

August 18 - August 31, 2023

# Athens Now

information & inspiration

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

## Special Feature



**Let The Children Come To Me...**  
For almost a century, St. Paul's Parish has been an integral part of the Athens community...  
Page 5



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# Bridal By Morgan: An Experience Designed To Elevate

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

This past January, Kate Morgan Smith came up with an idea, began to look into possible ways to make it real, and by March (with solid support from family

and friends) she was ordering inventory. What was her idea? "To provide high-quality bridal gowns at attainable prices for an affordable boutique experience." What does that mean? Here is her story which will explain the ex-

Continued on pages 16-17



Kate Smith, center, celebrated with her family at the recent Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting ceremony

## Tourism

**SUPERHERO DAY - More Than An Event For Our Community...**  
Please take a look at these pictures. The first picture of this sweet family was taken at the Superhero Day event last year...  
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## Cooking With Anna

**Roar Like A Polar Bear...**  
In the very early morning, when my husband and I leave to go to the gym, we pass by a local business with their display window bright from the spotlight shining...  
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**Publisher's Point**

**In The Grip Of Gratitude**

Many times, I have written, spoken about, and gratefully referred to the effect that the life of Corrie Ten Boom has had on me. The last edition of *Publisher's Point* was about the fact that Corrie's book, *The Hiding Place*, had been made into a movie again, and how much I was looking forward to seeing it. So, I wasn't expecting to revisit her life any time soon, and yet, I can't get away from one of the enduring stories of triumph-over-trauma that came out of her time in a Nazi death camp. It was there that she learned many secrets, including what has come to be called "thanking God for the fleas."

When you read *The Hiding Place*, you see that between Corrie and her sister, Betsie, Corrie was the one who struggled far more with her attitudes, with forgiveness, with trust, and with pride. Boy, I can relate! Betsie, on the other hand, was the comparative angel, and while Corrie adored her, Corrie felt about herself that she had drawn the short straw in the "personal development" department. She just wasn't as "good as Betsie." It was in the camp that Corrie discovered a powerful technique which neuroscientists call "reframing," or looking at an inarguably difficult, even



traumatic event and seeing what positive thing may be hiding there.

Corrie and Betsie were moved from one hellhole of a barracks to another that had an even greater level of distress residing there: it was infested with fleas. The straw on their barracks had been fouled, and let's just say that housekeeping was not going to be showing up anytime soon for turn-down service and chocolates placed on the pillow at night time. As they surveyed their situation, Betsie came up with the idea of "thanking God for the fleas," and Corrie wasn't having it. Corrie could thank God that she and Betsie were still alive, still together, but thank Him FOR the fleas? Not on your life!

What was Betsie's ra-

tionale? As a believer, it was her only hope for survival to hang on to Scripture, even when doing so seemed insane. Surely the admonitions to be thankful "in all things," and "for all things" weren't intended for a death camp, were they? But Betsie was adamant, and Corrie started out by *SAY-ING* she was thankful for the fleas. It took her a while to get there, and then she reached a place where she was firmly in the grip of gratitude, and spent the rest of her life telling people all over the world why the fleas saved her life.

What they learned later was that because of the infestation, the guards stayed as far away as they could. There were no rapes there, no beatings, no terrorizing-for-sport. The fleas made

it Corrie's and Betsie's safe place. It was there that they had Bible studies, (using a smuggled, tattered Bible that was never found), prayed with and for each other, led other inmates to Christ and succeeded in building community. They were unbroken even in their brokenness, and became people that Hebrews describes as those "of whom the world was not worthy."

Gratitude has a loving, powerful, and tender grip. My intention is to get into its grasp and stay there. Join me?

*Ali Elizabeth Turner*

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## Our Dear Jack Hunter Just Went Home

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



Local legend Jack Hunter “slipped on home” a week ago, and at age 97, was one of the last remaining WWII veterans in Limestone County. He was born at home in 1926 at 501 N. Houston Street in Athens, and years later came back and lived at the same address. He graduated from Athens High School and joined the Army at the age of 18. After the war, Jack went to what used to be referred to as Athens College.

Jack (whose given name was William) was a tail-gunner on a B17, and was part of what was then referred to as the Army Air Force. Jack was in what was called “The Mighty 8th” and was part of Squadron 547. He served in the European theatre, and his first combat mission was Dresden, Germany. All in all, he flew over 20 missions, was wounded in battle, and went home having been awarded medals for Victory, Good Conduct, Air Med-

als and a Purple Heart. Jack had gone to war with a strong faith and sense that he would be coming home, and he miraculously survived against all odds. According to interviews that were conducted by the late Jerry Barksdale and published in his book, *Duty*, a tail-gunner in Jack’s outfit rarely survived more than 15 missions, and were often killed or captured. Out of the entire 8th Army Air Force, there were 26,000 deaths and 46,000 casualties.

Jack came home, and married a gal from Mississippi. Her name was Bobbie Nell Windham. They had two children, Cathy and Bill. Jack worked for TVA as a surveyor well as Mabry Engineering in Decatur. Jack was on the Board of Directors of the Alabama Veterans Museum, and he was a beloved fixture at the monthly Coffee Calls, which is where I met him.

I have two favorite memo-



*The late Jack Hunter with one of his raving fans, John David McGee*



ries of Jack, who was always kind to me. The first was how he valued young people, and was concerned that the current younger generation not lose their history as well as their appreciation for what the Greatest Generation had purchased for them. I watched from a distance as he conversed with a young man who happens to be quite a history buff, and I could

tell that they were both enjoying the conversation. John David McGee always looked forward to Coffee Call, and having the chance to talk with “Mr. Jack.” I know that JD will miss him.


The other memory was when, in November of 2022, the Veterans Museum sponsored an evening with members of a Polish diplomatic team, and

Jack was a guest of honor seated at the table for the guests of honor. One of the high points of the evening was when they played the military hymns for each of the branches of the Armed Services. As the Army hymn was played, Jack struggled to stand to his feet and join the other Army veterans as they honored their branch. But, he just couldn’t quite do it. However, one of the members of the Polish team, a man many years younger, elegantly came around behind Jack, slid his arms under Jack’s arms, helped him stand up straight, and together they stood in honor. There is a lump in my throat as I remember that evening, and as I have the deep honor of remembering “one of the great ones,” Jack Hunter. Rest in peace, dear Jack, and thank you for your sacrificial service.

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# Let The Children Come To Me

by Dana Wolfe

For almost a century, St. Paul's Parish has been an integral part of the Athens community. Initially, it began as a small congregation in the early 20th century, with services conducted in a modest chapel named St. Henry's, located at the intersection of Coleman Avenue and Browns Ferry Road. However, by the late 1920s, the chapel closed, and parishioners had to travel across the river by ferry to attend Mass at St. Ann's in Decatur, Alabama.

In the 1940s, church services returned to Athens and were held at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Hatchett. Then, in 1959, the church acquired property and constructed a small mission church (which stands to this day and is now used as the parish chapel). Subsequently, in 1967, additional land was purchased, and in 1970, Bishop Vath officially established St. Paul Parish. The parish went on to build a rectory, which accommodated offices and religious education.

As the congregation continued to grow, a new church building was erected in 1992, followed by a parish hall in 1996, and a new rectory in 2004. More recently, in 2014, the church completed a beautiful and versatile two-story religious education building. It is within this building that the church is again expanding its services to establish a preschool, aiming to meet the increasing growth of the congregation and the broader needs of an ever-growing Limestone County.

Limestone County has experienced a burgeoning expansion, being the fastest-growing county in the State of Alabama. Mayor Ronnie Marks of Athens in a recent interview acknowledged



the challenges posed by this growth and emphasized the importance of handling it responsibly and supporting the residents. The population surge is driven by the industrial boom in North Alabama, with companies like Mazda Toyota and its suppliers attracting new businesses to the area. However, infrastructure, especially in education, is struggling to keep pace with the rapid expansion.

Father Tom John of St. Paul Parish sees the unprecedented rise in the population of Limestone County as an opportunity to give children a "head start on their socio-spiritual and intellectual growth." Father John said, "There is no better time to instill genuine Christian principles and core values in young minds than the mid-

formative years of preschool. St. Paul Athens Parish recognizes the need to establish an athenaeum where God's little ones can learn, grow, and form into responsible citizens and committed Christian ambassadors while receiving holistic education."

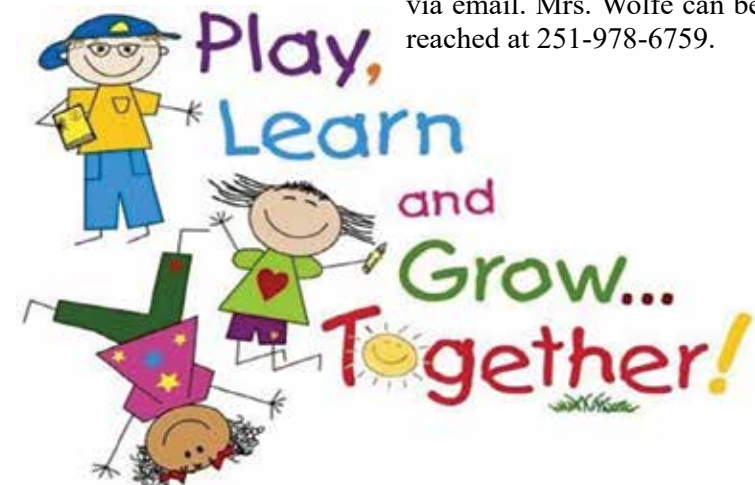
In May of 2023, Father John made a request to Most Reverend Bishop Steven Raica for the approval of a preschool program at St. Paul Parish. The request was subsequently approved by the bishop and his College of Consultors in July 2023. Father John expresses great enthusiasm and dedication to this new endeavor, as do many in the congregation at St. Paul Parish. The project is spearheaded by our dedicated team led by Mrs. Dana Wolfe, for St. Paul Academic

and Spiritual Athenaeum, an endeavor/project of St. Paul Parish Athens. Mrs. Wolfe has over 25 years' experience in public education and program development, and two master's degrees (pastoral studies with an emphasis on human spirituality and secondary social science education) from Spring Hill College, a Jesuit College in Mobile, Alabama. She is a natural fit to lead this endeavor.

St. Paul Parish is now actively establishing a Pre-K3 – Pre-K4 program by hiring an early childhood education teacher and instructional aide. Interested applicants should contact the parish office. The Parish is also now enrolling students into the Pre-K3 – Pre-K4 program. The 2023 preschool class

will be a half-day program designed to foster social and spiritual growth, as well as provide a solid academic foundation based on standards-based curriculum.

The preschool will offer registration on August 21, August 28, and September 4 at 6 p.m. in the Parish Hall. St. Paul members will receive a 25% discount on registration fees and a 10% discount on monthly tuition, while members of other parishes and residents of Limestone County will enjoy a 25% discount on the registration fee. For those interested in working for the preschool or enrolling their children, the applications can be obtained from the St. Paul Church office, St. Paul Church vestibule, or by contacting Dana Wolfe, who can also provide the applications via email. Mrs. Wolfe can be reached at 251-978-6759.



# Calendar of Events

## Athens Limestone County Library Events

*Author Visit- An Evening with Georgina Cross:*

*August 24*

6pm. Community Room

*Free Autism & Sensory Sensitivity Awareness Training:*

*August 31*

Presented by Tourism ALL-a-Bama. Free statewide trainings encouraging hospitality industry professionals to become more aware. 6pm. Leslie Walker, 256-859-4900. Community Room.

## God Encounters Tent Revival Hosted by Freedom House Ministries, Int'l Now Through August 21

7:30pm. 19837 Myers Road Athens, AL 35614. Come experience Jesus, divine healing, salvation, deliverance and miracles.

## Greater Ardmore Chamber Crape Myrtle Festival August 19

9:00am - 4:00pm. John Barnes Park,

30515 Ardmore Ridge Rd, Ardmore, TN 38449.

[greaterardmorechamber.com/crape-myrtle-festival/](http://greaterardmorechamber.com/crape-myrtle-festival/)

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## 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)

## Gold City Quartet

**August 24**

Berea Baptist Church will host Gold City Quartet on Thur, Aug 24 @ 7PM. Attendance is free, a love offering will be received. 16779 Lucas Ferry, Athens, AL 35611. CONTACT is Gary Wilson at 256-497-9763.

## 2nd Annual SUMMERFEST On the Square - Downtown Athens August 26

5:30pm - 7:30pm. This is our 2nd annual summer concert on the square in downtown Athens, AL. Bring your lawn chairs and friends to enjoy a night of bands while we raise money for Make A Way. This is a local benefit honoring our community. Food trucks will be on the square and all the local brick-and-mortar businesses will be open. Lesley Steele [Summerfest.Athens.al@gmail.com](mailto:Summerfest.Athens.al@gmail.com) 256-658-2305.

## Food Truck Friday! September 1

11:00am - 2:00pm. Join First Metro Bank + Singing River Dentistry for FOOD TRUCK FRIDAYS at their newest location in Athens, located off Hwy 72 + Lindsay Lane on the first Friday of every month thru October 6th. No need to pack your lunch, stop by on Friday from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

## 9/11 Heroes Run September 9

7:00am - 9:00am. Join us as we honor the heroes of 9/11 and the wars since. The 5K race for runners, walkers, and runners is on Saturday, September 9th at 7 am, starting and ending at the Courthouse Square. The proceeds from the race benefit Athens Fire and Rescue Auxiliary and the Travis Manion Foundation. [athens@911heroesrun.org](mailto:athens@911heroesrun.org) For registration information: <https://www.travismanion.org/events/911-heroes-run/2023-athens-al/>

## 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.

## News From The Tourism Office

# SUPERHERO DAY - More Than An Event For Our Community

by Tina Morrison, Tourism Athens

**Editor's note:** This is Tina's last column, and we shall miss her! Tina, thank you for your hard work in our town, and we look forward to seeing you soon!

Please take a look at these pictures. The first picture of this sweet family was taken at the Superhero Day event last year. Shortly after, in November, this little boy, Dean, was diagnosed with leukemia.

I invited him to ride in the Superhero Parade this year, but he is not able to. However, his mom is going to come to our Superhero Day event and work a booth, selling her wares. She is going to donate all the proceeds, along with our donations, to Eli's Block

Party Childhood Cancer Foundation.

With all this mom has going on in her life, she is still planning on being here. I am moved beyond words and I wanted to share this with y'all. THIS is why we are doing this event. THIS is what is important in our community. I sincerely thank every one of you for your help in supporting this amazing event.

See you on Saturday, September 9, 2023, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. for Superhero Day at Athens Big Spring Memorial Park!



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# What Makes Ronnie Roll

## Being In "Mint" Condition

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



Hot weather, seemingly daily wild storms, trees down, smoke tests, dealing with cancer, the State of the State and Governor Ivey's visit, city budgets and the honoring of Jack Hunter—it was yet another "pedal to the metal" Monday morning.

When I walked in, however, Mayor Ronnie had unpacked one of the table favors from the Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast that had been held on August 11. The cups had held various flavors of mints with the following saying as part of the celebration:

*Thank you for your*

INVEST-mint

COMMIT-mint

INVOLVE-mint

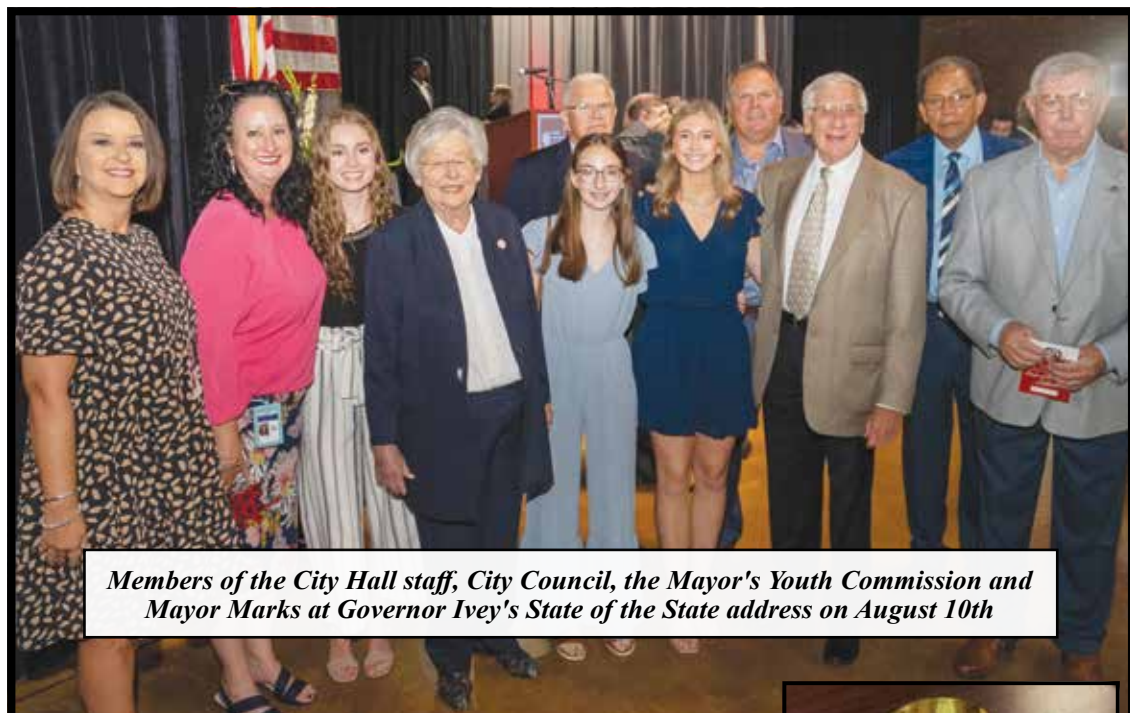
ENCOURAGE-mint

*So, here's something for your  
ENJOY-mint!*

The KALB breakfast had been beautiful in every regard, and the volunteers were honored in a fitting manner. The mayor looked at the saying and said, simply, "This is what our theme needs to be," and I agreed.

Mayor Ronnie then handed me copies of two proclamations as they pertain to cancer. One was designating September as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, and the other designating September as Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Month. "We have had losses to both in this city," said the mayor, and the war goes on. September 9 is also going to be the Superhero Celebration to honor and fight alongside kids that are battling cancer, along with strengthening their families in that fight.

Governor Ivey had chosen Athens as a site to deliver her



*Members of the City Hall staff, City Council, the Mayor's Youth Commission and Mayor Marks at Governor Ivey's State of the State address on August 10th*

State of the State Address, and the well-attended delicious luncheon was held at the Alabama Veterans Museum on August 10. Students from the Mayor's Youth Commission were amongst the attendees, along with several local of-

officials. In addition to focusing on the positive things that are going on in Alabama, as well as challenges, the governor gave thanks that Senator Tim Melson is making a full recovery and will be back in the State Senate soon.

The mayor is one of the few people I know who gets jazzed by budgets, and actually looks forward to budget season for the city which is starting now and will be voted on in the fall. "A lot of what we will be dealing with is infrastructure," he said, which is so necessary given our current rate of growth. "Have you ever seen the utility department's 'smart board' that shows who is still out of power when we have storms? The technology is amazing," he said, and commented that because of it, our utilities workers are able to restore power so much more quickly. This of course has been handy when you consider the combination of high heat and nearly daily storms that we have had this summer.

Another thing that the utilities department has been working



on has been smoke tests. I honestly hadn't known what they were. I mean, I would get notices on my phone that they were being conducted and thought that maybe they were somehow connected to air quality. Actually, smoke testing is the most cost-effective way to find out if water is entering a water system and overwhelming it, especially after a storm. "It shows up where we are 'storming' the system," said the mayor with a smile.

He had to get to Jack Hunter's "homegoing celebration," and so we prayed, and then it was time for Ronnie to roll.

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# Big Government, Pot, And Dr. Frankenstein

by Phil Williams



Here's one for you: Big Government, Marijuana and Dr. Frankenstein all walk into a bar...sounds like a cheap joke, I know. The problem is the joke is on us because that's basically what we got in Alabama when our Republican leadership formed the Alabama Medical Cannabis Commission.

Let me step back and remind us all that we have a Republican super-majority in Montgomery. The GOP controls all three branches of Alabama government and has carte blanche to do, or not do, what it wants.

Take a look at some of the key provisions currently on the Alabama Republican Party Platform. Among other things, the GOP stands for, "limited government and that the growth of government should be curtailed." It also says they "support lower and fair tax models" and "that business growth should be encouraged through elimination of all unnecessary regulations." The ALGOP platform expresses support for constitutional liberties to include "equal rights, equal justice, and equal opportunity."

I've been a member of the State Republican Party for many years. I ran as a party member. I helped establish the GOP as a super majority in the state legislature. I fully support that platform and the efforts of the party to promote it. Yet I watch as members of the legislature enact laws purport-

ing to be for the greater good that fly in the face of that platform despite the fact that they have an "R" by their name. That's exactly what's happened with the establishment of the Alabama Medical Cannabis Commission.

The more libertarian among us say that stodgy, old dyed-in-the-wool conservatives just want to get in the way of someone following their own desires. Its harmless they say. It's all natural they say. Just simple and non-threatening. It's like aspirin! Live and let live, get out of the way, you naysayers! Ganja gonna help ya!

If all of that is true and medical cannabis is such a non-issue, then why is it that the Republican supermajority had to violate every principle of their party platform to make it available?

Ask yourself with all candor, if medical marijuana is harmless, then why did the GOP establish a new fully separate and autonomous wing of government called the Cannabis Commission? A commission that has no limitations on the size of its staffing. A commission that will have its own enforcement officers that will be clothed with arrest and investigative authority.

Did you know that the Cannabis Commission enforcement officers will have the power of search and seizure without a warrant?

Did you know that the

Cannabis Commission law allows for the collection of taxes at 9% on the dollar for each medical cannabis "prescription"? It gets worse when you realize that under Title 40 of the Alabama Code, this state does not tax other prescriptions at all. But the efficacy of medical marijuana is so great that we will tax it at ten times the usual rate!

But people need it right away, so let's get the pharmacies stocked and ready to dispense! We can't do that because marijuana is not FDA approved and pharmacists cannot dispense it. It will have to be sold at a separate specially licensed dispensary by a non-medically trained clerk hired off the street.

But at least there will be dispensaries nearby for everyone who needs to get their prescriptions filled! No, the law only allows Alabama's 67 counties and 5 million residents to have just 37 licensed locations.

But if someone needs it, then just go where it is, get it, and bring it to them. Maybe not. The law says that in order to be able to administer it you must be approved by the Cannabis Commission as a registered caregiver, otherwise someone will have to come to your house to give your child their "medicine."

So let's get this straight: despite the absolute assurance that medical marijuana is a much needed thing for the citizens of the great state of Ala-

bama, the Republican supermajority has decided to make government bigger, limit the growth of a private-sector business, tax it heavily, violate basic rights in enforcing it, invade the privacy of your home to administer it, and do so in a way that is in violation of Federal law and could get a pharmacist fired.

Added to all of this morass is the knowledge that the Cannabis Commission has been mired in lawsuits. Multiple suits have been filed claiming that there has been partisanship and a lack of transparency in the licensing process. A new lawsuit in recent week just resulted in the commission's chairman resigning from his position for allegedly double dipping on state compensation.

What's the real reason for doing all of this? Recent studies show that the industry is peaking now with \$13.8 billion in sales in 2022 alone. States like Alabama have a chance to push that market share up by a projected 21% growth by 2030. This is a cash cow but they don't want it grown in your backyard. There is no money in that.

Let's pretend for a minute that marijuana is FDA approved for use on medicinal grounds. It's not, but we can pretend. There are studies that indicate that marijuana is helpful to ease pain, calm seizure disorders, and add calm to an anxious mind.

There are also competing

studies that question its effects and the societal impacts it brings. Recent studies indicate that legalization and decriminalization of marijuana has resulted in a three-fold increase in marijuana poisoning. Focusing on children alone reveals poisoning episodes increasing at four-and-a-half times year over year. It is also still off limits to our military, and law enforcement are going to need to see your papers.

The Alabama Cannabis Commission is exactly what you get when Big Government, Pot and Dr. Frankenstein walk into a bar together.

*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 send an email with your name and contact information to [Commentary@1819News.com](mailto:Commentary@1819News.com).*





## Slinkard On Success

# Learn How To Win At 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)*



I grew up in small-town America where if you were a loser, you knew it. It was in a time period on the cusp of handing out trophies for no apparent reason other than being afraid someone might have their feelings hurt. I grew up playing sports, and I remember watching in agony as the other team received their trophy for being the best of the best! I remember being envious of the trophy they would be taking home as I left empty-handed. This feeling of missing out made me want to work that much harder in the offseason to train and improve my own skillset. Yet, we live in a society today that is quick to hand out participation awards...so no one gets their feelings hurt.

We are teaching kids today that just showing up and not being the best is worthy enough to receive a piece of paper telling how great you were because you participated. I do not know whether to chuckle or maniacally cry when I think about the future generations of weak sissies we are raising. We are teaching our boys to be more feminine and teaching our girls to be more masculine. We are teaching boys that masculinity is a bad trait to have while applauding masculinity in girls. We are teaching girls that femininity is a bad trait to have while applauding femininity in boys. We have hijacked the mentality which made the United States of America the greatest country known to man.

We need to understand that

life will not always be easy, and we will not always get our way. Participation trophies are for losers, and we need to teach our kids that losing is not fun. To achieve success in life, every child on the face of the planet needs to be taught that they will need to work hard for the success they want. No one is going to just give them their dream home, their dream car, etc.; yet too many parents are teaching their kids not to worry about the messes they (the kids) make because their parents will clean it up for them.

We are teaching these kids that no matter the outcome, they are winners in life, when in reality they are far from winning at times. I am all about positive thinking, but we have many people who are beyond positive, and they have become delusional by making everyone feel more like winners and less like losers. These children who go about life thinking they are winners will eventually have to face the harsh reality that they

need to give more effort if they are going to achieve success. Instead of increasing their actions, they buckle because they do not know how to handle the pressures of life. Their entire life they have been lied to because people told them they were winners when in fact, they were losers.

How do we overcome this? We must first start being honest with ourselves and our children. We can no longer lie to our loved ones and pretend they are doing

a good job when in actuality they are not measuring up. We are too worried about hurting their feelings when all we are doing is prolonging the hurt until they are older, and life smacks them right in the face.

What is the world going to be like in the next fifteen to twenty years when these participation award recipients find out that life does not give out imaginary awards for lackluster results? We have to instill

competitiveness in our children and our grandchildren. We cannot wait. They need to be taught to be self-motivating; goal-oriented individuals who are able to self-sustain for their own good. Parents, please allow your children to learn from youthful mistakes; you do not always have to swoop in to save the day for them. Believe me, if you keep doing it, then your children are going to continue to rely on you well past the age you intended.

I write this article because we need to work on the mindset of tomorrow's leaders. A failure to do so not only hinders ourselves but more importantly limits the ability of our children to become great leaders. People complain about the direction we are headed, but who is to blame? We enable this destructive behavior when we should be teaching our youth that participating does not make you worthy of a trophy, no matter how special you think you should feel.





Clean, Green And Beautiful

# Composting: *Reducing Waste*

by Claire Tribble - Executive Director, Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful

As you drive down roads throughout the county, you can see something that seems to be an issue for A LOT of people -- their garbage cans appear to be overflowing. Of course, we are going to beg you to RECYCLE all your plastic, aluminum, steel cans, cardboard, and paper first, but there is something else that you can do without leaving your yard. Composting.

So, what is composting? Very simply put, composting is the natural process of recycling organic matter into a rich fertilizer. Organic matter includes things like fruits and vegetables as well as their peelings, eggshells, coffee grounds, tea bags, leaves, grass clippings, etc. If you are lucky



enough to know someone with horses or cows, ask for a bucket or two of manure; I'm sure they have plenty. Now that you have some great organic matter to recycle, I guess you need to know what to do with it.

Compost bins can be purchased at many different

places, but you can always make your own and save a few dollars. They can be as simple or as complex as you want them to be. Bottom line is, you need a pile that can be somewhat retained and contained. I started mine with a layer of leaves and horse manure. Then I added

eggshells, coffee grounds, fruit and vegetable peelings and pieces, as I used them. I added layers of leaves and old soil as I went. Every few days, I turn it with a pitchfork. This stirs up bugs, bacteria, and fungi to promote decomposition. Watering down your pile every few days helps keep everything stirred up as well. And not to mislead you, but this is a process, it isn't instant.

So, what are the benefits of composting? Compost improves soil health and prevents erosion. When it's ready, compost looks like garden soil. It is extremely rich in nutrients, such as phosphorus, nitrogen, and potassium. According to studies, compost increases the water retention capacity of soil, resiliency, and productivity. This means that compost makes a great

fertilizer, saving you even more money! Just a little observation -- you often get a bunch of volunteer plants each spring that grow from the fruit and vegetable seeds that make their way into the pile every year.

Composting may not solve the problem of overflowing trash cans, but it will significantly cut down on waste. If you will take advantage of the new recycling program that the Limestone County Commission and Keri Chalmers have provided as well as composting, there is where you will start to see remedies. And we all want to be proud as we travel our streets and roads. Sounds like a win-win to me. Help the environment and save money doing it.

## ***KALB UPCOMING EVENTS***

***September 9***

***Come see our booth at SuperHero Day i  
n Big Spring Park!***

***September 16***

***World Cleanup Day***

***Let us support you in litter cleanups!  
Call, email, or stop in for details!***

***September 30***

***FREE Shred Day at Athens State,  
including medication take back, electronic recycling --  
computers, tablets, phones, flat screen and plasma  
TVs only! (This will be strictly enforced).***

***October 7***

***The Wacky Quacky Ducky Derby  
Adopt your ducks for a chance to win a wide variety of  
prizes from CASH to gift cards to overnight stays!***



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## Cooking with Anna

# Roar Like A Polar Bear

by Anna Hamilton

*In the very early morning, when my husband and I leave to go to the gym, we pass by a local business with their display window bright from the spotlight shining on a huge, taxidermized polar bear. Now, if we lived in the Alaskan tundra this might not be an unusual sight, but we, however, live in a small town in North Alabama.*

*Without fail, I growl at my husband when we pass by the polar bear. No matter what we are talking about, I stop and growl before we continue the conversation. I asked him one day if he thought I was a weirdo for growling like a polar bear, he looked at me and smiled and simply said, "Don't ever grow up."*

*I recently read a quote by author Elizabeth Gilbert, "Don't ever be ashamed of loving the strange things that make your weird little heart happy." As silly as*

*it sounds, my weird little heart loves growling like a polar bear. Is it silly? Absolutely! Is it weird? Oh, yeah! Is it fun? You bet it is!*

*In Matthew 18, Jesus' disciples were wanting to know who was the greatest in Heaven. Jesus simply called a little child over and said to them, "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me." Matthew 18: 3-5*

*Little children are full of imagination and wonder. They trust fully, love without limits, and are able to be themselves without fear of being called weird*

*continued on page 23*

# Summer Vegetable Chowder

## Ingredients:

4 ears of corn  
1 yellow potato  
1 carrot  
1 zucchini  
2 cups spinach, chopped  
½ yellow onion, diced  
3 Tbsp. butter  
3 Tbsp. flour  
4 cups vegetable broth  
2 cups milk  
Salt and pepper to taste



## Directions:

*Carefully cut the corn off of each ear. Chop all of the vegetables into small, bite-size pieces.*

*In a large pot, over medium heat, melt butter. Add onion and sauté for a minute. Add flour and mix well. Cook for about 5 minutes.*

*Add broth, corn, potato, and carrot. Bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer for 15 minutes.*

*Add zucchini, spinach, and milk. Simmer for an additional 5-10 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.*



# PlayAction Sports

## Summer Wrap-Up, Fall Start-Up

by Tim Lambert

Tune in for the PlayAction Sports Update, three times each weekday on 1080 AM WKAC. Visit us online at [www.pasnetwork.net](http://www.pasnetwork.net)! email: [playactionsports@hotmail.com](mailto:playactionsports@hotmail.com)



During All-Star Week competitions in July, Tanner's Skyler Townsend scored 12 points for the boys' North All-Star basketball team in a last second 81-79 loss to the South. East Limestone's Briana Proudfoot and Tanner's Christian Cruz were part of North All-Star soccer teams that swept the South. The girls got a 3-2 victory; Christian allowed only one goal in the second half as the boys were 6-3 winners. Lindsay Lane's Chloe Ruble finished with the lowest point total of 12.5 in the girls' division as the North girls' golf team also swept the South; Athens Bible School's Luke Davis along with Westbrook Christian's Eli Edge won the boys' #1 competition. James Clemens' Bhavya Chalasani won the girls' #3 tennis match.

Athens High's Adalyn Pike and Lindsay Lane grad Chloe Ruble won the Alabama Golf Association's 16th Women's State Four Ball championship with a 14-under par to score a total 130.

Congratulations to James Clemens' Nate Jennings and Athens High's JayShon Riddle for their football commitments to South Alabama.

Ardmore grad Lee Hodges shot a 67 in the final round of the recent 3M Open for his first PGA victory and set tournament records with a 260 and a seven-stroke win. Hodges led each previous round with a 63, 64, and 66.

Athens' Kathy Harper set a new state age-group record in the female 70 - 74 division at the recent Twilight

5K at UAH. Bryant Moss of Athens finished second in the male 60 - 64 age group.

Preseason volleyball rankings were announced: Lindsay Lane starts out at number 4 in Class 2A while ABS is 3rd in 1A.

High school football kicks off its regular season next week. Here are our local schedules:

### Ardmore

- 08/25 West Limestone
- 09/01 at West Morgan
- 09/08 Brewer
- 09/15 at Lawrence County
- 09/29 at Elkmont
- 10/06 at Fairview
- 10/13 West Point
- 10/20 at Russellville
- 10/27 East Limestone
- 11/03 Central-Florence

### Athens

- 08/24 at East Limestone
- 09/01 Bob Jones
- 09/08 Decatur
- 09/15 at Muscle Shoals

- 09/22 Mae Jemison
- 10/06 at Cullman
- 10/13 at Hartselle
- 10/20 Columbia
- 10/27 at Fort Payne
- 11/03 Russellville

### Clements

- 08/25 at Holly Pond
- 09/01 West Limestone
- 09/08 Lauderdale County
- 09/15 Mars Hill
- 09/22 at Colbert Heights
- 09/29 DAR
- 10/06 Marion County
- 10/13 at Elkmont
- 10/20 Colbert County
- 10/27 at Phil Campbell

### East Limestone

- 08/24 Athens
- 09/01 at Central-Florence
- 09/08 Fairview
- 09/15 at Brewer
- 09/22 Russellville
- 09/29 at West Limestone
- 10/13 at Lawrence County
- 10/20 West Point
- 10/27 at Ardmore

- 11/03 Mae Jemison
- Elkmont

- 08/24 at Sheffield
- 09/01 Brindlee Mountain
- 09/08 Phil Campbell
- 09/15 at Lauderdale County
- 09/22 at Mars Hill
- 09/29 Ardmore
- 10/06 Colbert Heights
- 10/13 Clements
- 10/27 at Colbert County
- 11/03 at St. John Paul II

### James Clemens

- 08/25 at Gardendale
- 08/31 Mountain Brook
- 09/08 at Bob Jones
- 09/15 Huntsville
- 09/22 at Florence
- 09/29 Muscle Shoals
- 10/06 Sparkman
- 10/13 at Austin
- 10/20 Albertville
- 10/26 at Grissom

### Tanner

- 08/24 at Lauderdale County
- 08/31 at Mae Jemison

- 09/08 Tharptown
- 09/15 at Falkville
- 09/22 Sheffield
- 09/29 Columbia
- 10/06 at Hatton
- 10/13 at Lexington
- 10/20 at Red Bay
- 10/27 Booneville, MS

### West Limestone

- 08/25 at Ardmore
- 09/01 at Clements
- 09/08 at Deshler
- 09/15 Brooks
- 09/22 at East Lawrence
- 09/29 East Limestone
- 10/06 at Wilson
- 10/13 West Morgan
- 10/20 Central-Florence
- 10/27 Rogers

### Odds and ends

The 15th Annual James Kenemer Golf Tournament will be August 19 at Joe Wheeler. Entry fee is \$400 per team or \$100 per individual. For more information, go to the West Limestone Athletic Booster Club Facebook page.

Calhoun Athletics will host their first Family Fun Day on August 19 from 1 till 5 pm. There will be music, food trucks, and your chance to meet Warhawk athletes. Go to the Calhoun Community College Athletics Facebook page for more information.

James Clemens will host the Coach Mongero-Winning Baseball Dirt Bro Tour August 26-27. Cost is \$295 per camper, with a 50-camper limit. See the James Clemens Baseball Facebook page for more information.



The Tanner boys' soccer team receive their state championship rings (courtesy photo)

# What Is CrossFit Athens?

by Nick Niedzwiecki



CrossFit Athens is a community of like-minded individuals, striving to achieve one common goal -- live a longer, happier, healthier life. Everyone who walks through the door has a different vision of what this looks like. For some, this means being able to play with their children, anytime, anywhere, no matter what. Others may be looking to learn the basics of exercise and nutrition, and the list goes on. We are made up of individuals from all walks of life -- children, teenagers, young adults, parents, grandparents and all the in-betweens. Our common goal is what brings us together and makes CrossFit Athens different from any other fitness program you have ever tried. Our coaching staff will guide you every step of the way on your health and fitness journey.

How does CrossFit Athens work?

Our program consists of daily classes. Every class is led by one of our CrossFit instructors who will be there to guide you through the daily class at the appropriate stimulus for the day. Our workout will change every day; we will never do the same workout day to day or week to week. This is what keeps our classes exciting and fun!

What is in a CrossFit workout?

The workouts will consist of functional movements that will help you in your daily life. Squats, deadlifts, presses overhead, pulling yourself up, getting down on the floor and standing back up, these are just a few of the things that we will work on throughout our program. We do gymnastics with progressions that



are accessible to all. We bike, run, swim, jump, and row. We use intensity customized to the individual.

CrossFit works for everyone. Have no fear, all of the movements we do in our classes will be modified to meet you where you are in your fitness journey. Squats are as simple as gaining the ability to stand up from a sitting position. We use deadlifts every time we

bend down to pick something up off the floor. These movements are essential to life; knowing how to properly do these will aid you in living a longer life, no matter your current age and fitness level.

CrossFit can be used to accomplish any goal, from improved health to better performance. CrossFit is so effective it may feel like magic, but in truth, it's a formula

— a formula that works. It's the formula for everything we do, from forging elite fitness to preventing and reversing chronic disease. It's the inputs that give us the outcomes, the results that have revolutionized an industry

and changed millions of lives for the better.

We would love for you to come try a FREE week of CrossFit classes to see exactly how our program will change your life!

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# Bridal By Morgan: *An Experience Designed To Elevate*

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

*continued from page 1*

citement we felt on August 8 at the Chamber of Commerce ribbon-cutting ceremony when her “dream business” was officially launched.

Kate is the second of four daughters, with the youngest still in high school. Kate, her two married sisters, and her sister-in-law all found that they had to go out of town to find the wedding dress of their dreams, and they would have greatly preferred to have had the opportunity to

“shop local.” Each was successful in finding the perfect gown, and had a “dress shopping day to remember,” yet Kate wanted to make that a possibility for brides in Athens.

Kate got her idea of what she hopes will be a legacy of love from two sources; a bridal shop in North Alabama that has been in business for more than 50 years, and her Grandfather Morgan. The bridal shop where Kate found her own bridal gown is in a small town, and brides-to-be travel from all over

because of the sublime service and excellent experience that has been touted largely by word-of-mouth for a half-century. Her grandfather, Ronnie Morgan, had a mercantile store in a small town in Georgia, and it was the place you went to for everything you needed -- groceries, gas, or a bite to eat. His dream was for it to be an enduring “staple” in a small town. Morgan Grocery is still going today, and is the embodiment of “shop local.”

Kate desired to meet a need and do it well, and she wanted to serve our community. She calls what she does “building space for the bride.” The process begins with an online interview that has the bride tell a bit about herself, the ceremony/reception venue, and her

wedding dress dreams. Approximate measurements and style elements are included, and perhaps pictures from and links to other sources of dresses that have already caught the bride’s attention. Also included in the online interview is the budget range for the dress, and generally dresses at Bridal by Morgan range from \$1,200 to \$3,000. Kate then sets to work to find selections that will meet the bride’s specifications. However, once the bride et al arrive for the appointment she does something that just never happens in a bridal boutique: she lets the bride and the bride alone peruse dresses that are on the rack. “Ahead of time, I put clips on dresses that mark what seems to be what she’s looking for, and also let her look at each one on

the rack just in case she finds something that is a different style that she likes better. In most bridal boutiques, the staff does all the selecting, and the bride just has to choose from that selection,” Kate told me. The entire group in attendance for the appointment is offered sparkling water, lemonade, or champagne when they arrive, and then the selection process begins.

Bridal by Morgan exhibits an uncommon commitment to “protect and elevate the bride,” Kate explained. The bride goes into a large, private dressing room, receives any needed assistance from Kate with the gown, gets the first glimpse of herself in the mirror, and then goes out to where the rest of the group is seated.



*Kate Smith, owner of Bridal by Morgan is committed to providing an unforgettable shopping experience for brides, family and friends*





She stands on a comfortable dais while her gown is draped to the floor as needed by the design of the dress. Having a protocol where the bride leads and Kate protects the experience greatly lowers the chances of digs and disparaging remarks that upon occasion leave the bride in tears and ruins the day.

“We want everyone to slow down, be intentional, and enjoy the experience,” Kate told me. Because true boutiques are owned and run by local people, there is not the kind of “hurry-up-choose-your-dress-and-be-done-with-it” atmosphere that can appear in a big-box store.

Kate has some favorite lines of gowns, as well as her own private line. From Ukraine, there is a label called Yedyna, and is pronounced “Yuh DEEN ah,” which means “You are the only one.” Also from Ukraine is a line

known as Pollardi, along with one out of California called Enzoani. Kate’s own line is called “Wonderfully Made,” which is a reference to her strong faith as a Christian and the truth that we are indeed “wonderfully made” by our Creator. We chatted about the Scripture in Revelation that talks about the

bride having “made herself ready,” and how there is no other day in the life of a woman here on earth that more closely approximates that promise of a most glorious day.

Bridal by Morgan also carries bridal accessories and jewelry, and soon will be adding gowns for the mother of the bride as well as

flower girls. The veils and belts come from a label called Jaxie, and there is wedding jewelry by Olive and Piper. “You don’t have to be a bride to purchase the jewelry,” Kate told me with a smile. They also carry what Kate calls “honeymoon attire” for the wedding night.

I asked Kate to show me pictures from her

own wedding, which was in November of 2020. Kate and her bridesmaids were truly tastefully and beautifully dressed with a stunning result. She said with a tender, grateful smile, “I had the dream wedding, and I have a dream business.”

If this kind of attentive care is what you seek for your wedding day, then make an appointment today with Bridal by Morgan, and let them craft an unforgettable experience for you.

## ***Bridal by Morgan***

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# Grow In Integrity

by Eric Betts

*Udemy Instructor in Religion, Leadership and Ethics*



Beyond skill, talent, expertise, intuition, experience, and vision, integrity is the one indispensable quality that is needed to truly fulfill one's leadership potential. One can have a gift of inspiring and working well with others, but nothing is more demoralizing, disheartening, and deflating than to observe lapses in integrity by leaders. Those who function under the supervision of an unethical leader often lose faith in them and the organization, and begin to second guess requests and assignments. People notice what appear to be small lapses in integrity, and instinctively respond to ensure they are not being misled or cheated. When integrity is lacking, chemistry and togetherness suffers.

An unethical decision may seem to preserve the company from failure in the short-term but the long-term effects can be destructive. Integrity is always on life support if a decision has to be covered up with words such as "don't tell," in conversations about fellow team members. It is also difficult to keep people around with a high view of integrity when such lapses occur. According to leadership expert John Maxwell, "Integrity is when what you think, say, and do are all in alignment." In other words, integrity is cultivated when a leader refuses to say the opposite of what they think,

or do the opposite of what they say. Sadly, these are habits and traits that too many leaders have fallen into. Consequently, they fail to maximize their potential and get the best out of their more junior team members and associates. Some junior team members will continue to be loyal and follow a leader who lacks integrity, but the cream of the crop is constantly making mental notes, which creates an environment of suspicion and apathy.

Because so many, due to their own personal growth levels, have many blind spots when it comes to high-level integrity, it must be a constant study. There are so many details on the subject of integrity that are unintentionally overlooked. SIGMA Assessment Systems, which is a consultant company

providing talent assessments, succession planning, executive coaching, and leadership consulting services to help organizations hire and develop strong performers, have concluded the following when it comes to integrity:

"Integrity also involves following company policies, appropriately using company time and resources, and respecting one's colleagues' assessments...Employees serving under high-integrity leaders demonstrate more positive workplace behaviors (e.g., helping others during busy periods) and fewer negative workplace behaviors (e.g., falsely calling in sick)."

Based upon these studies, leaders with integrity inspire confidence and helpfulness among team members. Part of having

a heart of integrity means keeping promises and commitments and being honest about your limitations.

Integrity is not limited to following company rules to the letter, but also abiding by the intent and spirit behind the rules. It is possible to obey the literal reading of the words in the rules and find a loophole which violates the intent behind the rule. The intent behind most rules are universal values that are often unspoken and unwritten, which are fairness, mutual concern for common humanity, and mutual respect.

Finally, integrity means avoiding partiality when it comes to enforcement of rules and holding people accountable. Hold yourself accountable and acknowledge when bad choices have been made.

When it comes to correcting, criticizing, or enforcing disciplinary procedures, make sure it is the same treatment whether it is a senior official, salaried person, or a wage earner. Additionally, when executing discipline or reward, integrity means that there will be equal application across cultures, ethnic groups, genders, and people you don't particularly like.

Integrity builds faith in the mission of the organization and will lead to more positive outcomes than when integrity is lacking. It is also a mistake to assume that one has mastered what integrity looks like, when reality suggests that it is a constant work in progress. Keep learning, growing, and building.



# Know Your Designer's Brand

by Jackie Warner

**Career Development Facilitator**  
**"Impact, Engage, Grow" Community Matters**



The ups and downs of physical health and wellness definitely form a roller coaster for me. I recently started back walking to help with my physical and mental wellbeing. One day at a time, I am telling myself.

I already had some walking shoes from the time before when I started back walking last year, so no need to purchase any new ones. Over the last few months, I have started hearing the screams from my feet saying, "No more. It is time for some new shoes!" If you know me, I am always looking for a deal, so off to the clearance racks I go to build out my fitness wardrobe. Pretty smart, right? When you are on a budget, especially with our world today, it is important to find the good deals. New shoes are ready! I was happy with my purchase as it did not break the bank for my workout armor to tackle the treadmill and elliptical, so I think.

What about the armor we put on to tackle and defend ourselves daily? You know it is what we choose to wear each day - do we find it on the clearance rack or are we intentional about ensuring it is our Designer's brand? As a vessel for Christ, do we pour into ourselves the ingredients to stand strong in God's required armor - the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the Gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit?



We will not find any elements of this armor on the clearance racks or in the deal bins. They only come from our chosen walk with Christ, endurance, and desire to read, understand, and live God's Word. The cost is priceless for your originally designed wardrobe, which will allow you to stand against the wiles of the devil.

*Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil./For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places./Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand./Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;/And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel*

*of peace;/Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked./ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the*

*word of God* Ephesians 6:11-17

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Jackie Warner, Community Outreach Specialist

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## SHOD?

by Deb Kitchenmaster

Played any horseshoes lately? Horseshoes is a game enjoyed by many people, world leaders included. The classic outdoor game has a rich history – reaching back through thousands of years. Legend states that horseshoes originated back in ancient Rome. Roman soldiers would collect used horseshoes discarded by their officers and pitch them toward their target. The Duke of Wellington allegedly referred to the Americans as “pitchers of horse hardware,” following the American Revolution. This insult led to the games recognition in American society and has remained popular ever since.

So, why would horses be shod? What does that

mean? Horse shoeing is a process by which a horse-shoe is fitted to a horse’s foot (hoof) in order to protect it from wear and injury. Horseshoes are typically made of metal but can also be made of rubber. This process of fitting and nailing a horse-shoe to a horse’s foot is an ancient one and has been used since the Middle Ages.

The first record of horse-shoeing was in the 5th century. It is believed that this practice was used in ancient Greece, Rome, and Egypt. It was used to protect horses’ hooves from the rocky terrain they traveled on. In the Middle Ages (1000-1600 AD), nails were used to secure the shoe to the horse’s hoof. In the late 1700s, farriers in America began



to use the “clenched” nail method of horse shoeing which is still in use today.

The farrier, a skilled crafts person with a sound knowledge of both the theory and practice of the craft, capable of shoeing all types of equine feet (whether normal or defective), skilled in making shoes to suit all types of work and working conditions, begins with a time of preparation BEFORE shoeing a horse. Today, horse shoeing is a specialized skill and farriers must be trained and certified in order to practice it. In preparation for a horse to be shod, the farrier first will clean the hoof using a hoof pick. The hoof is then trimmed to level the soles and then the hoof is rasped with a file to smooth down the edges of the hoof and keep it flat. The farrier will also check the hooves for any signs of injury or disease. Once the horse’s feet are prepared, the next step is to measure and fit the horse-

shoes. The farrier will select the correct size and style of shoe. The shoes are nailed to the horse’s feet. The nails used to secure the shoes typically are made of steel, but can also be made of aluminum or copper. The finishing touch is filing any rough edges on the shoes, as well as adding any extra protection, such as pads or hoof dressings. The farrier will check the horse’s feet to make sure that the shoes are secure and comfortable. Shoes can help a horse perform better because they provide traction and help distribute the horse’s weight. Shoes can bring an improvement in the horse’s stride that you will feel as you are on its back.

We are instructed to be awake to the fact that we are in a war. It’s not a war against flesh and blood but it is a spiritual war against the principalities, against the powers, against world leaders of this present darkness, against the

spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. We are told to take the whole armor of God so we can stand! The word SHOD is right there in Ephesians 6:15, “And having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.” Think about it, shod your feet, with what? Yes, the good news of peace. Why peace? The angels announced, “Peace on earth, goodwill toward humanity,” at Jesus’ birth. And in the book of Romans one will read these words: “The God of Peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly.” Say “YES” to your feet being shod with peace, “YES” to being lead forth with peace, “YES” to standing in peace, and “YES” to crushing lies, fears, and deception, under our very own feet.

*Your NEIGHbor,  
Deb Kitchenmaster*

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# Habits Of Highly Insecure People II

by Lisa Philippart,  
Licensed Professional Counselor



**“Think about all that you are, instead of all that you are not.”**  
- Unknown

In my last article, we began to look at some of the habits that keep you feeling insecure. Let's continue by addressing one of the worst offenders when it comes to the reasons we stay feeling insecure: reassurance-seeking. When you habitually ask for reassurance, you're really telling yourself that you can't handle things on your own. Tell yourself that often enough, and you're going to feel like you can't handle anything. Obviously, getting reassurance feels good in the moment. For example, when you are feeling anxious or indecisive, outsourcing your decision to someone else relieves you of the anxiety. The real problem with chronic reassurance-seeking is what it does to your confidence in the long term. If you are always using other people to feel better, you're never learning how to help yourself feel better. My suggestion is to train yourself to tolerate short-term anxiety. How do you do that? I'll address that another time!

This may sound strange, but being excessively positive can quickly lead to a lot of emotional insecurity. And the reason is pretty straight-

forward: Excessive positivity is just denial in fancy clothes. Now, there's nothing wrong with striving to be cheerful and optimistic. In fact, I think both of those are pretty healthy characteristics. But excessive positivity is different in that it means using positivity as a way to distract yourself from something that is truly bad, negative, or painful. Here's an example: Your best friend calls you to chat and asks how things are going. Even though you just had a horrible fight with your partner and are feeling awful, you decide to say, "Yeah, things are good!" The problem is that there really is a problem in your life, and by insisting on being positive, you're putting off dealing with it. In this case, avoiding some genuine social support and compassion from your best friend!

I know you are thinking...just because you're feeling bad and there's a problem, you don't have to talk about it. But it's very easy to get into the habit of always avoiding negative things and insisting on putting on a façade of positivity. Excessive positivity can be a mask, and it's really hard to trust and be intimate with those who wear masks all the time. If you want to feel less insecure, experiment in small ways with being willing to express some



negativity sometimes. You might just find that you feel better for it in the end and, more importantly, establish deeper, more sincere connections to those you love and trust.

And lastly, I would like to address passive-aggressive communication. Passive-aggressive communication is when you want something but are too afraid of conflict to ask for it directly. This is the worst form of communication because it combines the fear of asking for what you want (passive) with the attempt to control other people (aggressive.) For example, routinely showing up late for work is often a form of passive-aggressiveness because you are trying to get what you want (more time for yourself) without taking responsi-

bility for it and avoiding criticism ("The traffic was awful!") But like so many of the habits in this article, being passive-aggressive only works in the short term. You may get what you want now, but others will get tired of it and stop playing your game altogether. Passive-aggressive people often end up resentful for not having the courage to be honest and direct with others. And being resentful is not very far from being insecure.

Insecurity isn't a life sentence. No matter what caused your insecurity in the first place, it's often the case that subtle habits are maintaining it now. If you can work to identify and eliminate these habits, confidence and self-worth can follow.

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

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## The Alternative Approach

# Remember Castor Oil?

by Roy Williams



Yes, this is your grandmother's castor oil. This particular type of organic castor oil is a specific type of vegetable oil that has been used for centuries and is making a huge comeback. It has many health benefits and topical uses, thanks to the inclusion of cold-pressed and hexane-free ricinoleic acid, which is the main healing element of castor oil but isn't found in many other substances. It is classified as an unsaturated omega-9 fatty acid that has been proven to do wonders for many areas of health.

Castor oil is added to many medications, skin-care products, and foods. It was used as a natural remedy in ancient Egypt and many other civilizations and societies. Today it is still used for relief from many common ailments and is fast becoming well known as an anti-aging supplement and skin softening and anti-wrinkle agent, and it is much less expensive than many commercial brands. Castor oil also helps moisturize the skin by putting a protective layer over the surface, which helps hold moisture in and other organisms out.

Organic golden castor oil can help increase the production of lymphocytes, which are critical to proper circulation throughout the body. Like many fatty acids, this particular oil works by increasing lymph flow throughout the body, which is so important in our lethargic society. As the lymph system is cleaned, many toxins are released, which may reduce swollen lymph nodes lowering many of the disorders associated with a sluggish lymphatic system.

Over time, circulation will improve throughout the body by addressing the root cause and drawing toxins from the body. Fatty acids are also known for improving circulation to the brain supporting overall brain and heart health. With the number of dementia and Alzheimer's diagnoses increasing, using this all-natural, totally safe supplement only makes sense.

Organic golden castor oil is also a well-known anti-inflammatory that can be used to relieve joint pain, due to inflammation. It can be used topically to treat painful joints all over the body, for both osteo- and rheumatoid arthritis. For those with



psoriatic arthritis, the results have proven to be particularly beneficial. Of course, anyone struggling with joint pain should try this safe, natural remedy. There is the slight possibility of an allergic skin reaction for people with sensitive skin. For this reason, you may choose to try a small amount on a small section of skin and wait an hour to see if your body responds or reacts.

Castor oil is used as a healing agent for skin disorders and wounds. The protective layer it produces can stop the drying out of the affected areas to help decrease scabbing and scarring. It also stimulates new tissue growth, allowing a barrier to be formed more quickly than if the wound was left exposed or untreated. It can be applied directly to the skin, which is why it is used in many ointments and wound healing aids. It can be applied directly on the skin around the eyes to help reduce wrinkles by softening crow's feet.

One of the most common uses of organic castor oil over the years is its ability to reduce or eliminate



constipation. This amazing oil works internally as a stimulant, increasing the flexibility of the muscles that move stool from the colon. In this capacity, the oil seems to work very quickly and be a great temporary way to alleviate constipation. When taken orally, it is absorbed into the intestines, where it reacts with the bodily chemicals to produce the needed effect without doing any damage to the body. Many studies and thousands of testimonials, over the last decades, prove the effectiveness of castor oil for the elimination system. It is, however, not recommended as a long term use for constipation.

Common uses include natural support for liver detox, lymphatic drain-

age, colon cleansing, deep sleep, stress reduction, constipation and bloating, inflammation, leaky gut, hormonal imbalance, nausea, diarrhea, vomiting and abdominal cramping, and almost any skin condition, including age reduction. It is no wonder that in a world seeming to recommend a drug with side-effects for everything, something as safe and effective as golden castor oil is coming back in style.

Try some today by going to Herbs and More in Athens or NHC Herbs in Killen. You will be glad you did.

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Cooking with Anna (continued from page 13)

## *Roar Like A Polar Bear*

by Anna Hamilton

*or strange. They don't worry about the mundane parts of their lives; they are able to fully understand unconditional love. One of my favorite musicians, Brandi Carlile, sums this up beautifully in her song, Stay Gentle. It speaks of how we are to be like little children. My favorite line in the song is from the bridge, "The Kingdom of Heaven belongs to a boy, while his worry belongs to a man."*

*This week, I urge you to stay gentle, be like a child, let your little weird heart love the strange things. Society expects us to grow up way too soon; don't listen to them! Roar like a polar bear.*

*If you are like me, summer vegetables are filling up your fridge. I hate wasting food, so this summer vegetable chowder is a wonderful way to use up all of those delicious veggies. This also freezes extremely well and will give you a little taste of summer during the cold winter months. This dish is vegetarian but feel free to add shredded chicken, cooked ground beef, or chopped ham for*



*a hearty dish. The soup pairs perfectly with fresh rolls, cornbread, or simple crackers. I hope your family enjoys it as much as mine does.*

*"But Jesus said, Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these." Matthew 19:14*

# Tennessee Valley Spotlight

**Mondays at 10am  
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# *The Singing Revolution Of Estonia*

by Mae Lewis

Estonia is a tiny, culturally rich country on the Baltic Sea. They have one of the most extensive collections of folk music in the world -- celebrated with choral festivals and choirs all over the country. Choral music is central to Estonian culture... so imagine what happened when they weren't allowed to sing!

In the aftermath of World War I, Estonia became independent from Russia. But then shortly afterward, they found themselves occupied by Nazi Germany during World War II, only to be swept back into the Soviet Empire as the direction of the war changed.

Under the new Soviet regime, the Estonians began to see their culture slowly wiped out. Stalin quickly began an ethnic suppression and cultural replacement. It became illegal to fly the Estonian flag or to express any hint of nationalism. Their music was forbidden. No choirs, no festivals, no patriotic songs. Their language was no longer taught in the schools, and only Russian was allowed to be spoken. Estonians were being shipped out, and Russians were being shipped in. By the early 1980s, Russians had replaced 40% of the Estonian population.

In the 1950s, some Estonians fought back using

guerrilla tactics, but they were quickly suppressed by the Soviets. The Estonians did not know what to do. They couldn't stand up to the great armies of the Soviet Union! Their culture was slowly being erased, but they were determined to maintain their cultural identity. They had no weapons, but they created their own power, remarkably, by banding together and singing.

With the restructuring that took place when Gorbachev took power in 1985, the Estonians finally had a chance to let their voices be heard. They began engaging in mass demonstrations, gathering in town squares, and defiantly singing the tra-

ditional patriotic songs of Estonia which had been forbidden for years. These demonstrations became the cornerstone of the resistance.

The movement began to gain strength, and even though there was great division in the nationalist movement, the Estonians were committed to holding onto their culture.

There were three very different Nationalist movements in Estonia: The conservatives, the radicals, and the middle. They each had a different idea for how the demonstrations should go, which led to conflict. The cautious leaders feared Soviet confrontation, and those in the middle tried to work with the Communist party. Those who were more brazen saw working with the communists as a betrayal -- but ultimately, they all recognized the futility of trying to challenge the Soviet Union. The three groups agreed that above all, the demonstrations had to be nonviolent. Their unity -- and their cultural survival -- was more important than their individual ideologies. They agreed to cooperate with one another for the demonstrations and by 1988, festivals were happening every month with thousands of people in traditional dress, singing the songs of their culture, and filling their hearts with hope and unity.

As their national and cultural identity was revived, the festivals grew, and in September of 1988, a massive song festival in the capital of Tallinn attracted 300,000 people -- a third of the entire population! Many people were dressed in traditional Estonian dress that had been passed down for generations.

The power of this moment was undeniable, and politicians -- of both Estonia and the Soviet Union -- began to openly call for the country's independence.

By the fall of 1988, a petition was signed by 860,000 Estonians disavowing the Soviet Union and declaring themselves citizens of the Republic of Estonia.

A year later, the neighboring countries of Latvia and Lithuania joined their cause, and over 2 million people gathered in a show of solidarity, forming a human "Baltic Chain" that ran the length of all three countries -- 400 miles of hands linked together and voices singing.

Many feared a bloodbath, but the Estonians kept singing. When Moscow tried a show of strength and sent tanks into the capital, the Estonians surrounded the radio and television stations, forming a human shield to prevent these critical assets from being captured. They continued to sing. The following day, the Russian government formally recognized the independence of Estonia and the other Baltic States.

This "Singing Revolution" lasted for five years. In the end, it was successful: they won their freedom peacefully and nonviolently. One million Estonians stood up to 150 million Russians -- a remarkable achievement!

Since then, Estonia has made great economic strides. They have joined the EU and NATO, and maintained a parliamentary democracy. Every five years, Estonians celebrate their historic revolution with a singing festival -- 25,000 singers and 100,000 spectators at the Song Festival Grounds.





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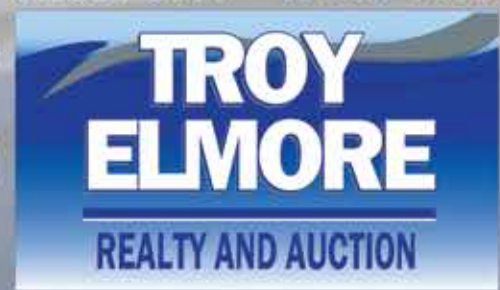
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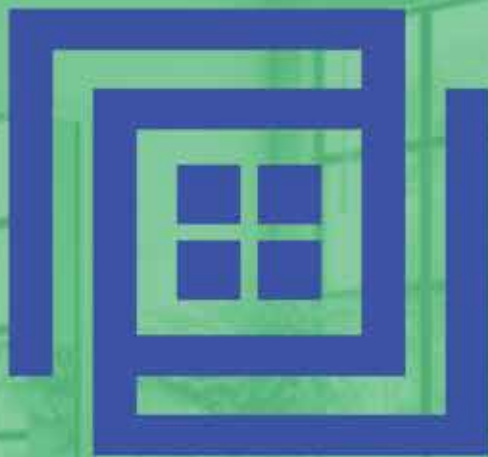
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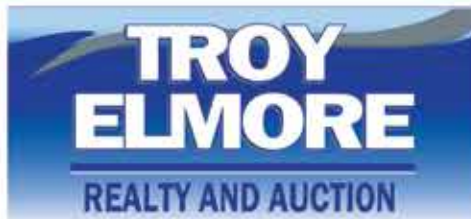
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