaders, and why, if you are a business owner, should you join us? We represent businesses that range from real estate to roofing, health and wellness, media, plumbing, insurance, property inspection, HVAC, property investments, athletic supply, mortgage services, a law firm, a florist, financial planning, and pest control. We could not be from

more diverse backgrounds, but here is what we have in common: we enjoy helping each other grow our respective businesses, and we have the numbers to prove it. Last year we passed more than two million dollars’ worth of business, and we are a small group, by BNI standards. And, we are looking to invite new members to join us!

How does BNI work? You commit to leverage what is known as the Power of One, and that means you attend one meeting a week, spend one hour in continuing education, have one meeting with a fellow member to exchange your business needs for that week, and seek

to give a referral for a fellow member if at all possible. BNI has literally hundreds of hours of training from which to draw for your CEU, and I can say from experience that I am a much more knowledgeable business woman as a result of the four years I have been a member. Thousands of dollars in business have come my way, and while I appreciate the financial footing upon which that has put *Athens Now*, the real value has come from the relationships I have built with people I most likely would have never met. We have mourned, laughed, learned, prayed, eaten, made money with and for each other, and we



*Ali Turner*  
Athens Now



*Amy Fiscus*  
Vollara

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8:30-10:30  
STOVEHOUSE

GET YOUR TICKET TODAY!

**DON'T MISS OUT ON THIS THIS EXCITING EVENT!**

have done just that in everything from three-piece suits to togas and crowns of leaves, along with overalls, straw hats, and garden

gloves. We would love to have you join us this and every Tuesday at 7:45 a.m. at the Alabama Veterans Museum, and hope you



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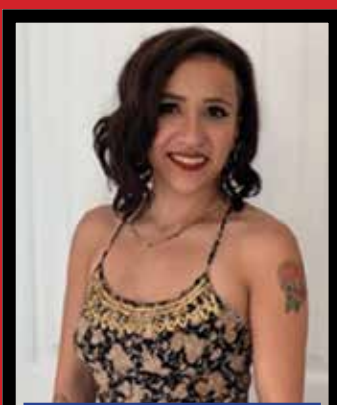


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# BNI®

*BNI (Business Network International) is the world's largest word-of-mouth referral organization. If you are wanting to grow your business, need more introductions, enjoy a positive community while being surrounded by supportive professionals, then come check out BNI! There are multiple chapters around town and all will be present and showcasing their culture and desire to meet people in your profession to give referrals to! You don't want to miss out on this opportunity.*

*Come meet hundreds of great professionals in the Huntsville area and network with top local professionals. Learn to increase your word-of-mouth referrals.*

The cost of the Big Breakfast is \$20, and you can purchase tickets and register on eventbrite.com. The address for purchasing tickets is <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/biggest-networking-event-of-the-year-bni-big-breakfast-huntsville-tickets-539777508057>.

consider a band that is perhaps small in number, large in heart, and has prevailed in the pocketbook. See you on Tuesdays!

To register for a visit, go to [bniconnectglobal.com](http://bniconnectglobal.com), and when you click on *Search for a Chapter*, click *Limestone Leaders*. Then click *Register* to visit, and you'll be all set. You can also go to Facebook and leave a message for us to contact you. We are Limestone Leaders BNI on Facebook. If you need more info, call Ali Turner, Visitor Host

Coordinator, at 256 468 9425.

Now, on to what is known as The Big Breakfast. In the spring, BNI chapters from all over Alabama put on a breakfast in Huntsville at the Stovehouse Event Center. It is designed to give hundreds of people a chance to network, eat, laugh, enjoy each other, and for BNI-ers to compete for the best booth. And, there will be door prizes! This year's Big Breakfast will be held on Friday, April 14, from 8:30-10:30 a.m. We chose the theme

"Business Is Blooming In Limestone County," and we are showing up as farmers and gardeners to showcase the fact that Limestone County once again is the fastest growing county in Alabama the Beautiful. Indeed, it is a great place to build your business, and we would be delighted to help! You will want to bring a kazillion business cards and your cell phone to exchange information, and here is what the event planners have said about what you'll be experiencing at the Big Breakfast.

## *BNI Big Breakfast*

**April 14, 2023**  
**8:30 -10:30 a.m.**  
**Stovehouse Event Center**  
**3414 Governors Drive**  
**Southwest, Suite 155**  
**Huntsville, AL 35805**

## *Limestone Leaders BNI*

**Each Tuesday AM**  
**7:45-9:15 a.m.**  
**Alabama Veterans Museum**  
**114 W. Pryor**  
**Athens, AL 35611**



*Randy McKinney*  
Athens Athletics



*Robin Gerrish*  
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# Rise Up

by Eric Betts

Assistant Director, Curtis Coleman Center for Religion Leadership and Culture at Athens State University



Those who are in leadership are living in constantly changing times. Sometimes those changes often appear to be for the worse rather than for the better. It is in those moments as a leader that you must remain hopeful. Hope is always contagious. A hopeful attitude and disposition often cause others around you to be hopeful and motivated to press forward to whatever is next. It is in those seasons where one can be reminded of the poem written by the legendary American icon and poet Maya Angelou entitled “Still I Rise.”

This theme of Resurrection is a focal point for many Christians and those with a Christian background during the season of Holy Week. Many leaders have found encouragement from the words of this “Still I Rise” poem. When feeling as though all is lost and that there is no hope for tomorrow, there is always a chance for a rebound. Often when one is experiencing their worst moments and has suffered from an obvious failure which is visible to all around, this adds to the discouragement and demoralized feelings. It is in those moments where critics often pile on and add to your misery and sense of shame. Those who were looking for you to fail, will see themselves as being vindicated by your loss; this can include those whom you have helped through their own traumatic experiences in life. Sometimes those whom you have helped will not lend a hand but rather add insult to injury and pour salt in your wounds. Those are objects of sneers in the midst of their loss may identify with the words of the poem which says:

*Did you want to*

*see me broken?*

*Bowed head and  
lowered eyes?*

*Shoulders falling  
down like teardrops,*

*Weakened by my  
soulful cries?*

*Does my haughtiness  
offend you?*

*Don't you take it  
awful hard*

*'Cause I laugh like I've  
got gold mines*

*Diggin' in my  
own back yard.*

Facing the judgment and scrutiny of others, upon suffering setbacks, Maya Angelou's poem is instructive. It provides a source of inspiration for those leaders who may feel as though they have hit rock bottom and that all is lost. It informs its audience that you may have failed but you are not a failure. Failure is what has happened to you, but it does not define who you are. You have what it takes within you to rise from your failure. You may have suffered loss but you are not a loser. You are not defined by your losses but rather your determination to continue on in spite of your losses. This determination is a testimony of your character, not the circumstances to which you have fallen.

Feeling as though you are drowning within the confusion, the chaos, and uncertainty, “Still I Rise” helps us remember a brighter day is coming and that trouble won't always last. One of the great Hebrew prophets stated, “Weeping may endure for a night but joy comes in the morning.” In other words, it is natural to cry and weep today; you may weep today, but the day will come when you will laugh

again. Your drive and sense of purpose will return and you will smile again. Night can only last for a limited period of time, and eventually the day must break. Light shall appear at the end of the tunnel of your darkest hours.

You may look around and see others laughing, smiling, and happy while you are broken inside. Your inner peace should not be disturbed due to comparing your levels of happiness with that of others. Choosing for yourself in that moment how you want to feel is what is important. Sadness or grief is a part of being human as much as happiness. It's okay to feel sadness; it doesn't mean that something is wrong with you. Remember that sometimes those who are smiling the most and appear to be the happiest may very well be the most broken and traumatized on the inside, and you would not want to trade places with them. Therefore, we cannot use the happiness or the smiles or the laughter of other people as a measurement for our own experience. Tragedy, loss, and suffering are all a part of the human experience whether rich or poor. Persons who appear to be on top of the world today, may very well hit rock bottom tomorrow. Life is filled with swift transitions and many twists and turns. There are millions of biographies throughout history that will tell us that there is hope in the midst of suffering and tragedy. There may be those who have never believed in you, but be thankful it is not up to them. They will see your loss and your failure as an opportunity to exalt themselves and to view themselves in a more favorable light. Do not be discouraged if they are using your failure as a way to hold on to their own sense

of importance.

Indeed, it is painful when others cheer your downfall and have no sympathy in your most depressing moments in life. They may try to bury you through their criticism and pile on while you are down and out, but as Maya Angelou said, “Still I Rise.” To those who celebrate what they perceive as your downfall, hold to the words of the poem:

*You may shoot me with your  
words,*

*You may cut me with  
your eyes,*

*You may kill me with  
your hatefulness,*

*But still, like air, I'll rise.*

Those who are pointing to your failures to define you are wasting their time. Don't waste yours by focusing on them. Every failure, loss, or setback is an opportunity for a new beginning that will be greater than before. Hope is the bridge over troubled waters, which is the span between your loss and the new beginning that will eventually emerge. Maintain your determination and commitment and patience throughout the journey, and you'll be glad you never gave up. While others are piling on because of your loss, the stage is being set for a greater opportunity to live into your purpose. The way to deal with the criticism and doubt concerning your potential is understanding that this only a bump in the road to progress. There is a way to get back up again and climb out of your rock-bottom circumstance. This poem also has a word for those who are looking for motivation beyond the criticism and insults.

*You may write me  
down in history*

*With your bitter,*

*twisted lies.*

*You may tread me  
in the very dirt*

*But still, like dust, I'll rise.*

*Just like moons and  
like suns,*

*With the certainty of tides,*

*Just like hopes  
springing high,*

*Still I'll rise.*

What Maya Angelou illustrates is that your future victories, conquests, and triumphs are not hindered by the negative attitudes that are directed against you in your hour of distress. Angelou states that your resurrection from the graveyard of broken situations is as certain as the rise of the sun and moon and the evening tides. It is this mindset that kept Maya Angelou strong in the various struggles of life. While absolute certainty is not possible, absolute confidence is indeed possible.

“Still I Rise” is a positive affirmation that we all can say to ourselves when we feel buried by the hardships and trauma of life. Don't wait for others to encourage you; learn how to encourage yourself and say, “Still I rise.”

There has been so much tragedy in our community over the past few weeks with the severe storms, tornadoes, and high winds that have caused devastation. They have interrupted our lives and too many have lost their lives. Mississippi, Alabama, and Arkansas have been greatly impacted. These tragedies can be extremely discouraging and disheartening; however, we have within us that internal instinct that says, “Still we rise.” We will rise.

# Shorty's Captivity and Daring Escape

by Jerry R. Barksdale

[www.jerrybarksdale.com](http://www.jerrybarksdale.com) [fb.com/jerry.barksdale.7](https://fb.com/jerry.barksdale.7)



I'm a dog and doggone proud of it. I was held in captivity by humans and against my will until I escaped. This is my story told to Jerry Barksdale, a real journalist.

I was born out of wedlock beneath a farmhouse near Elkmont, Alabama. I don't know the date since dogs don't have calendars – and don't need them. Nor do I know my Daddy. I suspect that he was the basset hound that often chased rabbits through the neighborhood. Mama was the prettiest, ugly, bulldog I ever saw. She was quite a looker. I have long ears and droopy eyes which I inherited from Daddy and very short legs which I got from Mama. I was a happy, well-adjusted pup. I have six siblings. All of us look the same, except for me. I'm the runt of the litter. I didn't have a name at the time. Dogs aren't required to have a name. Nor do I have a birth certificate – don't need one since I know who I am.

One day, Mama took us from the beneath the old house, and we ran and romped in the yard, played in the cow pasture and woodland, and lived a life of freedom. I was happy doing what a dog is born to do. I especially loved to chase cats, and Mama taught us later how to chase rabbits and squirrels and the mailman. But my favorite sport was chasing cyclists, joggers, and cars. Now that was fun! I didn't go to school, attend church, pay taxes, or work. I lay in the shade most of the time and took long, restful naps. Later, I developed an interest in girl dogs and copulated regularly with them, which I thoroughly enjoyed.

Boy! That was fun.

Big Daddy – he was our master – lived in the big house and wore overalls. He called me “hey dog,” which made me feel special. Later, he started calling me Shorty, I suppose because of my short legs. He let our little family live in the barn, which was warm in the winter time. When he whistled and hollered, “Heah, heah, heah!” fun was about to begin. We'd jump into the back of his old Chevy pick-up and he'd take us rabbit hunting. There is nothing tastier than fresh caught raw rabbit, except for seasoned road kills. Occasionally, I ate pig poop, which is a delicacy. When we got fleas and ticks, Big Daddy knew exactly what to do. He poured a mixture of used motor oil and tractor fuel down our spine. You should've seen fleas and ticks jumping off and running for their lives! I loved Big Daddy, especially when he tugged my long ears.

Big Mama wore an apron and was always whistling and singing. She threw out table scraps for us to eat and even cooked cornbread for us and soaked it in water. Now, that was delicious but not as satisfying as road kill and pig poop. I loved Big Mama, too.

Like I said, I was a happy, well-adjusted dog living a dog's life. Then one day my life changed. A huge black SUV came down the gravel road, kicking up a cloud of dust. We ran out and gave chase. Lil' Sis who could catch a rabbit and bite a jogger, had no experience catching cars. She was crushed to death. Mama went over and sniffed her body and walked away, her tail drooped. I knew she was sad. The monster car stopped and a small woman

got out and ran over to where Sis lay. “Poor pitiful little doggie,” she said and began crying. Big Daddy walked over to see what the commotion was about. He told her not to worry, that we had it coming to us. The woman saw me standing there with my little tail drooping. She stroked my head. That's when I should have bit her hand off. She picked me up and began speaking baby babble. “Ohhh, he's so precious, isn't he darling?” She nuzzled me, then kissed me on the mouth. “Peew whew!” She jerked back. I guess she smelled pig poop on my breath.

The woman -- I called her Bad Woman – lived in a brickhouse in Athens that looked exactly like the dozens of houses that surrounded her. There was no pasture, no woodland, and no rabbits and squirrels to chase. I couldn't run and play. She gave me a bath in a big white tub instead of letting me lick myself clean like Mama had taught me. She even brushed my teeth. Yuck! I had to pee on a pad and poop on command. When I didn't conform, she made me wear a diaper. Humiliating! She even made me sleep with her. Disgusting! How would she feel if she had to sleep in the barn with my siblings? She dressed me in a sweater and sometimes pushed me down the sidewalk in a dog stroller. She locked me inside her house all day and made me watch “Animal Planet” and gave me a rubber bone to gnaw on. How crazy is that? Instead of feeding me road kill and an occasional helping of pig poop, she fed me horrible tasting stuff out of a sack. I couldn't go outside and run and fornicate like a dog is

supposed to do. She led me around on a leash like I was a slave. When I rode in her monster car, she strapped me in a dog seat. How demeaning! She tried to make me into something that I wasn't. She even entered me in a 5K foot race and made me chase after nothing -- no mailman, no jogger, no nothing. Now that is crazy.

Then one day I overheard her say she was going to clip my tail and ears. “No, doggoneit, no!” That's when I rebelled. She enrolled me in obedience school where a bad man made me walk on a treadmill and tried to squeeze all the dog out of me and make me into a human. I didn't want to be a human. They argue and fight about skin color, which politician lies less, and constantly stoke discord between men and women, and even argue and fight about who is the true God. They work themselves into a lather and make war and kill each other. Dogs don't do these things. We aren't filled with guilt, greed, hate, jealousy, and malice and, we don't hold grudges.

I began acting out! I pooped on the neighbor's lawnmower seat and peed on his geraniums. Whoa, doggie! Talk about upset. He shook his fist at Bad Woman and told her to keep me out of his yard. He-he-he. I loved it. Then he yelled at me. “Get outta here! You ugly mongrel.” That really hurt my feelings. I chewed the leg of Bad Woman's expensive antique table. She sobbed and took pills and poured tall glasses of wine and began mumbling and babbling. “Why don't he love me?”

I hatched a plan to escape this

hellish life. One day, while tethered outside, I chewed through the rope and ran like the wind. “Free! Free at last!” I was so happy -- and so free. I hummed,” Born free, as free as the wind blows, as free as the grass grows...” Oh yeah, baby. I chased the neighbor's cat, patrolled for girl dogs, but didn't see any. They were all in captivity, too.

Two men dressed in blue jumped out of a pick-up. “There's the little varmint. Catch 'im!” one yelled. My short legs were no match for the net. I was locked inside a cage and hauled to dog jail. No reading my rights, no lawyer, no nothing. Bad Woman never came to bail me out. I was scared. My cellmates kept disappearing. A Doberman said it was part of the “final solution.” “What's that?” I asked. “The needle dude -- the needle.” He said it was a crime for dogs to be free. That really scared me. My only crime was wanting to act like a dog and not a human.

One day, I looked up and there stood Big Daddy in his overalls. He pointed at me and the jailer let me out. Oh, how happy I was! I rode in the back of his old pick-up to Elkmont where he turned me loose to run free. Mama and my siblings were overjoyed to see me. Before long I was chasing squirrels, rabbits, joggers, and cyclists, but not cars. I had learned my lesson. Big Mama cooked me cornbread. That night I scrunched up against Mama in the barn and slept like a rock, dreaming of cats, rabbits, and squirrels --- and, yes, girl dogs. “Free, free at last.”

## Old Dogs

by Joel Allen



Hello, folks! I hope everyone had a great Saint Patrick's Day and the "Luck of the Irish" was with all. Years ago, when my PeePaw (Granddad on Mom's side of the family) was alive, he rescued a few dogs. He gave them lots of love. One thing he used to do was call the dogs to him, and he would give each one an Oreo cookie. There was one among his pack named Checkers, and she would always eat her Oreo quickly and circle back around as if she never got one. PeePaw would play along and give her another. After PeePaw passed away, my mom and the family all took in PeePaw's dogs. Mom brought home Checkers and Sissy. At the time, they weren't that old but they were very loving. Sissy was a Great Dane and German shepherd mix so she was a big girl. She had the color of the shepherd. Checkers probably had Labrador and collie mix. She was white with brown speckles and a brown mask to her ears.

Anyways, they were quite the characters. Checkers was a "foodie" and though Sissy liked food she craved "lubbins" too. Sissy did not like storms though, and if one came, she was in your lap smothering whomever was the poor victim that so happened to be near her. It was usually Mom, LOL. But when Sissy was happy, she would be by Mom and Dad's bed arching her back and scratching it with the side of their bed doing a happy bark with every shove of her body using the bed as a back scratch-

er. Checkers was dubbed "Chubby Checkers" because she always wanted your food, and she would smile and wiggle her body in such a cute way that it was hard to say no. I cannot remember exactly how old they were when they passed, but I know that they lived a long time with all the love we gave them.

So, who is thinking of adopting or fostering an old dog? Are there pros and cons to doing so? If you're reading this and are having thoughts of adopting or fostering, then we will try and help make up your mind.

Let's talk about adopting an old dog. Adopting is supposed to be a permanent deal, and the life one can offer an old dog should be one of loving and understanding. This can be a first-time adoption where the family has never had a dog and an old dog would be a great start. Old dogs tend to be set in their ways, so if they

are a little stubborn, just be patient. Then again, ask yourself, "Who's being stubborn?" Could it be that you're expecting the old dog to behave like a younger dog? Be careful not to believe some popular beliefs of how a dog should act, like for instance like Lassie. (Just throwing that thought into the mix.) If they give more than expected in a positive way, then take that as a win-win. One can also adopt an old dog that just needs a peaceful place to be loved while they are getting ready to pass on. Sort of like a "hospice" for dogs where they are given a safe place to call theirs until they go to be with the Lord. Some will say, "Why not euthanize the dog?" I see your logic, but in my opinion, it's a cold logic and I tend to look at a dog with more respect than some humans. Why not euthanize yourself when you're past a certain age? Another thing to remember is that like

old people, old dogs can have achy joints or health issues too. So if they are slow and grumbly, again, be patient.

Now let's discuss fostering. Fostering is much like adopting with a slight difference. Your home will be open to the dog for a place to stay while the shelter or rescue searches for their "forever" home. Some shelters and rescues offer a foster-to-adopt program which is really a great idea because your home could be a perfect fit should your foster dog get along with everyone, including the cat. Fostering also keeps the shelter or rescue involved in any vet care the dog may need and fostering also frees up space in the shelters or rescues. Be sure to ask your local shelter or rescue about their requirements for fostering.

Lastly, I will leave everyone with an Easter story of what my PeePaw did for a joke, as my mom told me years ago. Sorry Mom if I

leave out anything, but I am going to share this as best I remember it. I hope everyone gets a laugh. Typical PeePaw pranking everyone. It was Easter morning and Mom and her sisters were kids. PeePaw waited for them to get up, and as everyone was coming into the kitchen where the dogs stayed, PeePaw threw a lucky rabbit's foot down and said, "Look girls! The dogs ate the Easter Bunny." Well Mom and her sisters began to cry and they started whipping those "bad dogs" with their pillows and such for eating the Easter Bunny. The dogs had that "What did we do?!" look on their faces. PeePaw was just laughing, and the whole time, no one bothered to look at the rabbit's foot and see it had a gold chain attached to it!

I leave everyone with one more thing to consider when adopting or fostering. Some dogs have been through hell and back. They too can develop PTSD and sometimes these dogs have permanent character flaws. A trainer can help with behavior issues should the need arise, but I cannot promise that this will correct the problem. So, until next month be safe!

***"Remember to love your dogs because they love you. Maybe not the way you want them to, like chewing up your favorite shoes or what not, but that is just love chewing. Be thankful for the time you have with them always."***

**Joel Allen  
256-651-2211**



# Uncomfortable Emotions Part 2

by Lisa Philippart,  
Licensed Professional Counselor



*“The body’s uncomfortable emotions happen only to remind you that there’s a thought available for questioning.”*  
- Byron Katie

In my previous article, we examined the uncomfortable emotion of envy. I suggested that perhaps envy could be viewed as a useful prompt for thinking more deeply about your values and what matters to you. Now let’s look at two more uncomfortable emotions, pride and pity, to see how we might reframe their meanings in a more positive light.

I’ve always been surprised at how hard people work to avoid admitting that they

are proud of themselves. It’s as if they are afraid that the tiniest admission of pride will lead to every important person in their lives immediately casting them out for being too self-centered. Unfortunately, pride has a reputation of being sinful or bad. But let’s take a step back and reconsider the emotion of pride as being on a spectrum. You can have positive feelings about your accomplishments without being a self-centered narcissist. In fact, in my experience, the extreme avoidance of pride is actually more problematic. For example, it’s hard to have genuinely close relationships if you can’t accept a compliment or acknowledge someone’s praise for you. Likewise, you find it difficult to maintain healthy self-esteem if you’re constantly devalu-

ing your achievements.

So, while overdoing pride can be a concern, that’s probably not a good reason to simply avoid it altogether. Those who have an unhealthy relationship with pride often connect feeling pride with acting prideful. It doesn’t make a lot of sense to claim the feeling of pride is bad if it’s not something that you have control over. (In my opinion, we don’t have direct control over any of our emotions!) So go ahead and slow down your arrogant actions, ignoring other people and making everything about you, or bragging about insignificant efforts if these are actions with which you struggle. Pride is just your mind’s way of communicating to you that you’ve done something worthwhile and important. And just like we make it a

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point to congratulate others on a job well done, why not extend the same courtesy to yourself?

I’m sure you have heard people say, “Don’t pity me!” First of all, pity is an emotion, not a behavior. It’s not something you do, it’s something you feel. It’s kind of like telling someone: “Don’t sad me.” And also, why should someone else get to decide whether you feel pity or not? It’s not about them...it’s your emotion. I think we tend

to avoid pity because, like most forms of sadness, it makes us feel helpless. When someone experiences pain or misfortune, there is often not much you can do to help, which makes us feel powerless or even inadequate.

We often feel sad for other people who are feeling sad. (That’s pity.) You feel pity (sad) when someone you love or care about is struggling. So, what’s the big deal? Emotions like sadness and pity are completely normal. In fact, pity can be extremely helpful. It’s hard to be compassionate if you never feel pity. Compassion is the mental act of putting yourself into someone else’s shoes and seeing the world through their eyes...which often leads to acts of charity, kindness, or forgiveness. And while it’s always technically possible to be compassionate regardless of how you feel, it’s a lot easier to be compassionate if you allow yourself to feel pity.

*Lisa Philippart is a Licensed Professional Counselor, providing mental health services through her own private practice in Madison, Alabama.*





## The Alternative Approach

# Spring Cleaning

by Roy Williams

Finally spring is upon us! The buttercups are peeking out and the trees have buds waiting to show they're glory. Spring symbolizes new life and a season of new beginnings. The new season is a great chance to do some spring cleaning, clear out the winter clothes, dress a little lighter, maybe even clean up your diet.

This time of year is a great opportunity to give our bodies a natural cleanse. After all, our ancestors routinely did spring cleanses on themselves and their children. We have gotten away from these rituals and now have a population of very sick people. Do a cleanse, it can't hurt and your body will thank you for it. Mother Nature has given us many natural herbs that work synergistically with our bodies.

Some of the things we can do right now are to start by drinking more water. Water is the bodies' lubricant and we need it so our organs can function correctly. To help the body not be in an acidic state add lemon juice to your water. Keeping the body alkaline keeps you healthier since most diseases manifest in an acidic state. Try to have

a cup of dandelion root or fennel tea. These help to clean your liver. To give your body a lighter feeling, start to eat lighter.

You can also incorporate more cooked greens into your diet, sip on cleansing soups or broths and reduce heavy foods, including fried foods, saturated fats, dairy, sugar, soda, alcohol and even grains. All of these can help your body detox like it is made to do. When your detox pathways are open your body functions better and you feel better.

Movement is also essential for cleansing. The old saying "Stagnation is death" is true. A body in motion will stay in motion, so stay active. You can stay active by doing so many things, even simple things. Take a walk, garden, even cleaning out your basement. You get the concept, just move!

When I think of spring cleaning, I can't stress the importance of cleaning up your mental health. Are there things going on in your life that are bringing you stress and affecting your quality of life? Do a mental cleanse also and ask yourself if something is not serving you or is affecting you in a nega-



tive way then find a way to make the situation better or remove it from your life. Sometimes we can do everything there is to get ourselves healthier but if emotional well-being is an issue, it can block our path to heal.

We have many great products here at NHC and I love getting to help others use them. When we talk about detoxing and spring cleansing "Regular" is a formulation we suggest for cleansing the digestive tract. It's made up of herbs, food, vitamins, good bacteria and minerals. The colon has a very important job to do in the

body and needs to function at an optimal level. Waste and toxins allowed to sit in the colon too long can be reabsorbed back into the body. "Regular" stimulates this process and does so in a gentle manner.

Just as the digestive tract plays a critical role in detoxing, so do the kidneys. The kidneys are responsible for filtering blood before sending it back to your heart. They are also responsible for eliminating toxins from your body. The kidneys also produce hormones, make red blood cells, help to regulate blood pressure

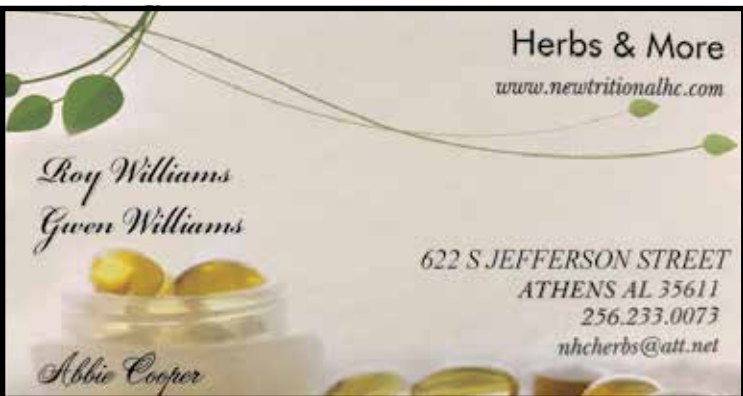
and control calcium. This keeps your bones strong and healthy.

We offer a product called "Kidney Cleanse With Liver Support." It contains herbs and extracts that support the urinary tract, and has antimicrobial agents. The liver needs to be supported when performing any type of detox. Keeping the kidneys and the liver clean and healthy is vital to our existence, since these are major detoxifying organs.

Remember, health begins when keeping an alkaline state in the body, eating a healthy diet and a hydrated system full of oxygen. Toxins are everywhere and they can pile up fast in our bodies and keep us from performing and living our best! Let us help you with your health and wellness. Happy Spring Cleaning!

Your friend in health,  
Roy P. Williams

April 07 - April 20, 2023





Cooking with Anna (continued from page 13)

# God Be In My Head

by Anna Hamilton

*spilling out of every part of you, you will stand out. "That you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world." Philippians 2:15*

*I urge you to commit this prayer to memory, but more importantly, commit to putting these five simple statements into practice in your life. When Christ is part of every facet of your life, our outlook on life will change and others around you will come to know Christ as well.*

*This week's recipe is a delish frittata. Frittata is a fancy word for an open faced omelet! It is an easy breakfast*



*meal, lunch meal, supper meal, or snack. You can eat this anytime you like, and it is completely customizable! Feel free to add whatever proteins, veggies, or cheeses your family loves to make this dish a staple on your weekly menu.*

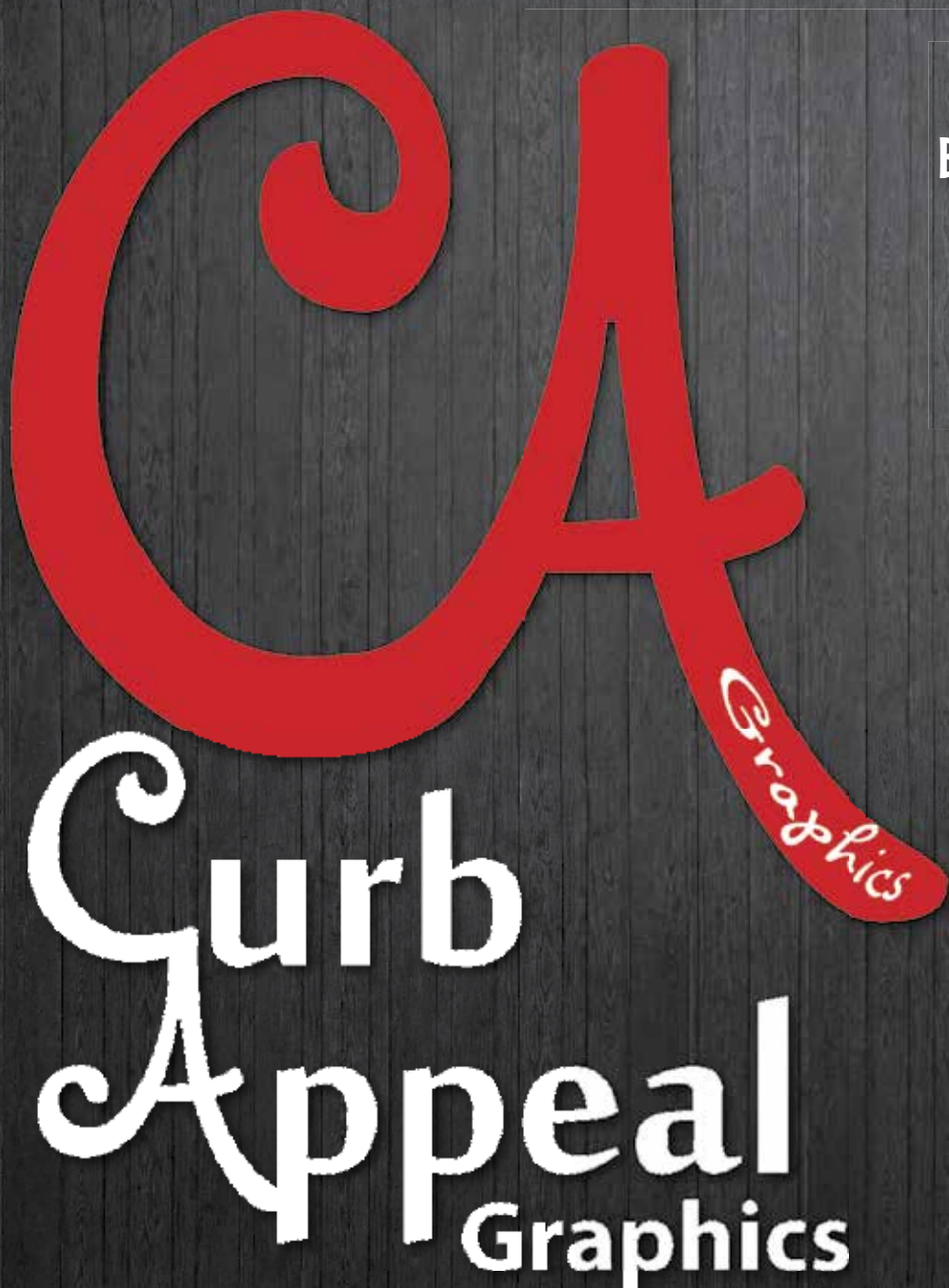
*"So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. We love because he first loved us." 1 John 4:16-19*

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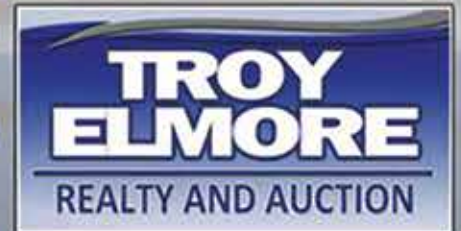
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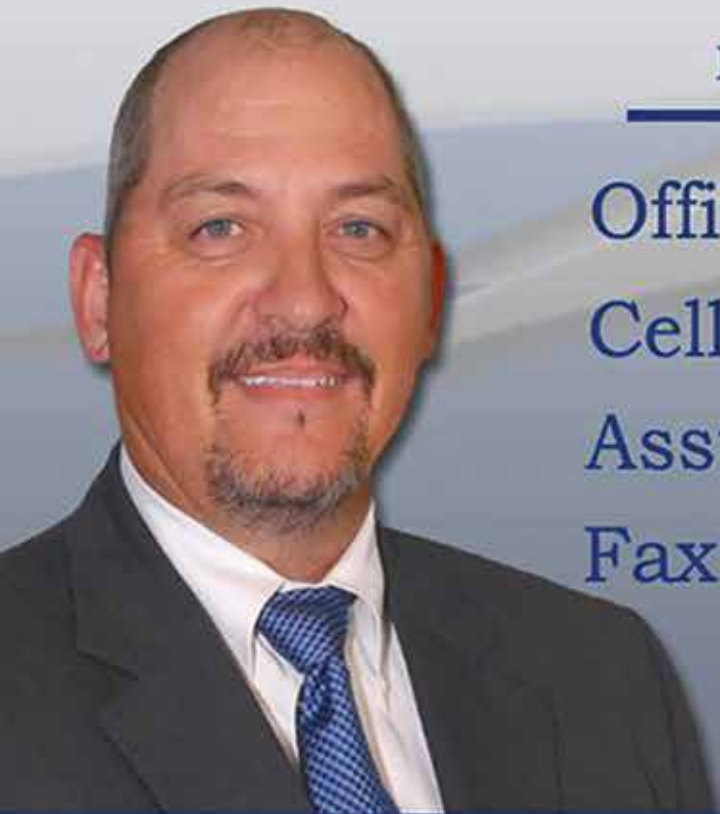
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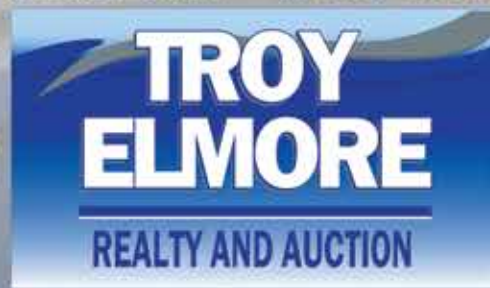
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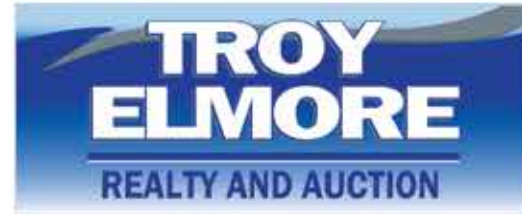
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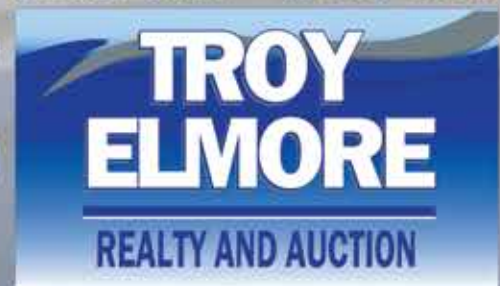
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