

February 3 - February 16, 2023

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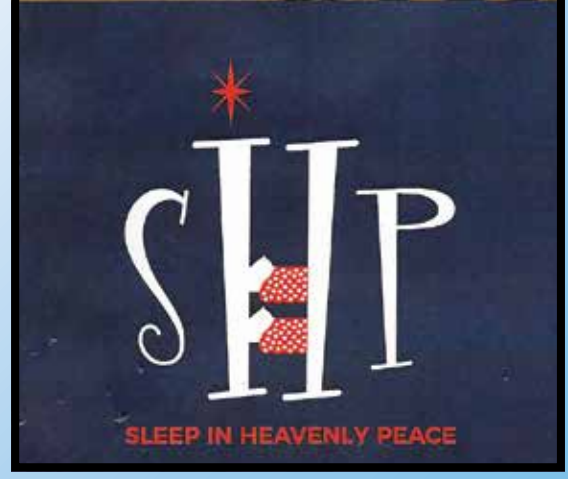
Sleep In Heavenly Peace: "Because Every Child Deserves A Safe Place To Sleep"

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

A few months back I heard a moving interview on *Right Side Radio* about an organization called Sleep In Heavenly Peace. When I say moving, I mean that there were moments when no one in the studio could speak, and as a listener that day, I was having to swallow hard and blink fast in order to be a safe driver.

Sleep In Heavenly Peace, or SHP as it is often called, began in 2012 in Idaho as a "fluke" or at the very least, an attempt to teach some life lessons and gratitude to some siblings who were whining about what they "didn't get for Christmas." Luke Mickleson, a youth pastor, took his kids out into the garage and said, "Let's make something for

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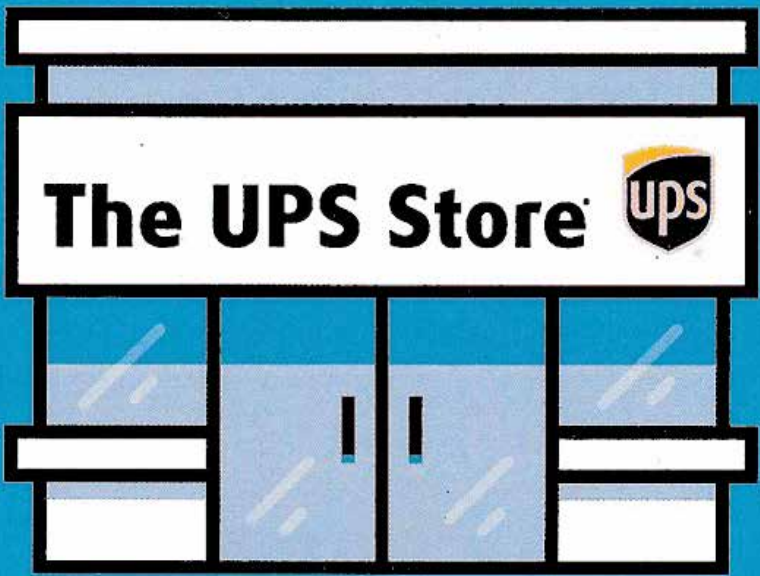
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Publisher / Editor
Ali Turner

Copy Editor
Yvonne Dempsey

Graphic Design
Jonathan Hamilton

Web Design
Teddy Wolcott

Contributing Writers

- D. A. Slinkard
- Lisa Philippart
- Anna Hamilton
- Joel Allen
- Dixie Bell
- Lynne Hart
- Jerry Barksdale
- Tina Morrison
- Eric Betts
- Phil Williams
- Blake Williams

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Publisher's Point

**Azuza Street's
William Seymour**

On April 18, 1906, an earthquake and fire leveled much of San Francisco, leaving 700 people dead. On the same day, a different type of earthquake and fire hit in Los Angeles, and it dealt out, in my view, what became the kill shot to Jim Crow. It was the Azuza Street Revival, and one of its leaders was a one-eyed African-American Louisiana preacher by the name of William Seymour. "Azuza Street" as it became known, swept, gripped, and changed the fabric of American Christianity and that of the rest of the planet. It was "noised abroad" all over our country and around the world, and nearly everything you have ever read about in the Good Book happened there. Most importantly, it was one of the strongest statements on record that God is indeed "no respecter of persons."

Whenever there is a true revival, there is always a corresponding social issue that gets exposed and addressed. For example, the 2nd Great Awakening under Charles Finney dealt with slavery. As it happened, I attended Oberlin College, which was founded by Finney. On campus there was still a dormitory that had a trap door in the floor that hid slaves during the days of the Underground Railroad. The Welsh revival under Evan Roberts dealt with alcoholism. The Hebrides revival after WWII tackled alcoholism, post-

war apathy, depression, and a general personal lack of purpose. Jesus People went after drugs and more. Azuza Street, I think it can be argued, proved categorically that people of every color were made to worship God and love each other in the same room, whether humble or lavish.

William Seymour was born and raised in Louisiana in 1870, in desperate post-war poverty. When he went to God's Bible School & College in Houston, because of the Jim Crow laws in place, he had to sit outside the room while he learned. Clearly his love for God and determination to do what God asked him to do was a whole lot stronger than the hypocrisy with which he was dealing, and his love for people no matter how he was treated was something for which Seymour was known all his life. Seymour was called to Los Angeles to pastor a small church, and to say that Azuza Street occurred in humble surroundings is an understatement. At the end of the day, nobody cared; they just wanted God.

Seymour worked with two other men who happened to be White, and together they changed history. Frank Bartleman was a Los Angeles-based journalist and holiness preacher who had been affected by the Welsh Revival. He had written Evan Roberts, the leader of the Welsh revival, and



asked for prayer that God would save California. I think that was and is still a timely request. The other man was Charles Parham, who was also a Holiness preacher and revivalist out of Kansas.

As remarkable as that outpouring was outwardly, the men were bound together with such love and mutual respect that they had an agreement with each other that I find utterly mind-boggling. They gave each other permission, if, in the middle of the service they felt that what was being preached or ministered wasn't quite spot-on with what the Holy Spirit wanted to accomplish, they could say, "Sit down, brother, you are not anointed!" Can you imagine that happen-

ing anywhere in any church today? More pointedly, can you imagine it happening interchangeably between one Black man and two White men in 1906? Now, that was an ego-shattering earthquake with a resulting fire of love that demolished de-humanizing hatred, and it was clearly not the result of social engineering. So, people get ready, it's fixin' to come through again like a freight train, and not a moment too soon.

Ali Elizabeth Turner

Ali Elizabeth Turner
Athens Now
Information & Inspiration
256-468-9425
ali@athensnowal.com
Website:
www.athensnowal.com



The Four Chaplains, 80 Years Later

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



February 23, 2023, marks the 80th anniversary of one of the most selfless and sacrificial stories to come out of WWII. People who know of “The 4 Chaplains” simply refer to it as that, and Congress passed a resolution that February 23 of every year should be observed as “Four Chap-

lains Day.” Who were they, and what did they do? They laid down their lives so that others could live, and they did it, by the accounts of those who saw the story unfold, with a serene joy that was undoing.

These men were of the kind of unscripted, uncontrived diversity that is the hallmark of Amer-

ican religious freedom. One was Dutch Reformed, one was Methodist, one was Roman Catholic, and one was Jewish. Their names were Clark Poling, George Fox, John Washington and Alexander Goode. They ranged in age from 31 to 43, and got their degrees from schools like Harvard,

Yale, Boston University, Moody Bible Institute, Hope College, the University of Cincinnati, Hebrew Union College, Johns Hopkins University, and more. They all had multiple degrees, and they were in the prime of life.

They were sailing on the SS Dorchester, and there were 900 souls on board bound for Greenland. They were in the North Atlantic, in a particularly treacherous part of the journey known as “Tornado Alley,” due to the infestation of U-boats. They were torpedoed by a German sub, and many died instantly. In the 20 minutes that it took from when the torpedo hit until the ship sank, the four chaplains moved through and amongst the men, guiding them to lifeboats, helping calm, soothe, and encourage. They handed out life-jackets and when there were no more left, each gave up his own, sometimes to men whom they almost had to force to take them. Then, the final moments came, and the eyewitness accounts all agree that the last thing they saw was the four men linking arms, standing tall with heads bowed in prayer as they plunged into a frigid grave made of water. One survivor later said, “It was the finest thing I have seen or hope to see this side of Heaven.”

“No casting director in Hollywood could have selected a better cast of characters than these

four to portray the basic unity of the American people,” said Monsignor John McNamara, former chief of chaplains of the U.S. Navy, discussing the chaplains’ religious diversity at a ceremony commemorating their bravery that was held in Belgium.

After their death, a decision was made to honor them with what is called the Four Chaplains medal. In 1960, just a few months before President Dwight D. Eisenhower left office, Congress decided to honor their next of kin with a medal that had a very special designation that had to be reconciled to the concept of the Medal of Honor. In order to receive the classically conceived medal of honor, the honoree had to have been armed and engaged in technical combat. Chaplains do not carry weapons when they serve in combat. They do have chaplains’ assistants, whose job is to protect them, but they themselves do not. The designation had to be changed in order for the “Four Chaplains Medal” to have the same weight as the Congressional Medal of Honor for incomparable bravery. No one else has ever been awarded this medal, and I pray that no one ever has to. These were the men of the Greatest Generation, and those of us 80 years later who understand what that means can only simply and humbly say, “Thank you.”



Alexander Goode



George Fox



Clark Poling



John Washington

New Project: Athens Farmers Market at Doug Gates Park

by Blake Williams

ATHENS, Ala. – Athens Main Street announced today [Feb. 1, 2023] plans to embark on a project to revitalize Limestone County’s farmers market located at 409 W. Green Street in downtown Athens.

The historic site is central to downtown Athens in a diverse socioeconomic area and plays a major role in supporting local producers, ranchers, prepared food vendors, and artisans. This project will improve the overall attractiveness of the site with a freshly painted pavilion, new roof, and improved landscaping with additional trees and indigenous plants. Plans also include cleanup of an overgrown drainage basin in the middle of the site.

Plans are to include local art, colorful sunshades, and refreshed painted surfaces to the site which will add vibrancy. New multi-use areas will provide several varied usages for youth educational areas and community special events.

Recently, the Limestone County Commission added handicap accessible restrooms, new vendors tables, large fans, and upgraded the electrical in the market pavilion. The farmers market site is the property of the Limestone County Commission. In 2022, the commission approved additional funds to Athens Main Street to assume additional responsibilities for the weekly market and the Saturday Market.

“We appreciate the confidence the Limestone County Commission has shown our organization by supporting us in this renovation effort,” Athens Main Street Execu-

tive Director Tere Richardson said. “The time has come to improve and revitalize the pavilion and grounds.”

According to Richardson, the pavilion has served producers and patrons for more than 40 years.

“With the important infrastructure improvements done by the Limestone County Commission and the partnership to assist with in-kind improvements, this project will be able to address both the aesthetics of the pavilion grounds while creating an inviting vibrant multi-use site,” Richardson said.

Another major component of the renovation is the entertainment pavilion. This addition increases the capacity of the farmers market and addresses the waiting list for vendors. Additionally, these improvements will attract other organizations to utilize the site for a wide range of community events.

PROJECT FUNDING/ NAMING

Athens Main Street has raised more than \$70,000 of the estimated \$130,000 needed to complete the project, with \$12,000 from donations in memory of Doug Gates, a driving force on the Athens Main Street Board, a lifelong community servant, and fierce proponent of downtown.

With the approval of the Limestone County Commission, the park will be named the Athens Farmers Market at Doug Gates Park. According to Richardson, this park highlights Gates’ passion for downtown: restoring historic properties, fostering of small businesses, improving parks



and trails, and supporting Athens Main Street’s mission.

Limestone County Commission is thrilled to support this renovation project.

“As Athens Main Street continues to foster a center of activity for the community at the farmers market, the major renovation will be beneficial to all involved,” Limestone County Commission Chairman Collin Daly said. “I look forward to seeing the market continue to grow and flourish while supporting local farm-

ers and producers.”

Daly says the Limestone County Commission is fully supportive of this renovation.

TIMELINE

The construction is a phased implementation with the refresh of the existing pavilion completed by May for the opening of 2023 market season. Much of the landscaping and artwork will be ongoing. The Cast Products Entertainment Pavilion is slated to open in May 2024 with the remaining construction com-

pleted by December 2024.

“This project will be implemented in much the same way we successfully implemented the Merchants Alley project, through teamwork and detailed planning,” Athens Main Street Board President Shane Black said. “A team of dedicated volunteers will plan, fundraise, and implement the design.”

Black says this group believes in the mission of revitalization and historic preservation and have donated their time and expertise.

Calendar of Events

Houston Memorial Library and Museum Book Sale February 4

10:00am - 4:00pm. The Houston Memorial Library and Museum, 101 North Houston Street in Athens, hosts a book sale daily. The book sale, museum and library are open Monday-Friday and the first Saturday of the month from 10am-4pm.

Chocolate Walk February 4

1:00pm - 6:00pm. Do you love all things chocolate? Do you love great places to shop and dine? If so, you will not want to miss Athens Main Street's popular Chocolate Walk. The self-guided event will start at the Athens Main Street office (107 N Jefferson St), where walkers will pick up their pre-paid ticket(s), a map to participating businesses, and their bag to collect their chocolate goodies. Visit all the businesses and be entered to win \$25 "Love Bucks" that can be redeemed at any of the downtown businesses. Participating businesses will also have special sweet deals on the day of the event. Only 300 tickets will be sold for this popular event. Tickets will go on sale Wednesday, January 18, 2023, at Noon. They can ONLY be purchased online through Eventbrite. Tickets are \$8 (plus processing fee)—limit 5 tickets per purchase. Last year, tickets sold out within 48 hours of release. Get yours early!

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Amvets Monthly Breakfast - Free For Veterans February 11

7am - 9:30am. Every month on the 2nd Saturday at 7am, go to the Alabama Amvets Post 21 at 22769 Black Road for a delicious breakfast open to the public. Only \$6 and Veterans eat FREE.

Rooted in Grace February 12

Berea Baptist Church will host Rooted in Grace (local Pulaski TN gospel bluegrass group) on Sunday night, February 12 at 6PM. Free admission. Location - 16779 Lucas Ferry Rd, Athens, AL 35611. Contact Gary Wilson 256-497-9763.

Master Gardeners Present The Value of Curb Appeal February 14

Gettin' Dirty at the Library - The Limestone County Master Gardeners are offering a free presentation on "The Value of Curb Appeal", February 14th from 11am to 12 noon at the Athens-Limestone Public Library. Chris McNatt is our guest speaker.

Athens Forever Gala February 25

The Athens State University Foundation cordially invites you to join us for the ATHENS FOREVER GALA at Carter Gymnasium on the historic campus. This celebration will commemorate the achievements of the ATHENS FOREVER Bicentennial Campaign! Cocktails & Hors d'oeuvres: 5:30 PM Dinner: 6:30 PM After-dinner entertainment by the Lamont Landers Band. \$100 per guest. Corporate Tables Available. Seats are still available, but space is limited — reserve your tickets today!

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

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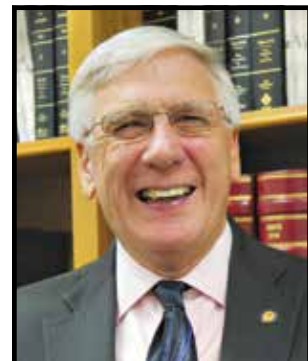
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What Makes Ronnie Roll

Super School, Super Bowl, Super Athens!

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



Much had happened over the weekend, with a “joyful lot” to come. Mayor Ronnie had a twinkle in his eye as he told about the ribbon-cutting for the brand-new Athens Elementary School, which had taken place the day before. “You should have seen the kids; they were so excited,” he said. For those who are new to Athens, the site of the school has long been associated with education. From 1910 to 1920, Greene University School was a prep school for boys, and it was the alma mater of famed Athens judge, David L. Rosenau. (See page 19.) The school closed its doors in 1920. The Athens Board of Education purchased it, added to it, and used it until it was torn down and another school was built. That version of Athens Elementary served the city

from the 1950s until 2020, and construction on the new school began. Mayor Ronnie told me one of the best comments from the kids: “It smells good and it's pretty.” More importantly, it is state-of-the-art in every regard, and is on track to take care of our ongoing growth spurt as a city and county. The former school could educate 400 students, and the new one can handle 600. “The kids, parents, teachers, all came together, and it was a great turnout,” the mayor said.

Black History Month is going to be kicked off at 5 p.m. on Saturday, February 4, at the Beasley Center with a reception and a keynote address by Athens native and ELHS graduate, Chauncy Glover. Chauncy has gone on to have an Emmy Award-



Reed Blankenship



Quez Watkins

winning career as a news anchor, and currently is with the ABC affiliate in Houston. One of the things for which we all appreciate Mr. Glover is how he grabbed a team and came back to Athens to help in the aftermath of the 2011 tornadoes. They brought supplies, water, and helped to rebuild a church. Chauncy, like the mayor, is super-invested

in helping kids become leaders, and it should be an inspiring evening. The title of Chauncy's address at 6 p.m. will be, *The Next Generation; What Are They Doing?* The Beasley Center is located at 202 West Bryan Street in Athens.

City Councilman Chris Seibert happened to send a text,

while the mayor and I were chatting, about the fact that for the first time in the history of the Super Bowl, we have not one but two native Athens-Limestone County NFL players who are going to be a part of the annual and epic pigskin battle. Reed Blankenship and Quez Watkins both play for the Philadelphia Eagles, who will be facing off against the Kansas City Chiefs. Quez went to Athens High School, and Reed went to West Limestone. The mayor looked at me with all seriousness and said, “We will be cheering for Philadelphia,” and then he smiled. “Roger that,” I returned.

“We finally have a date set for the State of the City address, and it's March 7. It will be a breakfast rather than a lunch, and more than anything, we want to orient people to who we are,” said the mayor. While there may be some numbers crunched courtesy of Power Point, the more important point is to remind or perhaps introduce people to what makes Athens so...well...super! There was just one thing left to do, and that was pray. So, we did and once again it was time for Ronnie to roll.



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For Our Kids

by Phil Williams



and to enjoy the salacious nature of having a trusted adult to help us rebel against our own family? You don't remember doing that? Neither do I. None of us do. Because it's wrong, and any teacher who tried that back in the day would find themselves out on their ear.

But I'm sure that you recall those halcyon days of learning when you sat in class and learned about the fundamentals of biology, anatomy, and physiology. But even though the course content said one thing, you were also told by your teachers that despite the science, it was all bunk and in reality the textbooks were wrong because any male could be a female and vice versa. You don't remember that? Neither do I. None of us do. And any teacher who tried that would be run out of town on a rail.

Okay, but remember when we were taught in English class to use the proper pronouns based upon the standards of use for the English language, and then in our next class, we had another teacher tell us

that we can misappropriate pronouns for our own satisfaction and that she can be used for a he, and that they/ them can be used on a singular person? Yeah, that didn't happen in my school, and I guarantee it didn't happen in yours either. But it happens far too often now. Any teacher back in the day who attempted that tripe would be sent packing forthwith.

Okay, maybe those things didn't happen, but I feel sure that you recall those days when you were taught that these United States that won two world wars, abolished slavery, put a man on the moon, invented the modern industrial age, and more really didn't come to being in 1776. Our country started in 1619 with slavery and this great nation is systemically racist and not worth saving. Was that in your history books? It was not in mine either, and any teacher who tried to foist that kind of dogma on our kids would have been looking for work the next day.

Every single day we are catching more glimpses into

the activist factories that some schools have become. Too often a new social media post or TikTok video shows us schools where every value, belief, patriotic verve, and faith-based position is laid bare and vacated by activists who pose as teachers.

I will pause here and say that I know and believe that the vast majority of educators are not at all on board with the kind of educational indoctrination that I just described. Most classrooms are filled with wonderful people who have a calling to truly love and educate our kids. But too many of them are also aware of off-putting activism that happens in the neighboring classroom but they are reticent to get involved.

Whether for fear or complacency, too many real teachers choose silence in the face of the foolishness being perpetrated by their coworkers in a vain attempt to avoid the shouts and aspersions that liberals often employ. In my view, good teachers need to take back their profession from the crazies who are trying to co-opt it and are making a mockery of the profession of education. I guarantee that parents will rally for a teacher who brings common sense back to these uncommon times.

Parents will appreciate it if a teacher or superintendent calls out a classroom being set up as a so-called safe space for kids to change their names, pronouns, and allegedly their genders, or the classroom down the hall where they are taught to despise the flag of the United States, or deny scientific reason by attempting to tell students that men can get pregnant, that. Good teachers will have parents and

concerned citizens getting their back.

But that means we've got to keep up our end of the bargain. Gone are the days where we can just turn a blind eye. Gone are the days where we can just shrug our shoulders and say, "That's not my kid, so it's not my fight." Progressive liberals want our kids, and if it's not your kid today, then it will be your grandchild tomorrow, or that sweet neighbor's kid who plays in the yard, or the little minions that run in the hallways of your church, play on the playground on the corner, and get too loud in the grocery store. Our communities must rally for our kids.

This nation is filled with good teachers, educators who value children and truly value real education, and who will take a stand for our kids. And when they do, it is our mission to have their back.

It's for our kids.

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. 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.





Slinkard On Success

Build The Future You Desire

by D. A. Slinkard

D.A. Slinkard would love your feedback. You can contact him at da.slinkard@gmail.com

How are your goals coming for the year? Are you on track or are you like many Americans who have already become derailed by this time of the year? The year has just begun, yet too many people will begin giving up on what they started out wanting to achieve. We need to change our mindset now to properly build the future we desire to have.

We still have time to improve upon our year, whether it has been good or bad. I think we all need to realize that sometimes we do not have it as bad as what we think. Typically, in any given situation, especially one that we would consider to be a bad situation, there is someone out there who would trade their circumstances for ours. This is very humbling to think about, especially when we start going down the "woe-is-me" road.

I think it is imperative to revisit something I have touched upon before, and it concerns goal setting. An issue we have in our country is that too many people do not know how to set goals, and they do not know how to follow through to see their goals fulfilled. If the school system could teach more on this and less on common core, we might see a different society. I think there needs to be more focus on how to set goals and how people can follow up to achieve success.

Too often we have peo-

ple who know what they want to accomplish, but they have no concept of how they are going to get there. Can you imagine if a homebuilder was going to set out to build a home but did not have a plan? The house plans are a blueprint, and your life goals are the blueprints for the life you want. The blueprints of a building are crucial for the builder to make sure every measurement is correct, and too often we fail to realize we are the builder of our lives.

How many people leave their life up to chance? How many people go about their day without any intention of bettering themselves? If we started each day with a blueprint for our life and what the necessary steps were to measure success, what change would we see? In the beginning, I would suspect we would see very little success, and this may surprise you. We live in a society that expects results instantly, and with momentous change. We decide to change a certain aspect of our life, but when it takes a little longer than we expected, we get frustrated and give up.



If we had only kept on the same track and not given up too early, we would have found the success we desired. Instead, though, when we are met with a little resistance, we just tuck our tail, roll over, and give up. I am proposing that we make the conscious decision to begin each day with a game plan for what success looks like in your life. Your definition of success — what you want to accomplish, what you want to achieve — is going to be different than mine. However, if you truly take the time to put the blueprint together for your life, eventually you are going to see posi-

tive change in your life.

For instance, look at all the construction being done around us. I know there have been times that I kind of scratch my head while thinking, "What are they doing?" What we do not always see is the big picture. These construction companies have the blueprint; they know what needs to be constructed, what tasks need to be done, and then they work on doing it. We need to do the exact thing in our lives. We are going to face obstacles, just like how construction workers must overcome the rain. In your life, there will be

rainy days, but you cannot let the negatives stop you.

Goal setting is important, but just as important is brainstorming and asking yourself what you are wanting to achieve. What is the desired result going to look like for you? This is your goal, but then you must think through the steps needed to obtain your goal. This is the blueprint of your life. Next is taking action to build the life you want. It all starts with a plan for what you want to accomplish, and then you must commit to follow through the design blueprints of your desired life.



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Clean, Green And Beautiful

Helping Wildlife Through Cold Winter Months

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

As I write this article, the weather is cold and rainy. I'd like to be at home snuggled under a blanket with my dog, Ivy, drinking a cup of hot chocolate.

Before we get too comfortable in our warm homes, let's take a few minutes to think about what we can do to make the winter months more comfortable for local wildlife.

So much of our land is being developed right now, pushing wildlife out of areas they once called home, leaving them to search for food, water, and shelter outside of their normal habitat. I have always felt a strong tie to the natural world, and agree with Peter Coyote's statement, "Habitat for wildlife is continually shrinking - I can at least provide a way station."

You will find some ideas below on how to provide a "way station" for local wildlife right in your own back yard.

FOOD

- Fill your feeders with

seeds that will provide high energy, such as black oil sunflower seeds.

- Woodpeckers, blue jays, and other birds love suet. It provides the fats needed to help keep the birds warm. Be careful not to leave them out too long when the weather is above freezing as they can spoil. See the recipe provided for suet. Instructions to create a suet log can be found at www.ourrecipesforsuccess.com/suet-plug-bird-feeder. Fill the suet log, hang, then enjoy watching the birds dine on your creation!

- If you prefer to go natural, consider hanging dried sunflower heads for the birds to pick out the seeds. Hang strings of popcorn and cranberries where the animals and birds can reach them.

- Prepare for next winter by planting shrubs that produce berries, nuts, and seeds. The animals and birds will thank you for the healthy winter meals.

WATER

**SUET
RECIPE**

½ cup crunchy peanut butter
½ cup lard
1 cup quick cook oats, uncooked
1 cup cornmeal
½ cup flour
5 tablespoons sugar

Melt peanut butter and lard together. Cool. Add remaining ingredients and place in holes on suet log. Hang outside for the birds to enjoy! Place remaining suet in the refrigerator until needed.

Instructions to make a suet log can be found at www.ourrecipesforsuccess.com/suet-plug-bird-feeder.

- Provide a birdbath or two. Place one on the ground for animals that can't climb.

- Heat your birdbath if you are able. A warm bath is always nice!

- If you have the inclination, build a pond! Even a small one in your flower garden will be a welcomed addition.

- Keep your birdbaths and ponds clean.

SHELTER

Providing shelter doesn't have to be difficult or expensive.

- Create a brush pile. Find a corner of your yard and pile leaves as the base. Add sticks and twigs and other brush. Small animals will find safety and warmth.

- Covering your flower garden with leaves provides shelter to small animals and insects.

- Add bird houses, hollow logs, old drain tiles, rock piles, and other creative



shelters to your yard.

- Create a warm hideaway by cutting a hole in the side of a Styrofoam cooler. Add some straw (NOT hay or blankets) to add some warmth and tape the lid closed to prevent air leaks. Tuck the cooler in a protected area.

I find my greatest peace when I connect with nature, and I have a huge

love for animals. How true are the words of Cecil Frances Alexander: "All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small, all things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all."

Let's be good stewards and care for God's creatures. Each has a purpose on this Earth.



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Cooking with Anna

Exhausted And Overwhelmed

by Anna Hamilton

January 2023 is over, and I am still unsure where it went. This past month has been one full of stress and anxiety. I have felt constantly exhausted and overwhelmed. Between my husband and myself we have had three family members in the hospital, one of whom had a very serious surgery. We have been spread between north and central Alabama, keeping our families going as well as our business going. Exhausted and overwhelmed is an understatement.

My husband is a good example of how to properly handle stressful situations, I on the other hand need a full-blown intervention! Luckily, the word of God provides ways to handle stress and what to do when you are feeling overwhelmed. We are going to look at six things to remember when you feel overwhelmed. These six simple

steps have helped me so much this month and I hope they are able to help you as well.

Number 1: God has a plan for you! “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” (Jeremiah 29:11). When the plans you have completely fall through, don’t fret, God has plans for you better than you could ever imagine. I have major trouble with control. I am a true firstborn and love, I mean love, to make plans. In my mind, this month was not supposed to be this chaotic. It has been a struggle for me to let go of my strict plans and know that God has my life planned, and His plans will provide me the future I need. Knowing that God will take care of me has been such a comfort.

Number 2: God will make your “storm” calm. “That day

continued on page 23

Greek Chicken Chili

Ingredients:

- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- ½ cup chopped celery
- ¼ cup chopped onion
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 4.5 oz. can green chilis
- 2 15 oz. cans northern white beans
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 Tbsp. oregano
- 1 Tbsp. Greek seasoning
- 1 Tbsp. dill weed
- 4 oz. cream cheese
- 1 lb. chicken breast, cooked and chopped
- 2 cups chicken broth



Directions:

Place all ingredients in to a large stock pot and simmer until warm and ready to eat! Seriously, it’s

that easy! You can also place everything in a slow cooker and set on low for 4-6 hours. You can serve this soup with pita chips and feta cheese.

Shine A Light On Big Spring Park - Tourism's 2023 Events

by Tina Morrison, Tourism Athens



The Athens Limestone Tourism office has been diligently working for years to not only bring visitors and residents to Limestone County but to improve their quality of life. By hosting fun, family-friendly events which spotlight the many benefits of living in a small Southern town, we, like you, pride ourselves on making an impact in our industry.

We are excited to announce our events and experiences that will generate interest and attract tourists. Our 2023 Event Marketing Strategy is "Shine a Light on Big Spring Park." This marketing strategy will create a desire within people's minds for their vacation, and we'll gain the attention of tourists seeking the outdoor recreational experiences we offer. Furthermore, our marketing plan will convince our audience

that the perfect getaway any time of year is in Athens-Limestone County, AL.

Athens Big Spring Memorial Park, a gem in the heart of the city, is located just steps away from our Visitors Information Center and nestled between the Beaty Historic District and Athens State College District. It is surrounded by the city's oldest cemetery, the Athens-Limestone Chamber of Commerce, Keep Athens Limestone Beautiful headquarters, and the in-progress Scout House music venue. The groundwork has been laid to establish the park as the perfect location for many popular events like the Wacky Quacky Ducky Derby and the North Pole Stroll.

With all the amenities Athens Big Spring Memorial Park has, such as tennis courts, a covered pa-

vilion with picnic tables, restrooms, a pond with a fountain, sidewalks with benches, flower gardens, a grassy area, an ADA-accessible playground, historical markers, and one-of-a-kind metal sculpture artwork, this park in the heart of Athens is one of our own premiere, underutilized event locations. With a statewide focus on outdoor recreation, we are poised and ready to host these 2023 Tourism events in Athens Big Spring Park! We will release more details on these events soon, but for now please save these dates:

- March 11 - Roaring 20's Murder Mystery Dinner in the Tourism Meeting Room
- April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 - Saturday Historic Walking Tours
- May 7-13 - Nation-



al Tourism Week Open House

- May 12 - Singing in the Park - Summer Concert Series (1 of 3)
- June 9 - Singing in the Park - Summer Concert Series (2 of 3)
- July 14 - Singing in the Park - Summer Concert Series (3 of 3)
- September 9 - SUPER-HERO DAY!
- October 3, 5, 10, 12,

17, 19, 24, 26, 31 - Haunt Walks

• December 1-31 - North Pole Stroll

We are excited to host these events, but we need your help. Your company's tax-deductible sponsorships will help us host and market all these wonderful events, and it's the perfect way to get your company name and brand in front of residents, tourists, and future residents. Thank you for considering a sponsorship with the Athens-Limestone Tourism Association. We are hardworking, dedicated, and trustworthy professionals, and we appreciate your continued support to Athens, Limestone County, and our own Sweet Home Alabama. All sponsorship opportunities are first come-first served. Thank you for your time and please give us a call today to discuss your preferred event sponsorship. Teresa Todd and Tina Morrison ~ Your Tourism Dynamic Duo (256) 232-5411

Tina Morrison,
Event Coordinator
Extraordinaire

Athens-Limestone Tourism
Tina@VisitAthensAL.com
www.VisitAthensAL.com



Senior Fitness: *You May Have More Choices Than You Think*

courtesy BrandPoint content

(BPT) - Do you struggle with starting or maintaining a fitness routine? Don't worry, you're not alone. While most of us know that exercise is beneficial, fitness can be daunting, especially if you're over 65 and want to be sure that you work out in a way that is safe and effective. The good news? Physical activity is key to maintaining health and mobility as you age, and if you are 65 or older, the right Medicare Advantage Plan can provide tools and resources to help you get off the couch. If you just need a little motivation to reengage in your fitness and social routines or would like to start a new one, there are more choices than ever in exercise and wellness options.

Meeting seniors where they are

No matter your age, the ongoing pandemic has caused tremendous changes in our lives, including an increase in physical and mental health issues because of social isolation. Many seniors were understandably cautious due to a heightened health risk and experienced a greater disruption of trusted routines. More good news? We continue to see a return to our lifestyles and activities.

A recent nationwide poll by Tivity Health®, a leading provider of healthy lifestyle solutions, including Silver-

Sneakers®, the nation's leading community fitness program designed for older adults, shows that seniors no longer just work out at the gym or home, but enjoy the freedom to exercise how and where they please: indoors, outdoors, at the gym or community center, together or alone, in-person or virtual.

The poll also found that over the last few months, 78% of seniors have engaged in some type of physical activity, the highest proportion in months. More seniors are engaging in activities that bring them joy and can include a variety of movements - walking, household chores, gardening, hiking, etc. By identifying how the past few years have unsettled these daily routines, we can take steps to help older adults re-energize and re-engage in healthy activities that are enjoyable and encourage valuable social connections.

All you need is an iPhone

By joining forces with Apple Fitness+, the award-winning fitness and wellness service designed to be welcoming to all, SilverSneakers members in participating health plans will soon have access to Apple Fitness+, with workout types from Strength to Yoga, guided meditations, and more at no additional cost. Programming allows members



to exercise where they want, when they want with world-class workouts and fitness programming curated for a range of skill levels and interests.

"We know that fitness isn't one size fits all, especially with today's dynamic senior population," said Richard Ashworth, president and CEO of Tivity Health. "Seniors need a variety of options for physical activity that fit their lifestyles. Our partnership with Apple Fitness+ offers fitness for all skill levels, interests and goals including a wide array of content presented by expert instructors and celebrity guests."

Seniors can change the fitness industry

The fitness industry is changing. According to the International Council on Active Aging, a large and growing num-

ber of products and services are being developed to allow people to fully enjoy the gift of a longer life, which requires a foundation of good health. Exercise remains critical for seniors to maintain a healthy immune system that's able to fight off disease and consistent exercise can improve balance and strength and help prevent falls. One trend the pandemic saw was the rise of digital and virtual care, and it's here to stay. About one in four seniors are currently using a device to monitor their health and well-being, and the use of video calls to socially connect with friends and family has steadily increased in the past few months.

Fitness is more than a workout

"As a fitness instructor, I see firsthand how exercise can change a per-

son's life. But fitness is more than just a workout," said Jen Burgmeier, 2022 SilverSneakers Instructor of the Year. "I have SilverSneakers members who attend classes both in-person and virtually, and I love that they have a choice to work out when and where they want. One of my members recently said that 'the laughter and camaraderie coming through her computer screen makes you feel like you could conquer anything!' I get so much joy out of seeing them take meaningful steps to improve their health and watch them fall in love with SilverSneakers."

Don't wait until January to jump-start your fitness journey. For more information on how seniors can check their eligibility, visit silver-sneakers.com.

Sleep In Heavenly Peace: “Because Every Child Deserves A Safe Place To Sleep”

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

continued from page 1

someone else.” So, they did, posted it on Facebook, and were blown away by the response. They did another project the following Christmas, and then the whole idea began to almost take on a life of its own. It was named “Sleep In Heavenly Peace” in connection with the Christmas carol, *Silent Night*, and then it grew to where beds were being built year around. The name stuck, the chapters grew to be nationwide, and SHP is hoping to partner with more people in North Alabama to either start a chapter, do a build, or both. At present in Alabama there are chapters in Gadsden, Muscle Shoals, Hartselle, Oneonta, and Huntsville, with two in Birmingham.

The bunk beds are sturdy, and are made of 2x4s, 2x6s, and 1x4s for the slats that hold the mattress. Each bed is “made from scratch,” and they have the production process down to a science. When they sponsor a build, the public is invited, and you don’t have to have ANY experience. SHP gets nearly as much joy empowering people to give back as they do, making sure their mission is accomplished.

The “No Kid Sleeps On The Floor In Our Town” motto is the result of both research and experience as to how children are positively affected, and

it is SHP’s stated goal for every town, everywhere. “They sleep better, they are more secure, and have a sense of their own space and place,” said John Jackson of the Hartselle SHP chapter. He added, “You spend your night on the floor because you want to, not because you have to.” We met in Decatur for this interview, where he told me his own story of getting involved in SHP. “I was lying in bed in February of 2018, watching the Facebook video/program, *Return The Favor*, which was hosted by Mike Rowe, of *Dirty Jobs* fame,” he said. Mike was showcasing SHP, and John was simply heart struck. He and his family got involved, and they decided to start the Hartselle chapter. John flew to Twin Falls that March to get trained on how to start and run a chapter, and the rest is history.

John built a core team, and their first build in June of 2018 was for five beds. That build was in the Jackson’s front yard, and now they are such a well-oiled machine that they can produce 20 beds in 1.5 hours. They have an assembly line, and the SHP pros team up with the ones that have come to volunteer. They have storage units that have all the materials, the mattresses, and the bedding, and everything is brand new. SHP gets their requests from churches, DHR, ministries, CASA, school counselors, and occasionally from private



citizens. Big-box building supply stores, bedding stores, and small businesses donate lumber and bedding, and donors range from private individuals to corporations. Many of the builds come out of small groups, life groups, or just friends getting together and wanting to give back because they know from experience that it is indeed better to give than to receive.

Here is what SHP has to say about their history, mission, the results, and the joy of a completed build:

Founded in Kimberly, Idaho, in 2012, Sleep In Heavenly Peace is the ONLY charity providing hand-made bunk beds to children who don't have beds of their own. Not only do we deliver these





“Sometimes the kids just stay in their beds all day and play or read,” John said. “They have something solid that is just theirs, and it changes their lives,” he added. John, and just about every “tough guy” that is involved in SHP gets emotional when they talk about what they do, and they want to give you and/or your group the chance to get involved. You can be young, old, either gender, know something about building or know absolutely nothing at all. They will walk you through the entire process, and you will make friends and change lives. All that is necessary is a teachable spirit, a willing heart and mind, and a solid work ethic. If this sounds like you on

any level, contact Sleep In Heavenly Peace today and make it true in your town that “No kid sleeps on the floor in our town!” For more information, you can contact John Jackson at john.jackson@shpbeds.org, at 256-616-6784, on Facebook at @SHPHartselle, or online at SHPbeds.org

beds to kiddos in need, but we partner with organizations, churches, businesses and individuals like you to build them at events called Build Days.

With so many great charities providing clothing, meals and toys, little help goes to something as permanent as providing suitable beds and bedding. SHP is a group of volunteers dedicated to finding those young children living without the luxury of sleeping on a bed or even laying their heads on a pillow. Through the wonderful efforts of volunteers and generous donations, bunk beds are built, assembled and delivered to those children who are otherwise sleeping on couches, blankets or even floors. At SHP, we have a mission: NO KID SLEEPS ON THE FLOOR IN OUR TOWN!

John told me about a couple of memorable builds that had God’s fingerprints all over them.

Over in Muscle Shoals, John and his sister Amy Legg, who is a nurse, went to do the delivery and set up. The beds were for a four-year old girl and her brother who was 12. SHP always tries to have a woman present when they deliver and set up the beds. The little girl was wearing Minnie Mouse ears when

they arrived, and they just “happened” to have brought a bed-in-a-bag that was Minnie Mouse themed. The boy was talking about having trouble with his handwriting, and Amy lovingly teased him and said, “Well, you could be a doctor, because lots of times they don’t have very good handwriting.”

His reply? “I don’t want to be a doctor, I want to be a paleontologist.” The bedding that John had grabbed -- Jurassic Park from start to finish! What are the odds? And, more importantly, who gets more blessed? John would say that he and his team are the greatest recipients of the blessings.



Discipline Is Key

by Eric Betts

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

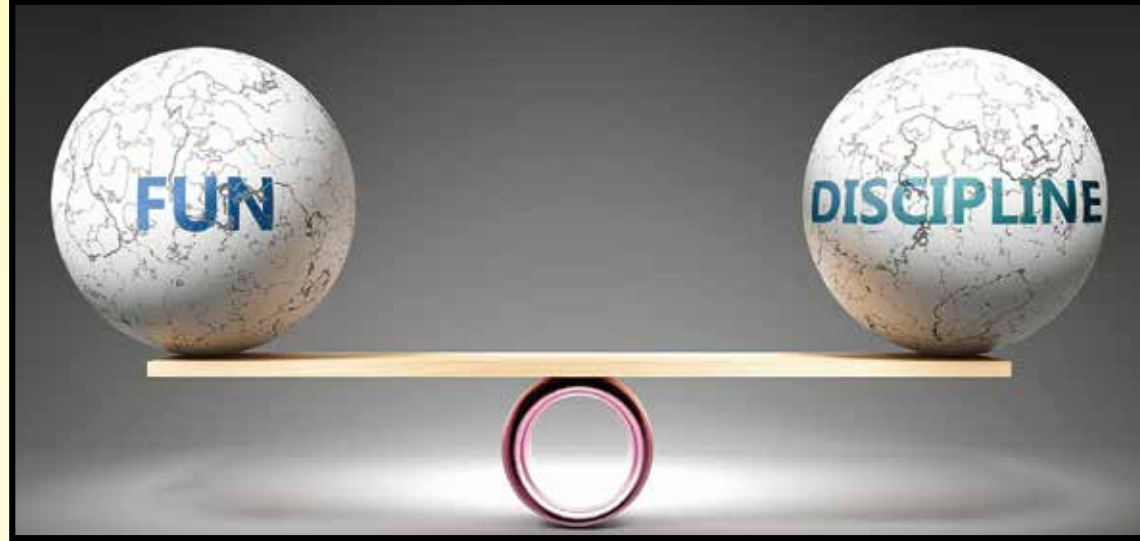


Discipline matters as we begin this new year in 2023. Many, now that January has passed, are already thinking about letting go of their resolutions. Many are discouraged because they were not able to keep their commitments and have already decided to revert back to their old habits.

One of the problems and mistakes that are made with when it comes to launching into a new beginning is that sometimes we can try to do too much too soon. Whenever I see others trying to better themselves, it always inspires me, but I always encourage them to start out with small commitments and work their way up. In other words, doing too much in the beginning often leads to despair and the urge to quit good habits before they form. You

may be trying to launch a new project, to read certain number of books, to begin an exercise or a dietary program. I want to encourage you to start off small and build momentum as you go. This is what creates discipline.

One area that I like to emphasize is adopting the two-minute rule. What do I mean by two-minute rule? For example, someone gets on an exercise program by trying to set aside two hours or even one hour for their workouts. What often happens after they begin the day-to-day workouts is that some days their schedules are more crowded than other days. What happens on those busy days is that they recognize that it takes them one hour to two hours to exercise, and they realize that they do not have enough time to



do that exercise. Sometimes, one may be mentally exhausted before the exercise and become overwhelmed by the thought of having to go through the two-hour routine. Therefore, because of the perceived burden or inconvenience, they forego the exercise for that day. Subsequently, the cycle continues for several more days and then sud-

denly they will go and entire week without exercising. The two-minute rule says that rather than committing to exercising for an hour to two hours a day to keep it to two minutes only. This helps the brain to not be overwhelmed by the amount of time that it thinks it would take to exercise. When the schedule is tighter, commit to doing just a two-minute

drill. Read perhaps one or two pages of that book. Rather than exercising for long durations, commit to about 20 calf raises.

When it comes to diet, start off with something simple such as adding a few more carrots to your plate or regular meal rather than preparing a big fancy healthy meal. Of course, over time the two-minute rule will seem too small, and rather than two minutes, you will feel driven to go beyond what you've accomplished in just two minutes. You'll begin to feel motivated to go for fifteen minutes, and then thirty minutes, and forty minutes, up to an hour. However, the two-minute rule trains the brain so that everything over two minutes is icing on the cake. Discipline doesn't happen overnight; it is painstakingly developed over long durations. Two minutes are what you committed to and this will create a pattern of discipline that will help you achieve your goals over the long haul. Modeling this discipline will inspire those you lead.

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Judge Rosenau – One Of A Kind

by Jerry R. Barksdale

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honors, he aced Stanford Law School. Quite an achievement.

Rosenau's grandfather, Isaac Rosenau, came to America from Germany, and served in the Confederate Army under Stonewall Jackson. After the Civil War, he and his brother, Samuel, settled in Athens and opened a merchandise business on the Northside of the square where Lucia's is currently located. Later, David Lee Rosenau, Sr. operated the business until it was sold to Sharp and Killen Department Store. Bruce Sherill, a gifted storyteller, who began his law practice in Athens following WWII, used to joke that Judge Rosenau went to work for a big-mule law firm in Birmingham after graduating from Stanford. Certainly, one of the best jobs in Alabama at the time. "His father mailed him a post card saying that the shoe salesman had quit and he needed to come home and work in the store," said Bruce, laughing. "Can you imagine a man quitting the best law firm in Alabama to sell shoes?" I can imagine him doing that. He didn't fit a pattern.

The judge also taught business law at Athens College. He walked to class followed by his faithful hound that slept at his feet. I never saw Rosenau drive anywhere until he and his wife, Jewell, moved to Brookwood, east of town. There was one exception: He drove to H & H Bar-B-Que Ranch on Nick Davis Road where he ordered one meal and requested two settings. He didn't waste his own money, and he watched taxpayers' money like a chicken hawk. Rosenau had a tiny office on the third floor of the courthouse, refused to hire a court reporter, had no secretary, and did his own typing on an antique manual typewriter. He married Jewell Hertzler, whose family were large landowners in the Mooresville-Belle Mina area, as were the pioneer Peebles family. The judge used to

joke "the Peebles speak only to the Hertzlers and the Hertzlers speak only to God."

Mrs. Leaton Martin, who lived around the corner from Rosenau, was delivering pies to a neighbor when they slid off the car seat. She reached to grab them, lost control, and crashed into the Rosenau breakfast room. Bam! Crash! The judge looked up and calmly said, "Well, good morning, Leaton. Come right in."

Rosenau's humor carried over to the courtroom. While trying a bootlegger case, attorney David Patton was hotly cross-examining Sheriff Clyde Ennis on the witness stand. Clyde didn't like David and didn't like him in his face. Clyde turned to Judge Rosenau on the bench. "Judge, how much will you fine me if I knock the hell outta David?" "Oh, about a dollar I guess," replied Rosenau.

The judge quoted Shakespeare in court. When he ruled against a lawyer, he often quoted a line from Hamlet's soliloquy: "Tis a consummation devoutly to be wished, Counselor." In other words, "You lose."

Rosenau frowned on men wearing long hair. If a defendant showed up in his court with long hair, the judge would suggest he get a haircut. James Doss's barber shop was located next to my law office on South Marion Street. One day a long-haired teenager climbed into Doss' chair and said Judge Rosenau told him to get his hair cut before he returned to court. The kid teared up. "Will you call Judge Rosenau and ask him not to make me cut my hair?" Doss called while the teenager sat in the chair. "Judge wants to know why you don't want it cut," Doss said to the boy. "Tell him... boo-hoo...that Jesus...boo-hoo...had long hair." Doss relayed the message. "Judge says when you start acting like Jesus you can wear long hair." Doss sheared the kid. Several



David L. Rosenau in 1918 while the Limestone County Courthouse was under construction

days later a man showed up at Doss's shop and asked if he was the barber who cut his son's hair. Doss reluctantly admitted that he was and waited for a fist. "Well, I'm his daddy and I want to thank you," he said and shook Doss' hand.

I represented a part-time preacher in a divorce case whose wife had gone astray. My client thought Rosenau should have punished her – with stoning, I suppose – and prophesied to the judge: "The sword of the Lord will strike you dead." Rosenau didn't hesitate. "Mister, you better be sure that your hand isn't on that sword."

Judge Rosenau was incorruptible. A big time politician in Montgomery was busted for a traffic offense in Limestone County. The governor's office called Rosenau to fix the ticket. "You tell the governor to run his office and I'll run mine," he said and hug up. He and Jewell had two daughters – Joy Graham and Jill Hicks – but the judge knew how to handle young males who appeared before him. "Young man, I'm going to give you a choice, would you rather spend time in jail or the service of your country?" If they enlisted he dismissed their case. He made good citizens out of many errant teenagers who later thanked him. A fellow

who had been caught shooting dice appeared before Rosenau and admitted he was guilty. Rosenau laid a pair of dice on the bench. "Do you feel lucky today?" he asked. The defendant eyed the dice. "I-I don't know, Judge. Why?" "I'll let you roll for the days you're going to spend in jail," the judge said. "I don't feel that lucky," the defendant replied.

When a young man merited jail time, but was in school or working, the judge had a solution. He would order him to report to jail on Friday and spend the weekend locked up. That was a death sentence. No weekend partying. He had another tactic that worked well with fast driving, beer drinking teenagers. "I know your father, let me call and see what he thinks." "No-no, Judge, don't do that."

Judge Rosenau retired in 1981, after 44 years on the bench, the longest serving judge in Limestone County. He died in 1998 at age 95. Jewell passed in 2003 at age 96.

The judge wouldn't fare well in today's political-correctness atmosphere. He'd offend someone before 9 a.m. If threatened by the ACLU, he'd most likely quote Shakespeare and suggest they get a haircut. Like I said, he was an original.



Judge David L. Rosenau, Limestone County Superior Court Judge, was an American original. Totally unique. I first met him in the fall of 1960 when I was a freshman in his political science class at Athens College. He opened the class with a question. "Who was the greatest governor of Alabama? The question will be on the final exam." We were stumped. "Gov. Bibb Graves," he said. "And you know why?" We were still stumped. "Because he appointed me judge of the Limestone County Court." That's how I was introduced to his wonderful sense of humor. Sure enough the question was on the final exam.

Rosenau's wit and penny-squeezing frugality was legendary. Bibb Graves, a Yale graduate and former WWI Army Officer, appointed Rosenau to the bench in 1937. When I returned to Athens to practice law in 1968, he had been on the bench for 31 years. Every bootlegger feared him, errant teenagers knew he would call their fathers, and out-of-town lawyers didn't know what to make of him. Rosenau called U.S. Supreme Court decisions "magazine law." He didn't get bogged down with legal technicalities. He cared about right and wrong and that a just and fair result was reached.

Hollywood portrays Southern judges as cigar-chomping rednecks dressed in seer-sucker suits. Rosenau didn't fit that image. Not even close. He didn't smoke, drink, or cuss; was smarter than Ol' Satan himself; was urbane, well-educated, well-read, and well-traveled. He spoke with a pleasing and mellow Southern accent and was graced with Old South manners. His son-in-law, Mack Graham told me that Rosenau was on his way to Yale at age 16. After graduating in 1922 with

We Don't Deserve Them!!!

by Joel Allen



Hello, folks! I cannot believe that January is gone already. Blink and we will be hearing Christmas music again and looking at 2024.

But before then, I want to share with everyone what has been on my heart lately.

I am about to hurt some feelings here when I say this, but it has to be addressed.

It's all these owner turn-ins and I call it abandoning family (In my opinion it is when

someone gets a dog and then just up and takes them to the shelter because life just got too hard for them.

All right, SNOWFLAKE!). In some cases there are circumstances that cannot be

avoided. But there are those among us that have made irresponsible decisions for selfish reasons and think dumping the dog is okay. I

would hope and pray I am not related to them because I believe that how they treat their dog will be how they

treat everyone else they claim to love. Now, if reading what I have said makes someone angry at me, then

they should look at themselves and think, "Why am I angry? Did Joel just tell the truth and I can't take it? Am I wrong?" Yes, if someone is

angry at me for telling this truth then they are wrong.

"Be sure your sins will find you out," direct from the Bible, Numbers 32:23.

I want to share another writing that I have seen in a video on the internet. I hope everyone enjoys this.

So God Made a Dog

And on the 9th day God looked down on his wide-eyed children and said, they need a companion.

So God made a Dog.

God said I need somebody to wake up and give kisses,



pee on a tree, sleep all day, wake up again, give more kisses, then stay up until midnight, basking in the glow of the television.

So God made a Dog.

God said I need somebody willing to sit, then stay, then roll over, then with no ego or complaint, dress in hats they do not need and costumes they do not understand. I need somebody who can break wind without a first or second thought. Who can chase tails, sniff crotches, fetch sticks and lift spirits with a lick. Somebody who, no matter what you didn't do or couldn't take or didn't win or couldn't make, will love you without judgment just the same.

So God made a Dog.

God said I need somebody strong enough to pull sleds and find bombs and yet gentle enough to love babies and lead the blind. Somebody that will spend all day on a couch with a resting head and supportive eyes for the broken heart.

So God made a Dog.

It had to be somebody who would remain patient and loyal even through loneliness, somebody to care, cuddle, snuggle, and nuzzle and cheer and charm and

snore and slobber and eat the trash and chase the squirrels. Somebody who would bring the family together with an open heart. Somebody to bark, and then pant and then reply with the rapid wag of a tail, when their best friend says, "Let's go for a ride in the car."

So God made a Dog.

God said I need somebody who would stand at your side when the world around you collapses. Somebody to lie next to you during the long nights of pain and sorrow when it hurts to move, to talk, or think, or be. Somebody to stand guard, play games, snore for hours and repeat as needed. Somebody to give you strength when you have none of your own. Somebody to fight when you have no fight left, to hold onto your soul as if it were their favorite toy, playing tug of war to keep you in this world. Somebody to be your companion and guide in this world and the next. Somebody to wait for you on the other side or stand guard in your absence until they can join you for eternity.

So God made a Dog

- Paul Owens

It says Paul Owens at the

end but I got this off of Victoria Thatcher's website so I am giving credit where it is due. I hope this poem touches everyone's heart. It is also my hope that instead of giving up and taking their canine family member to the shelter, that every family tries to find a way to keep their loved ones. Again, I realize that circumstances do lead us to make decisions we all think we could or would never do. I always pray about things like this because I have found that God always provides us a way through our most difficult times.

Tonight as I write this, I am dog sitting Houston's nephew Baldr (and his name is spelled that way). He had a hormonal episode and lashed out at his family because his sister from the same litter is also at the same home and went into heat. If anyone knows dogs, their instincts take over and they lose their minds when the male senses a female in heat. So, for the sake of my family, dog, and human, I took Baldr in to stay with me this week. We did not just give up on Baldr and send him away permanently because life got a little difficult. We all thought this thing through and took steps to help him through this hard time. I used to believe in neuter and spaying but there have been two times in this area where veterinarians have conducted this procedure, and I lost my Frank and my sister lost her Smokey. So, now I find other ways to keep mine from breeding but Baldr's sister will be spayed soon and her stomach tacked because she is a Great Dane, and I will worry until she is in the clear. To those of you who

think that I am being unreasonable about my choosing not to neuter and spay, you are welcome to your opinion. And if I get a dog who is already neutered or spayed, I am good with that. Other than that, my decision is nonnegotiable.

So, folks, if there is someone out there facing giving up their dog, I hope and pray they have exhausted all resources to not give up their canine family member. But, if circumstances dictate they have to rehome their dog or send it to the shelter, I can attest that the Athens-Limestone Shelter and the rescues do everything they can to find your pup another home, a "forever" home that is. I must say though, they are overwhelmed and are out of room. The OTIs have increased so much. It is not just here in Alabama either. Sadly, people give up too easily and make me think we don't deserve dogs, not the way we treat them. Until next month, folks. Be safe and give your dog lots of "lubbins" (loves and rubbings).

P.S. If you find that you want to argue with my article, perhaps you're feeling guilty or trying to justify a decision you are making or made. Think about this. That is why I wrote this to make you all think.

"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**

What Other People Think

by Lisa Philippart,
Licensed Professional Counselor



“I care not of what others think of what I do, but I care very much about what I think of what I do!”
- Theodore Roosevelt

Many clients come to me with the challenge of caring very much about what others think. I have identified four ways to care less about what other people think of you.

First, accept that it's okay to care about what others think of you. My experience is that most people aren't really bothered by caring about what others think of them. Instead, what bothers them is the huge wave of anxiety, shame, disappointment, and all the other difficult emotions that go with it. This potential excessive emotionality is often the result of assuming that it's bad

to care about other's opinions. When you assume it's bad to be concerned about what others think, you end up feeling bad about feeling bad, which dramatically increases how bad you feel! If you can learn to accept the fact that it's normal and okay to care, you'll stop getting lost in all those unproductive mental patterns that blow your emotional responses out of proportion. Try this: The next time you start this caring process, say this little script to yourself: "I may not like caring about what other people think of me, but it's perfectly normal and okay for me to feel this way."

Second, stop dwelling on your worries. A single worry won't cause you much anxiety. Ten minutes of continuous worrying almost certainly will. In other words, having a worry isn't the problem. It's continuing to worry that makes you

anxious. If you want to care less about what other people think of you, it's critical that you avoid letting a single initial worry turn into cycles of worrying. And the best thing you can do is refocus your attention on something more productive and less anxiety-producing. But what if your concerns are legitimate? You can't just stop thinking about it. Try this: Delay your worry. In most situations, even if the concern is legitimate, it's unlikely that you absolutely need to think more about it right now. Rather, set aside a time in a few hours or days to reflect on it when you're in a better state of mind.

Third, clarify what really matters to you. Sometimes we become overly-fixated on what other people think because we aren't very clear about what we think. Specifically, when you're uncertain about your

Lisa Philippart LPC LLC
NCC, BCPCC, BC-TMH
Licensed Professional Counselor
Living Life Counseling Center
44 Hughes Rd, Suite 1050
Madison, AL 35758
256.326.0909 cell
256.631.7898 office
256.542.3366 fax
urlifematters@hotmail.com or
Lisa.P@livinglifecounselingctr.com
livinglifecounselingctr.com



values (what's really important to you in life) it's easy to get lost in other people's values and try to live by them. We all have values. But often we haven't made time to reflect on what is really important. When you do, you'll find yourself increasingly confident in who you are and what you want, and as a result, a lot less concerned about what you think you should want based on others' opinions. Try this: The next time you are feeling anxious about what other people think of you, ask your-

self this question: What do I really want right now? And no, to feel less anxious doesn't count!

Finally, build confidence by practicing assertiveness. As we said, it's normal to care about what others think. The trick is how can we care about it enough, but not so much that it's debilitating? In a word, confidence. More specifically, you have to be confident enough in yourself not to get lost in worries about what other people think. And where does this confidence come from? Assertiveness. Assertiveness is the skill of taking action on what you really want despite your emotions pulling you the other way. For example, despite not wanting to disappoint your coworkers who are working on a project over the weekend, you tell them you can't because it would cut into your family time. Boundaries are a key part of assertiveness. The more you practice being assertive, the more your mind starts to believe that what you want and think matters. And this leads to confidence.

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



The Alternative Approach

Heart-Centered Health

by Dixie Bell



The month of love is here. We are seeing pink and red hearts around every corner. Love is in the air. This is the time for teddy bears, chocolates, romance movies, and XOXOXs. As much as I want to talk about that side of Valentine's Day, there are more pressing matters at hand. What about self-love?

You can't pour love onto your family and friends with an empty cup. For this reason, we are going to be talking about taking care of your physical and emotional health, aka self-love. I don't think that we talk about this enough. I know I have a hard time slowing down and taking time for self-care. We torture our bodies with processed foods, synthetic drugs, stress, anger, working ourselves to death, etc. The to-do lists are getting longer and the nights of sleep are getting shorter. What about you and your health and happiness? It becomes very difficult to keep giving while feeling empty and stressed all of the time.

The good news is that there are SO many ways to love on yourself! Self-love and self-care are important. Vitrally important. If you aren't already taking time for self-care, this is your sign to start!

First things first. You need



to start setting aside time EVERY day, week, and month for self-care concerning your physical and emotional health. Let me explain. Maybe you practice 15-minute meditations and take your supplements daily. That's something for the body and mind that you can do every day. You may want to set aside time to cook a nutritious meal and read a book. Again one thing for your body and one for your mind, daily. You aren't limited to two self-love acts per day. Do more if you can! This is just the minimum. Then once a week go to the gym, take a yoga class, take a hot

bath, or get in the sauna. This one will be something you can commit to doing at least once a week for both your body and mind. Finally, once a month go get a massage, have a reiki session done, or take a day trip to go shopping. This is something monthly you can commit to that is also going to help your emotional and physical health, or simply to just unwind. The possibilities are endless and different for everyone. The important thing is that you are taking time daily, weekly, and monthly for yourself. You will be amazed how much more produc-

tive, peaceful, and present you will become!

Daily routine ideas:

Taking supplements, meditation, yoga, reading, learning something new, cooking, taking naps, doing facials, walking, journaling

Weekly routine ideas:

Getting your nails done, hitting the gym, taking a hot bath, meal prepping, having lunch with a friend

Monthly routine ideas:

Getting a massage, learning a new skill, taking a day trip to go shopping, getting a colonic

Again, there are SO many

other ways to show yourself love, but taking this time out of your life is going to help you feel more fulfilled and less drained. If you are reading this right now wondering how you can fit all of this into your busy schedule, I want you to hear this word, PRIORITIES. I learned something about time management. You actually can't manage time, you can only manage the activities you schedule within the time you have. It's not a matter of not having enough time, it's a matter of how important something is to you and making it happen. I have faith in you. Maybe cut out an hour of TV in the evening to do a Bible study, or wake up an hour earlier. I want you to live a long, happy, fulfilled life, and that's not possible feeling strung out and exhausted all of the time. Let's face it, the important thing in life is love, not material things. As cheesy as "love yourself" may sound it's important! As 1 Corinthians 13:13 tells us, the greatest of all things is love. Love yourself enough to take time for YOU. You will then be more equipped to love others like Jesus has called you to do.

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*Blessings,
Dixie Bell*



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Cooking with Anna (continued from page 13)

Exhausted And Overwhelmed

by Anna Hamilton

continued from page 13

when evening came, he said to his disciples, 'Let us go over to the other side.' Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, 'Teacher, don't you care if we drown?' He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, 'Quiet! Be still!' Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. He said to his disciples, 'Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?' They were terrified and asked each other, 'Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!'" (Mark 4:35-41). This could be an entire article by itself! I have been running around screaming I was about to drown, while God is just resting, waiting on me to come and asked for help. God is right there, resting in the midst of my full-blown break down, smack in the middle of my storm. He is there and willing to take your chaos and calm your life. When I remember this, the peace washes over me and I know that I will not drown.

Number 3: When you get off course, God will straighten your direction. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight" (Proverbs 3:5-6). There have been countless times this month when I did not understand why all the chaos and problems were piled on top of my husband and myself. I didn't understand and I was so tired; I was so anxious. Then I remembered that God does understand what is happening in my life. I needed to pray about it and lean into His wisdom. Once I had submitted my thoughts and plans to him, I could see the straight path and the light at the end of the tunnel.

Number 4: Forgive, just as Christ has forgiven you. "Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as Christ God forgave you" (Ephesians 4:31-32). Are your toes sore too? I didn't realize how bitter I was until I was reading this passage in Ephesians. God has forgiven us and is so patient with us and he expects that of us as well. I have felt like we had taken on all of our families' problems without much support and help from the other members of our family. I found myself

angry and lacking kindness and patience. In reality, everyone is doing the best they can. I have to forgive others around me for not doing what I thought they should. That is not fair to them or to me. I hang on to bitterness towards them for something I expected them to do, something they weren't even aware I wanted them to do. Doesn't that sound silly. Forgiveness is truly for yourself. Once you forgive someone, you are able to be at peace.

Number 5: God accepts you as his own. "Because the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son" (Hebrews 12:6). When a parent loves their child, they will discipline them. Discipline keeps you safe, it helps you stay on the correct path, it helps you keep your life focused on God. Feeling overwhelmed and so anxious has caused me to need God's discipline. I needed to be reminded that I shouldn't be a brat, and I was being a brat. Struggle in this life helps pull us closer to God and helps refine our faith.

Number 6: God is Always with you! "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you" (Deuteronomy 31:6). When you are a Christian, there is absolutely nothing to fear. God gives us a promise that he will never leave us. He goes everywhere with you. Even when this world is piling problems on top of us, we must remain strong and brave. Others will look to us as Christians to see how we react when we are overwhelmed and stressed. If we remain calm and strong, they will be encouraged by our faith and that can help bring them closer to God. What a wonderful, calming thought to know that God will never, ever leave us.

This week's recipe is for chili, but not just any chili. This recipe is for Greek Chicken Chili. Not only is it delicious, but it is healthy and will be a great addition to your winter recipe rotation. As always, feel free to change up the veggies or meat to make this recipe work perfectly for your family.

"But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when the heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit" (Jeremiah 17:7-8)

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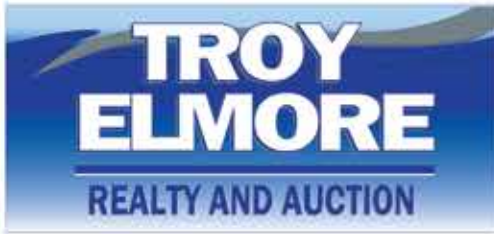


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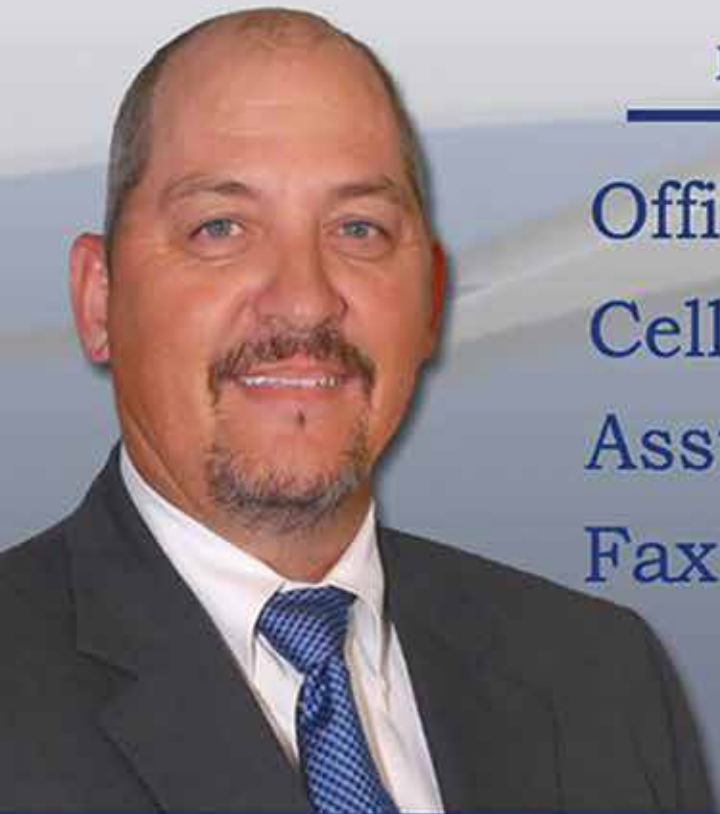
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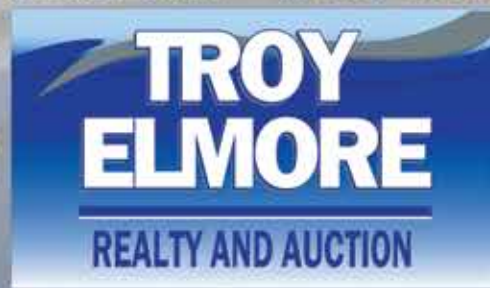
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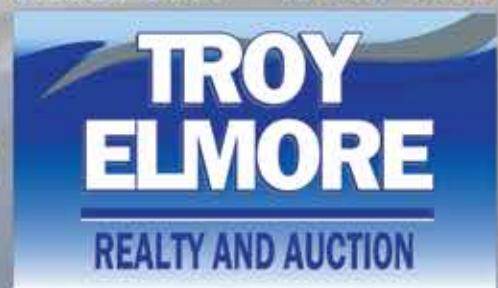
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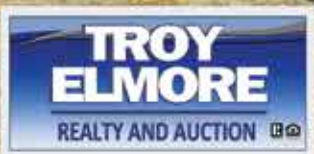


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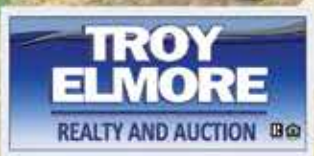


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