

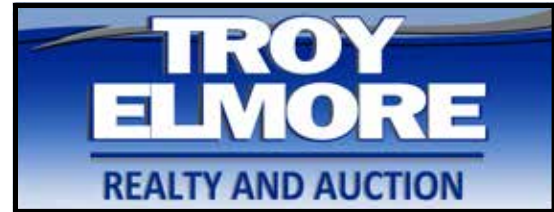
February 17 - March 02, 2023

# Athens Now

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See Our Listings Inside this edition...  
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## Special Feature



*Be the Difference*  
**Youth Commissioners  
And Relay Team Giving  
From The Heart On  
Valentine's Day...**  
Sitting for hours  
undergoing chemo  
treatments or waiting  
on a loved one to  
complete a radiation  
treatment can be...  
**Page 5**

## Clean, Green And Beautiful

**Let's Attack Trash  
Together!...**  
Litter. There seems  
to be so much of  
it in some places,  
and nearly none in  
others. Litter most  
definitely reflects  
on a community in  
a negative...  
**Page 12**



## From The Tourism Office



**Tourism Is Southern  
Hospitality...**  
I was born here...right  
here in Limestone County,  
Alabama, over there at  
Athens Limestone Hospital.  
We moved away to Ohio  
shortly afterward and then...  
**Page 14**

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# Cabinet Express Of Athens: Custom Look, But Not A Custom Price

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

For decades, Keith Rowe of Cabinet Express and his family have been in various aspects of the construction industry and real estate development in the Tennessee Valley. Keith says, "I was born and raised a farmer, but as times changed and real estate development became dominant in our market, I moved into the construction industry. In 2017, I began buying and remodeling houses to resell. As I was rehabbing houses, I saw a need for quality cabinets at a great price, and that is how Cabinet Express was born."

I know from several conversations with Keith that doing things right, irrespec-

Continued on pages 16-17



*Holly Rowe is the new office manager that keeps everything and everyone humming at Cabinet Express*

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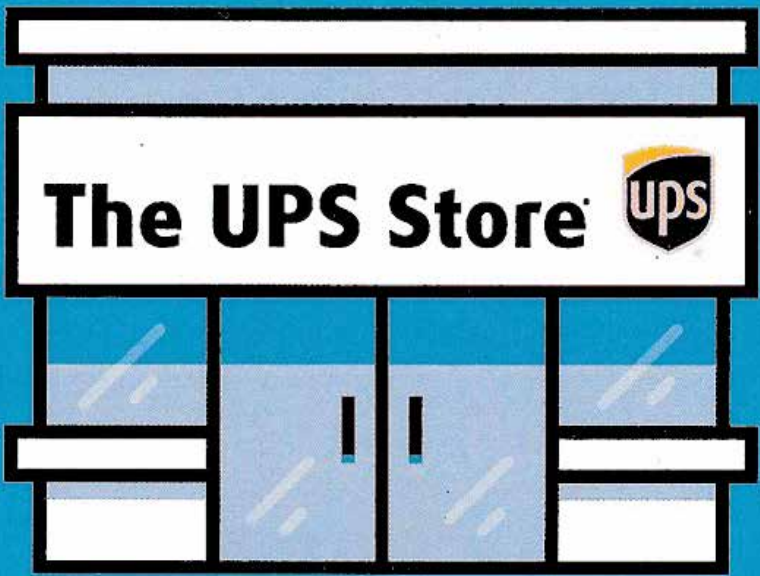
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**Publisher's Point**

**Thank God (Literally) For Asbury**

For the past 53 years, I have told anyone who is remotely interested (and maybe even some who weren't) what it was like as a teenager to become a "Jesus People." For me it was December of 1970. Literally, one day hippie kids were smoking dope defiantly on the hill behind Chief Sealth High School, and then the next day, they were passing out tracts in classes and with the singular boldness of a newborn babe in Christ, began to ask their teachers if they were born again. A childhood friend by the name of Tina had been radically changed, and she began to talk to me about what had happened to her. I wanted what she had, and I had been looking for it in all the wrong places. Long story short, I gave my heart to Jesus all alone in my bed on the night of December 8, 1970, and the most profound changes began in me that night and continue till this day.

What also was going on then was genuine revival on the campuses of the University of Washington, Pacific Lutheran University, and the University of Puget Sound. It spread like wildfire, which is the true nature of revival, and another school that had been set ablaze with that kind of unscripted, organic, life-changing spiritual movement was Asbury College in Kentucky. It had hit the previous February. It changed the lives of students, faculty, the townspeople, and the people who came from all over just to

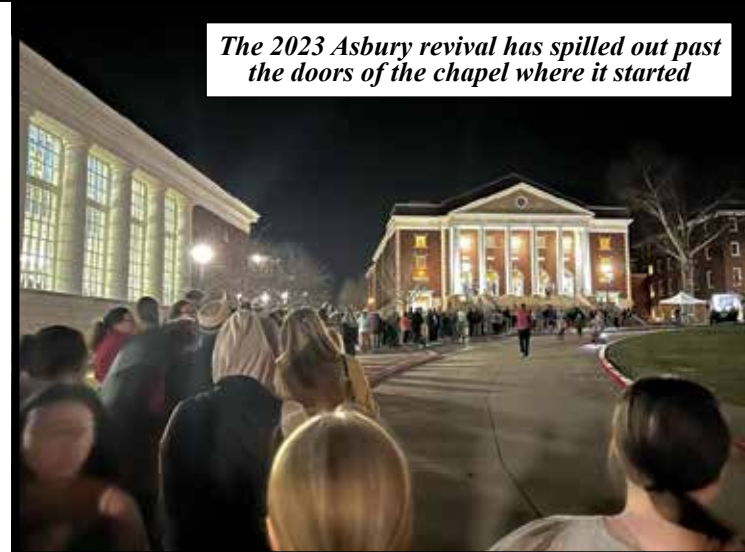


Asbury revival 1970

have an encounter with the One who loves them most.

I am pleased to report that revival has broken out again on the Asbury campus, and one week into it, as is the nature of fire, it has jumped and spread. It has now gone on 24 hours a day for over a week and there are people lined up down the street from the Chapel to get in. It has spread to other colleges and nations, and there is a livestream that is running 24 hours a day. The ABC, NBC, and CBS affiliates are covering it, and, yes, TikTok is even helping. As of this writing, the viral TikTok video has more than 24.4 million views. You can see it at #asburyrevival. People are driving all night to get there, and my faith tells me that many will "bring it back" to their home town.

So, even though this might sound odd, there is a song that won't leave me alone that I think is appropriate once again to describe what is occurring and which serves as an invitation for all of us. It is Curtis May-



The 2023 Asbury revival has spilled out past the doors of the chapel where it started

field's People Get Ready, and the lyrics say in part:

- People get ready
- There's a train a-coming
- You don't need no baggage
- You just get on board
- All you need is faith
- To hear the diesels humming
- Don't need no ticket
- You just thank the Lord
- So, people get ready
- For the train to Jordan
- Picking up passengers coast to coast
- Faith is the key

Open the doors and board 'em

There's hope for all  
Among those loved the most

It's comin,' it's hummin,' and it will change your lives if you let it. Pray for Asbury and beyond!

*Ali Elizabeth Turner*

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# Meet CW4 James Chambers

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



If you or your children have been around Athens High School for the last 11 years, you either have met or know about CW4 “Chief” James Chambers. If you have been to a parade any time of year that involves the JROTC, you have seen him. If you have ever heard the term “command presence,” which refers to

the type of officer that makes you want to square your shoulders and stand up straight out of well-earned respect, you know about whom I am talking. Chief Chambers spent 26 years serving our country as a Warrant Officer 4, and specialized in electronics, communications, and aircraft control. We were in Iraq

at the same time, and it is entirely possible that he came through Camp Stryker from Anaconda and relaxed in the MWR facility in which I worked. It is my honor to tell his story.

James Chambers is from Gretna, VA, and spent his days as a kid playing outdoors all day, going down to the

creek that was on their land, and like most of us, came home to eat supper with his family, do his homework and do his chores. He always was a hard worker, went to tech school while in high school, and graduated in 1985. He enlisted that summer, and at the time did not think that college was in his future. However, he got to Sergeant First Class in 9½ years, (which is unheard of) and his superior officers made it clear that he definitely needed to pursue higher education. He got a BS in technology management. His career took him all over the world, and he “finished” his career here at Redstone. He told his wife that he wanted to do something to give back, (as if a life of service for 26 years hadn’t quite filled the bill) and as he told me, “I had so much respect for teachers, the way they dedicate their lives to the kids, and I also had become a lifelong learner.” So, he got his master’s degree in education, and came to work at Athens High School in August of 2012. Chief knows he is walking in his calling, and has faced head on one of the biggest crises in America -- the breakdown of the family. Many of the kids who have joined JROTC come from single parent families, and he has found that the combination of discipline mixed with support from a

man works wonders for students just as it did for the soldiers under his command.

“We have had some great success stories,” said Chief Chambers, and proceeded to tell me about them. “Tons of kids have gotten ROTC scholarships, and two have gone to West Point. I get texts from the kids all the time, long after they have graduated. One student had been ‘in the system’ since the third grade and started his first day by swearing at everyone and said he’d never graduate. We got him through; he did graduate,” he said.

I interviewed a freshman by the name of John David McGee who is in his first semester of JROTC. He especially likes the fact that in addition to all that they learn about physical fitness, being part of a team, having the chance to get promoted, and understanding what makes a good soldier, on Thursdays they study current events. As of this writing, John David is preparing for his first promotion exam and a PT test. He plans on staying in JROTC until he graduates, and hasn’t ruled out joining the military.

Thank you, Chief Chambers for your service to our country and to our kids, and may you be a part of their lives and ours for many years to come!



CW4 James Chambers, head of Athens High School JROTC program



## Special Feature

# Youth Commissioners And Relay Team Giving From The Heart On Valentine's Day

by Holly Hollman

Sitting for hours undergoing chemo treatments or waiting on a loved one to complete a radiation treatment can be an exhausting process in the fight against cancer. A group of students and Relay for Life volunteers collaborate each February to bring love and encouragement to those undergoing cancer treatments and to their caregivers as well.

The City of Athens Relay for Life Team and Athens Mayor's Youth Commission collected items for care baskets to distribute to the cancer treatment centers: Southern Cancer Center in Huntsville, Clearview Cancer Institute in Athens and Huntsville, and Alliance Cancer Care

Radiation in Huntsville.

Some youth commissioners wrote cards with messages such as this one from AnaGrace Russell, "We're all rooting for you! You've got this! We love you!"

The baskets have individual goody bags with items such as puzzle books and pens, juice boxes, snacks, hard candy and lotion.

"Our Relay teammate Kathy Cothren fought two types of cancer before passing away last year," Relay Captain and Youth Commission mentor Holly Hollman said. "She did chemo and radiation, and was the inspiration for these care baskets about four years ago. She told us items we should get, such as suckers

and hard candy because the chemo can leave a metallic taste in your mouth. The snacks and puzzle books give patients and caregivers something to do and eat while waiting at appointments."

Cherry Hammonds, senior development manager for the South Region of the American Cancer Society, works with these volunteers to deliver the goody bags. "Relay really cares," Hammonds said. "We let

our survivors know we are thinking of them as they face their fight against cancer, and we let their caregivers know they are an important part of that fight. Seeing the youth commissioners join us in this endeavor is a blessing. We don't want anyone to fight this fight alone."

Hollman said youth commissioners and team members donated so many items, volunteers will deliver about 65 individual

bags to the treatment centers this Valentine's week.

"We had enough left over that on Valentine's Day we delivered about 35 goody bags to Athens-Limestone Hospital so they can recognize staff members," Hollman said. "Our youth commissioners and Relay team have big hearts, and for the last few years we have received so many donations, we have been able to show some love to our local hospital, too."



Card made by Youth Commissioner AnaGrace Russell



Holly Hollman, City of Athens Relay for Life Team Captain and Youth Commission mentor, delivers goody bags to Loren Veazey, director of Performance and Service Excellence with Athens-Limestone Hospital. The hospital has programs to recognize staff members who make a difference, and some of those staff members will receive the goody bags.

# Calendar of Events

## Preschool Storytime February 22

9:30am - 11:30am. 603 S Jefferson St, Athens, AL 35611.  
Preschool Storytime at the Athens Library every Wednesday at  
9:30 or 10:30 for ages 3-5.

## 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!

## Foster Parent Interest Meeting February 28

Athens-Limestone Public Library. 603 S Jefferson St, Athens. 6pm - 7pm. Interested in becoming a foster parent? Join Suzanna Yuhasz from the Limestone County Department of Human Resources for information on how to become a foster parent.

## Empty Bowls 2023 March 3

Announcing Empty Bowls 2023! 11:30-1:00. Mark it on your calendar and watch for tickets to be available soon. Something new this year is our Makers Market where you can purchase pottery, art, and donations from local businesses. All proceeds go to agencies that address hunger and food insecurity in our community. LCCI, school backpack programs, homeless

## 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)

charities are all included. We look forward to community support as we have had in the past

## State of the City Address March 7

400-476 Pryor St E, Athens. State City Address featuring Mayor Ronnie Marks. 8am breakfast. 8:30am program begins. Will be in the Athens University Carter Gymnasium. \$35 Chamber Member. \$40 Non-Member.

## International Women's Day Breakfast Celebration March 8

8:00am - 10:00am. Join us for a celebratory breakfast honoring International Women's Day, with equal pay and women's rights activist Lilly Ledbetter! Athens State University - Sandridge Student Center Ballroom, 300 North Beaty Street in Athens. Tickets \$10: [www.eventbrite.com/e/international-womens-day-breakfast-celebration-tickets-530657339387](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/international-womens-day-breakfast-celebration-tickets-530657339387)

## Pat Waybright / Sue Vice Spelling Bee March 11

The Learn to Read Council of Athens / Limestone County is hosting the Pat Waybright / Sue Vice Spelling Bee and silent auction on Saturday, March 11, at Athens Middle School Cafeteria. The Spelling Bee begins at 10:00 AM. Free admission for spectators

## Silver Sneaker Flex™ Classes

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## Digital Literacy Classes

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# What Makes Ronnie Roll

## Learning To Lose

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



“Well, we didn’t get what we wanted,” said Mayor Ronnie as we started our time together. He went on to say of the disappointing Super Bowl Philadelphia Eagles loss the day before, “It was a great game, a great celebration, and we got to come together to hoot and holler. It rallied young people and old. Our whole town got involved! And sometimes this kind of thing reminds us that you are not going to win every time.” We both lamented that one “lame” holding call that seemed to have cost the Eagles the game, and marveled at the two-point conversion run that tied it. All in all, it was an unforgettable and wonderful time for Athens-Limestone County; the store fronts painted with “spirit” sayings, the watch parties, and the school rallies. Who knows, maybe it could happen again?

As it pertained to the pre-game festivities, the mayor mentioned the all-female flyover and the emotion shown by Eagles Head Coach Nick Sirianni as he listened to Chris Stapleton sing and play the National Anthem. It was a welcome change from the masks and mayhem of recent years.

“We are getting ready for March Madness, and the Tennessee men’s team is probably going to be in it,” said the mayor, and I for one am glad that we can cheer for anyone who is in the running from our part of the country. Go, Vols! He moved on to the discussion of local sports as part of our Parks and Rec program headed up by Bert Bradford. Bert

called in to give an update on land that is being considered for a soccer field, as well as to discuss the numbers for the upcoming spring softball and baseball season that will occur at the Sportsplex. “So far there are roughly 300 girls for softball, 400 boys for baseball, and with soccer at 350 now, it could very well get to 500 plus,” said Bert. Bradford also told the mayor that he was looking at various plots of land in diverse neighborhoods to act as practice fields, and has worked out plans to bring in field dirt so they can be the real thing. At this point there are several possibilities that could work well in the neighborhoods. The mayor added that with the spring season coming up, he was glad that kids were going to get out of the house and away



*Grammy award winning Chris Stapleton plays the Star Spangled Banner at the Super Bowl while tears stream down Eagles Coach Nick Sirianni's cheeks*

from being glued to their video games. I wholeheartedly agreed.

“Pickleball is big, you know,” said Mayor Ronnie. “We honestly could use 50 acres for pickleball and soccer, but right now the price of land is sky-high,”

he said. Anyone who knows our mayor knows that one of his “babies” is to create a Miracle Field, which is designed to empower special needs kids to become the best athletes they can. That is still a dream, but one that is being pursued. “Kids need

all that sports can bring to them—team work, sportsmanship, working, and playing hard. It’s important,” he said.

The time had come, as it always does for us to pray, so we did. And then, it was time for Ronnie to roll.





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# Everything To Lose

by Phil Williams



the great proofs of the Bible via history, archeology, cross-cultural reference, and more. We talked about the miracles in my own life which I attribute to God's intervention. Toward the end of the conversation the person I was talking to said, "well, I'm sure that means a great deal to you but I'm just not there yet." It was a fair response. No judgment here. But then I made a statement that renewed their attention by saying, "my faith leads me to live a life of honesty, faithfulness, strength, duty and loyalty. The bottom line is that if it turns out in the end that I'm wrong, then I've really lost nothing. But if it turns out in the end that you're wrong, then you've lost everything."

I believe that to be a statement that applies to more than just faith. It is a statement that can be attributed to much of what we see in today's woke culture, to include the constant haranguing for gender transitions of children in the form of life altering treatments and surgeries that can alter a child's life forever.

I believe that no child is a mistake. In my view a child born to this world is meant to be and the biological sex of that child is not "assigned" at birth, it just "is" at birth. To say otherwise immediately makes the child a victim for the rest of their lives. "Oh, you poor child,

you were born wrong. You are a living mistake, forever trapped in the wrong body, only made whole by medical correction."

This is predatory thinking. Telling a child that they are not right in ways that cannot be changed without life altering therapy is emotional abuse and once the therapies begin it becomes physical abuse.

What would we think if we witnessed a parent telling their child that they are an idiot and cannot do anything right? We would think them abusive.

What would we think of a parent who kept their child over-medicated so that they wouldn't be a bother? We would think them abusive.

Yet we as a nation stand by while hordes of unreasonable accusations by adults are foisted on precious kids by telling them that, in essence "they" are wrong and must have medical intervention to be right.

These are our children, and they are minors who are not allowed by law to make their own medical decisions. Children are protected from statutory rape because they are deemed to be legally incapable of consenting to sex with an adult. Children are not allowed to enter contracts and can't vote or join the military until 18 or drink alcohol until 21. But yet some adults are willing to tell that precious child that they were made wrong and need to be fixed.

Despite all liberal arguments to the contrary, if

I'm right, and that child is allowed to wait until they are an adult to make their own life-altering decisions, then they have lost nothing. But if the so-called adults making these medical transition changes are wrong, then that child has lost everything.

They have literally lost their physical identity, their emotional well-being, and their natural selves, all because an adult couldn't affirm them as they were born.

Thankfully the State of Alabama has already passed legislation to put an end to gender transition therapies and surgeries for kids. The State of Utah passed similar legislation in recent weeks, and Tennessee is debating it now. The fight is real and the opposition is insidious.

In March 2017 a UCLA study indicated that there were roughly 150,000 high school age kids that identified as transgender, or roughly 0.7% nationwide. In June 2021 a research brief published by the American Academy of Pediatrics concluded differently that the number is now closer to 10% of high school students reporting a "gender diverse identity". The new study did not assign an actual number but extrapolation of data infers that the new study finds the number of kids identifying as other than their biological sex is well over a million nationwide. That's quite a surge in a short amount of time.

I would hazard an educated but non-scientific guess that the numbers are actually more reflective

of increased numbers of adults pushing an agenda on kids with an activist's zeal.

Millions of kids were not "born wrong". Most Americans don't believe that suddenly, despite ages of mankind notwithstanding, that we have a new phenomenon. What we have instead is an age in which activist adults have lost the sense of propriety that used to keep their adult versions of the world from being foisted on the children of the world. The lines have blurred. Anything goes. Children can be mutilated to prove the adult's point.

And if I'm right then those children would have lost nothing by waiting until they are of the age of majority. But if those adults who perpetrate this madness on kids are wrong then those children have lost everything.

*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).*

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**Rita Aaron, Owner**

## Slinkard On Success

# Think To Succeed

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)*



Our thought process is detrimental to the quality of life we have. Whether our lives are good or bad, it all depends upon the way in which we choose our perspective. Our thought process plays an integral part in our everyday living, and your thoughts could be holding you back from living the life you so desperately desire to have. It is no secret that it is much easier to think negatively and to be negative than it is to be positive. It takes work to be a person not bogged down by the negativity of the world.

If you can control your thought process, then you can control the outcomes you get. I did not realize this aspect until later in life; I wish I had

someone, anyone, who could have taught me this when I was younger. In fact, I believe we do our youth injustice by not allowing them to think for themselves. When they are in a difficult situation, instead of allowing them to figure it out for themselves, we too often want to jump in to help get them to the final result. Sure, they get to where you want them to be, but they have no idea how or why they are where they are.

I want you to think about the last time you faced a challenge but did not know what to do. Did you give up? Just tossed your hands up in the air and walked away? Or did you try to figure the situation out? What was your thought process? I am a firm believer that

too often we say to ourselves, "I cannot figure it out," and our brain says, "Okay, you cannot figure it out," and thus you cannot. However, instead of saying we cannot, we need to say we can.

For instance, I recently had a friend looking to buy a particular brand of car. As he was getting closer to purchasing, he was noticing this brand everywhere. It seemed as if everywhere he went, this car was there. Have you ever bought something, say perhaps a specifically colored shirt or a particular brand, and then afterward you started noticing the same item everywhere? The fact is that before you made the purchase, your brain was tuning it out, but afterward, your brain was telling you to pay at-

tention.

Our thought process is no different. Instead of thinking you cannot figure something out, just ask yourself, "If I knew how to solve this, what would I do?" Amazingly, your brain will allow you to find the answer. Now, this cannot be forced and, yes, I understand you can easily disprove this method; but remember, when you are trying to disprove this method, your brain is doing exactly what your thought process is telling it to do. You do not want it to work, so your brain will show you why it will not succeed. But change the thought process and your brain will show you why it will succeed.

Have you ever met someone you knew you were smarter than, you

knew you had more upstairs than they did, you knew you offered more than they brought to the table, yet they were further ahead in life? I guarantee you that their thought process is different from yours. The next time you face a difficult situation, you need to play the expert instead of playing the victim. Ask yourself what the expert would do and then do it. Many times, we stand around scratching our heads reaffirming our disbelief that we cannot make something happen, and if we changed the mentality around us, we would be actively changing our lives.

If we want to see a change in the success/failure rate we have in life, we need to change the way we view our thoughts. Instead of the victim mentality being accepted and taught, we need to teach our youth how to be successful. We need to teach them how to think instead of trying to dumb down things for them. I have learned a lot through the school of hard knocks, but the most important thing I have learned is controlling my thought patterns. I cannot determine the obstacles that will arise in my life, but I can make a clear decision on how I will respond. The next time you are faced with a challenge, will you tell yourself you cannot, or will you allow your thought process to show you the way to success?





## Clean, Green And Beautiful

# Let's Attack Trash Together!

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

nally located. This can take it to our waterways, which feed into lakes, rivers, and possibly to the ocean.

Humans are the ONLY creatures on God's green earth that litter. We are responsible for every single bit of the trash we see that becomes litter when it is misplaced. So we humans need to be responsible for fixing the problem.

First and foremost, never litter! Keep a litter bag or a grocery bag in your vehicles to collect litter. KALB has washable/reusable litter bags available free of charge. They also have our Litter Hotline number on them so you can call to report littering incidents you witness while on Athens/Limestone County roadways.

The next thing we all need to do is participate in a

Litter. There seems to be so much of it in some places, and nearly none in others. Litter most definitely reflects on a community in a negative way – and clean roadsides give the impression that the people who live in the area take pride in their community. A clean community is a more welcoming community where people want to visit and linger.

I was on my way to Pulaski recently, and as I rode up Jefferson/127, I passed a spot on the east side of the road where the ditches all seem to wash into, and it was loaded with litter. This proves one thing... litter moves. The wind, water, animals, and people cause litter to move from where it was origi-



cleanup. You can organize one of your own or participate in a cleanup that KALB is organizing or participating in. KALB has litter cleanup supplies we are more than willing to lend. There are many ways to help. If you are not physically able to clean up the litter, you can always volunteer to help at the registration tables, provide a giveaway for our volunteers, or make a donation to KALB to support our cleanups.

### UPCOMING CLEANUPS

#### **Ardmore Spring Clean**

United Pest and Turf Control in Ardmore, Alabama, will host their 7th annual Spring Clean. KALB will participate by providing litter grabbers, gloves, safety vests, trash bags, and some buckets. Here are some details:

- Saturday, March 4
- 8 a.m. – registration, breakfast, and supply pick-up at Jones Drugs parking

#### Lot

- 8:30 a.m.-noon – Spring cleanup of roadsides and other public areas
- Noon-1 p.m. – Volunteer lunch at the Chamber of Commerce Office in Ardmore

For more information or to register, call United Pest and Turf at 256-423-7378.

#### **Annual River Cleanup**

KALB will host our annual river cleanup in March. This year it will be in the Tanner area. KALB will provide litter grabbers, trash bags, gloves, safety vests, and some buckets. Volunteers are needed. Here are some details:

- Saturday, March 25

- 8 a.m. – Registration, breakfast, and supply pick up. Location to be announced

- 8:30 a.m.-noon – Cleanup of various locations along the river

- Noon-12:30 p.m. – A litter grabber will be given to each volunteer to take home upon return of supplies in hopes that participants will use them to continue cleanups in their neighborhoods.

To register for this cleanup or for more information, call KALB at 256-233-8000 or send an email to KALBCares@gmail.com.



(256) 233-8000  
KALBCares@gmail.com  
www.KALBCares.com



## Cooking with Anna

# *Straighten Up!*

by Anna Hamilton

*I grew up attending church. There was never a question where we would be on Sunday morning, Sunday night, or Wednesday night. If the doors of the church were open, we were there. I was baptized at the age of 13 and I attended a Christian college. My life has been surrounded by the word of God, yet somehow, I have remained a “bent” Christian.*

*I didn’t realize I was bent until a passage in the Gospel of Luke leapt off the page. It came to life in a way I had never felt before. “On a Sabbath Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues, and a women was there who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten up at all. When Jesus saw her, he called her forward and said to her, ‘Woman, you are set free from your infirmity.’ Then he put his hands on her, and immediately she straightened up and praised God.” Luke 13:10-13*

*For eighteen years, this lady had been bent over. She was not able to stand straight, and she was miserable. The passage goes on to say that “Satan had kept her bound.” Society looked on her as someone who was less than, someone who was not worthy of love, and definitely not someone who deserved to be healed by Jesus. On the day Jesus healed her, not only did her physical ailment leave her immediately, but she also felt the love of Christ rush through her. “Immediately she straightened up and praised God.”*

*I knew I was a Christian, but there was no way that Christ loved me unconditionally. Who would love me for the “real me.” The pressure to keep up with what I felt the world and people around me expected me to be has kept me bent at the waist. I have carried around the feeling of never being fully loved, never being fully accepted, never being good enough, for over 30 years.*

*continued on page 23*

## *Pepper Steak with Squash*

### *Ingredients:*

- 1 can beef broth*
- 2 Tbsp soy sauce*
- 3 lbs. beef flank steak, cut into thin strips*
- 1 cup green pepper, cut into thin strips*
- 1 cup sweet red pepper, cut into thin strips*
- 1 ½ cup zucchini, cut into thin strips*
- ½ cup green onion, chopped*
- 3 garlic cloves, minced*
- 1 cup fresh snow peas*
- 1 cup fresh sliced mushrooms*

### *Directions:*

*Mix broth and soy sauce. Set aside. In a large skillet, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add beef; stir-fry until no longer pink, 2-3 minutes. Remove from pan.*

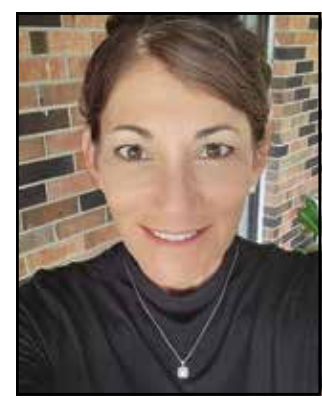


*In same skillet, add a little more oil, if needed. Stir-fry peppers about 2 minutes. Add zucchini, onion, and garlic; cook and stir 2 minutes longer. Add snow peas and mushrooms and cook until crispy-tender, about 2 more minutes.*

*Once vegetables are cooked, add soy sauce mixture and bring to a boil; cook and stir until sauce is thickened. Return beef to skillet and enjoy!*

# Tourism Is Southern Hospitality

by Tina Morrison, Tourism Athens



I was born here...right here in Limestone County, Alabama, over there at Athens Limestone Hospital. We moved away to Ohio shortly afterward and then returned to Limestone County when I was about 7 years old. I remember my first day at West Limestone K-12 School, in April, and the teacher announced that I had moved from a place that was much colder than here. Somehow my fellow 2nd graders imagined it was Alaska, and I spent the rest of the day explaining that I, indeed, was not an Eskimo. I made friends, made good grades, only tortured the teachers a little, and settled into country life growing up as an Alabama girl.

We lived in a small house in the middle of cotton fields and pastures. My three siblings and I joke that when school was out for the summer, my mom sent us outside to play and told us not to come back until August, which is only a slight exaggeration. There were no computers, iPads, or smartphones. Not even any video games. We wouldn't even get a landline telephone in the house until I was in middle school. We would go outside and play and at lunchtime after we all washed up, my siblings and I and whatever friends we had over to play that day, would line up and get handed a peanut butter and jelly or bologna sandwich and some Kool-Aid. Then it was back to making mud pies, or jumping from the barn loft into a pile of hay, or racing each other in potato sack races. We found our fun by playing togeth-

er, riding bikes, or swinging on vines over the creek bed. The country life was simple and sometimes boring, I thought, but it made me who I am and I wouldn't change anything about it.

After I graduated and later started working for a contractor through the Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant, I left Athens and traveled the world for almost a decade. My job took me to Florida, California, London, Australia, Mexico, Washington, and Idaho. While I was overseas, I would hear the international "locals" sing along loudly when the song "Sweet Home Alabama" came on. I used to laugh looking around in Australia knowing that I was most likely the only one in the room that was actually born in Alabama. When I lived in London and had only a small concrete patio instead of a yard, I wrote letters home to my mom about how I missed and longed for things that reminded me of my country home, like clothes drying in the sun

on a clothesline, hearing a screen door slam, sitting on the porch swing looking at a hanging fern and sharing a fresh glass of still warm sweet iced tea -- the things you really, really miss when you live in a huge city. When my mom would mail care packages to me overseas all those years, she would use local newspapers to pad my goodies, and I would smooth them out and read all about what was happening in my quiet little country town.

I came home many times during those years I lived away, and each time I came home, I would see new and exciting improvements to Athens and Limestone County. More and more great restaurants and shopping and events were popping up every year. In 2020 when COVID had us all rethinking everything, I finally made the decision to move back home, after being away for almost 30 years. In the 2.5 years since I've been back, I've been renewing my respect

for all the wonderful things and Southern hospitality about life in North Alabama. The friendly people. The delicious home cooking. The solid foundation of character and values. The rich traditions and history. The Southern hospitality. I would go as far as to say that Southern hospitality is really what Tourism is all about. It's a friendly "Good morning," or "Hey, y'all"! It's a sincere "How's your Mama 'n em," or "We're praying for you." It's sharing what food you have, even if it's only a bologna sandwich. It's saying, "Y'all stay a while," or "Y'all come back soon." Tourism

and Southern hospitality really go hand-in-hand. At least for me they do, and every single day, I am so blessed and so fortunate to be working in Tourism and promoting my hometown of Athens-Limestone County. Home truly is where the heart is. And my heart is home, here in my Sweet Home Alabama.

*Tina Morrison,  
Event Coordinator  
Extraordinaire  
Athens-Limestone Tourism  
Tina@VisitAthensAL.com  
www.VisitAthensAL.com*





# PlayAction Sports

## Late Winter Champions Emerge

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)



The Lindsay Lane cheerleaders won the Christian Cheerleaders of America Sweet Home Classic Varsity Championship and came in second in JV Game Time. Athens Cheer Team Black was first in the Super Varsity division at the UCA National High School and the World School Championships. The Gold team finished third in Small Junior Varsity Game Day at Nationals. Athens Middle School also placed third in large junior high. James Clemens won the national championship in Non-Building Game Day and Small Varsity D1 and was Small World Champions.

East Limestone's Da'Montrea Johnson signed a scholarship with Ottawa University football and Rebekah Phelps committed to Midway University soccer. James Clemens' Grant Gage committed to Wallace State baseball. Athens' Kameron Gatewood and Isaiah Unger signed letters of intent with Tuskegee football and Elmhurst University wrestling.

### Basketball highlights

- Calhoun M 74, Gadsden State 70
- Calhoun W 61, Gadsden State 51
- Calhoun M 76, Chattahoochee Valley 74 (OT)
- Calhoun W 75, Wallace State 71
- Calhoun W 80, Coastal South 45
- Calhoun M 86, Beville State 74
- Calhoun W 77, Southern Union 43
- Calhoun W 83, Gadsden State 45
- ABS VG 43, Whitesburg Christian 24
- ABS VB 70, Crossville 49
- ABS VB 63, Alabama School of Cybertech 39
- ABS VG 63, Alabama School

- of Cybertech 12
- ABS VB 80, St. Bernard 30
- Ardmore VG 76, Brewer 41
- Athens VB 53, St. John Paul II 52
- Athens VB 47, Oakwood Adventist 44
- Athens VG 71, Oakwood Adventist 12
- Athens VG 62, Columbia 38
- Athens VB 41, Decatur 35
- Athens VG 37, Decatur 22
- Athens VG 48, Columbia 43
- Clements VG 62, Elkmont 29
- Clements VG 57, East Limestone 48
- Clements VG 51, East Lawrence 37
- Clements VG 48, West Limestone 42
- Clements VG 67, Lindsay Lane 20
- Clements VG 57, Rogers 20
- Clements VG 51, Phil Campbell 36
- East Limestone VB 83, Elkmont 51
- East Limestone VG 62, Ardmore 40
- East Limestone VB 57, West Limestone 38
- East Limestone VB 56, Priceville 55
- East Limestone VG 57, Priceville 39

- East Limestone VG 68, Buckhorn 51
- East Limestone VB 43, West Limestone 38
- East Limestone VG 62, West Limestone 38
- East Limestone VB 54, Athens 49
- East Limestone VG 41, Athens 20
- East Limestone VB 89, Ardmore 30
- East Limestone VG 61, West Point 51
- Elkmont VG 52, Wilson 37
- Elkmont VB 63, East Lawrence 62
- Elkmont VG 56, East Lawrence 32
- Elkmont VG 54, Tanner 18
- Elkmont VG 26, Holly Pond 17
- Elkmont VB 59, Clements 43
- Elkmont VB 53, Colbert County 48
- James Clemens VG 55, Austin 43
- James Clemens VG 41, Scottsboro 32
- James Clemens VB 63, Florence 47
- James Clemens VG 68, Florence 57
- James Clemens VB 64, Muscle Shoals 50
- James Clemens VG 61, Muscle Shoals 60

- James Clemens VB 77, Keith 46
- James Clemens VG 88, Keith 31
- James Clemens 65, Florence 46
- Lindsay Lane VB 68, Alabama School of Cybertech 41
- Lindsay Lane VG 68, Alabama School of Cybertech 9
- Lindsay Lane VG 69, Whitesburg Christian 38
- Lindsay Lane VB 59, Woodville 58
- Lindsay Lane VG 43, Woodville 38
- Lindsay Lane VB 51, Clements 41
- Lindsay Lane VG 50, Tanner 38
- Tanner VB 61, Randolph 59
- Tanner VB 64, Elkmont 59
- Tanner VG 49, Whitesburg Christian 27
- Tanner VB 54, Alabama School of Cybertech 39
- Tanner VB 65, Holly Pond 59 (2OT)
- West Limestone VB 38, Tanner 22
- West Limestone VB def. Ardmore
- West Limestone VG 52, Ardmore 41
- West Limestone VB 48, Clements 42
- West Limestone VG 52,

- Westminster 29
- West Limestone VB 35, St. John Paul II 31
- Soccer**
- Athens VB 3, Madison Academy 0
- Athens VG 7, Madison Academy 0
- Athens VG 2, Florence 2
- East Limestone VB 1, Priceville 1
- East Limestone VG 10, Priceville 0
- East Limestone VB 6, Gulf Shores 0
- East Limestone VG 2, Gulf Shores 1
- East Limestone VG 10, Elkmont 0
- James Clemens VG 3, Thompson 1
- James Clemens VB 3, Mars Hill 0
- James Clemens VG 4, Decatur 0
- Tanner VB 11, Hamilton 0
- Tanner VG 4, Hamilton 0
- Tanner VB 3, Boaz 0
- Tanner VB 1, Westbrook Christian 0
- Tanner VB 2, Southside-Gadsden 0
- Tanner VB 7, Ardmore 2
- West Limestone VB 5, Danville 1

### Softball

- Calhoun 6-19, Enterprise State 4-9
- Calhoun 6-6, Roane State 2-2
- Calhoun 2-10, Gadsden State 5-7

### Track and field

State indoor meet: Jaylen Drake (James Clemens, second-7A shot put), James Clemens boys, second-4x800m relay, Jayshon Ridgle (Athens, first-6A 60m hurdles), Malea Wiggins (Athens, third-6A shot put), Karl Parham (Tanner, first-1A/3A 60m).



The East Limestone boys and Clements girls were varsity champions at the Limestone County tournament  
photo credit: Dean Baucom

# Cabinet Express Of Athens: *Custom Look, But Not A Custom Price*

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

*continued from page 1*

ive of personal cost, is one of his core values and is just how he does things. Since 2020, Keith's company has focused on bringing beautiful, affordable all-wood cabinets to developers, DIYers, and investors at a reasonable price and with a quick turnaround time. The cabinets have a custom look, but not a custom price. They stayed busy, in spite of the uncertainty of COVID, and they have added new services and a new staff member. Holly Rowe Guthrie (who as

far as anyone can tell is not related to Keith's family) is now running the front office. "She is able to handle the walk-ins and give tours, as well as keep us all on schedule," said Keith, and he is glad to have her on board.

In addition, Keith has worked hard to build a team that makes production and meeting client needs, desires, and deadlines the things that rule the day. "Because we are able to meet face to face, we have built relationships, hold each other accountable, and it has translated into benefiting the customer," said

# C A B I N E T E X P R E S S

Keith. He added, "COVID hurt us, but it also made us have to thrive. Our January numbers have been good. We are going to have a booth at the Huntsville Home and Garden Show on March 3 through March 5, and we hope people will come

see us." We both agreed that it is such a relief to be able to get back to normal and do things that used to be a part of our lives, like gathering at a home show, and the dreaming and planning that goes with it. It is no secret that in the past few years construc-

tion businesses have been plagued with supply chain issues, and Cabinet Express found a number of ways to avoid some of those obstacles, especially during COVID, that were keeping projects from being completed. The first was to make sure that suppliers were based in the U.S., and no one was having to wait for the more than 100 ships that at one point were bouncing around in the surf off Los Angeles to get unloaded and then shipped east.

Another thing they discovered is that it was less expensive for everyone, the business as well as the clients, to order cabinets that arrived painted



## *Home and Garden Show Info*

**South Hall  
Von Braun Center  
Booth 1029  
March 3-5, 2023  
Friday: 1-6  
Saturday: 10-6  
Sunday: 12-5**





*Cabinet Express is your solution for quality and affordable RTA cabinetry in Athens for your kitchen, bath, library, and much more. Our team, centrally located in North Alabama, has a combined 20+ year industry experience, and our pricing and service are second to none. From traditional framed cabinets to more contemporary frameless cabinets, we have countless styles and options to suit your new inspiration and ideas. Breathe new life into the heart of your Athens home with new bath or kitchen cabinets by Cabinet Express.*

white, and then custom paint them. “We have our own guy that can custom paint any color that is chosen, and that has really cut down on turnaround time,” Keith told me.

Full remodeling of kitchen and baths is available at Cabinet Express. It used to be that they would do complete kitchens in brand new houses, supply cabinets for the do-it-yourselfer, and do installs for homes that had already been remodeled. But the demand has increased for total kitchen and bath remodeling services, and Cabinet Express has stepped up to meet that need.

Cabinet Express will also do “medical remodels” for both the bath and kitchen. They include wheelchair accessibility, all manner of shelves, cubbyholes, and cabinets that can be easily used from wheelchair height in both the kitchen and the bath. All cabinets and drawers feature soft close, which means they just glide open and shut and never get stuck. They can do “everything from floor to ceiling,” and their cabinets have a lifetime warranty. Cabinet Express

also offers financing for customers. It is no longer the case that only custom built cabinets offer upgrades and “custom features.” Now you can get upscale accessories like the soft close hinges and drawers, lazy Susans, dummy doors, farm house sinks, and high-end pulls. Cabinet Express has several vendor lines of cabinets and they are all solid wood with no press wood. If you go on their Face-

book page and see pictures of some of their recent projects, you’ll see that they look like something out of *Southern Home* or *Magnolia*. You can also see pictures of less expensive kitchens, and they still look beautiful and are durable. What make the most difference are the accessories, and Cabinet Express will always respect your budget. Here is what they say about who they are and what they do:

The Cabinet Express showroom is located at 1602 S Lindsay Lane, Athens, AL 35613, right across from White Bison Coffee, and just south of the intersection of Hwy 72 and Lindsay Lane. Stop by today for a no-obligation consultation to see what they offer, or come visit them at Booth # 1029 at the Huntsville Home & Garden Show. They are dream makers, and they are waiting to make yours a reality.

Here is what they say about who they are and what they do:

## **Cabinet Express**

1620 Lindsay Lane S, Athens, AL 35613  
 256-298-7878  
 Hours: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.,  
 Mon-Fri and by  
 appointment  
<https://cabinetexp.com>  
 Facebook:  
 Cabinet Express



## Learning As A Lifestyle

# Hidden Figures And The Power Of Curiosity

by Eric Betts

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



As we commemorate Black History Month, we remember Katherine Johnson, a notable figure who was known for her ingenious mathematical abilities. She stands out as a bright light and pioneer in science, technology, and engineering. Katherine Johnson was a trailblazer as an African American and female research mathematician for NASA during the era of the space race in the late 1950s and into the 1960s. According to NASA.GOV, Katherine was a major researcher and contributor to finding the geometrical data necessary for successful space travel. Additionally, she was known for discovering the paths for the spacecraft to orbit planet Earth and for the historic moon landing. What is remarkable and inspiring about her story is that these achievements occurred during a time that black people were relegated to second class citizenship and women were often unwelcome in professional work places.

In 2016, a popular film was made about Mrs. Johnson and her fellow black female research mathematicians at NASA, entitled *Hidden Figures*, based on the book by the same name. Prior to the debut of the movie, few in the world were aware of the contributions of these amazing human “computers.” In the 1950s, research mathematicians were called computers because computations had to be made manually by humans. These “hidden figures” were the best in the country in their research and were known for their accuracy and reliability. Alan Shepherd, John Glenn, and other U.S.

astronauts depended heavily upon her trusted trajectory analysis for their success and survival.

Summer Brown is a nationally renowned leadership speaker and professional growth coach. When writing about the leadership qualities of Katherine Johnson, she says, “One miscalculation would have resulted in disaster. Yet, unerringly and more reliably than electronic computers, Katherine’s mathematical calculations helped realize the dream to send a man to the moon.” Brown, in drawing lessons from the life of Katherine Johnson, concludes that trust and reliability are the keys to influence. Leadership is often defined as influence, and Katherine Johnson was a leader within the NASA program. When those within your sphere or place of service recognize you as trustworthy and reliable, they are most inclined to listen and follow your words and advice.

When reading about Mrs. Johnson’s life, one may safely conclude that another key

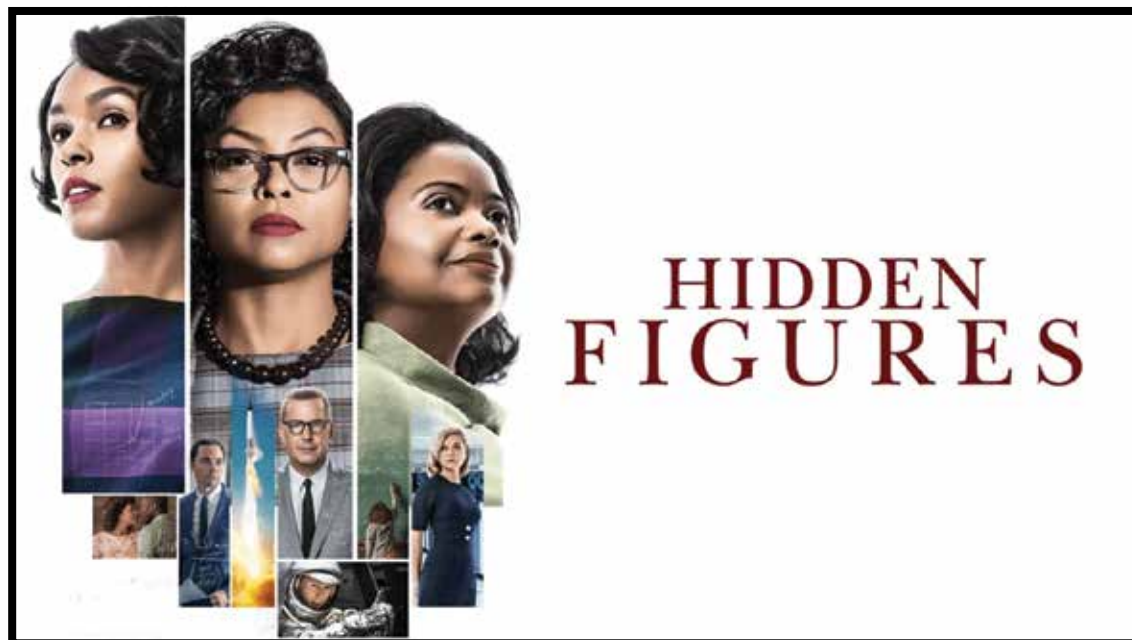
to her success was her passion for detail and accuracy combined with her unshakable habit of asking questions and questioning long-held protocols and modes of operation. One of her biographers, author Ebony Joy Wilkins, stated, “Katherine’s presence at NASA broke many barriers that existed for women and African American women at the time. Her brilliant mind for math and her determined attitude help put people on the moon. When the expectation was that women would do what they were told to do without asking questions she did the opposite because of her courage. Katherine stood out and in doing so she changed the world.” For one to take an organization to the next level, one must be willing to question traditions that may possibly slow or stifle progress. Moreover, in order to lead a successful organization, one must be willing to create an environment where employees, co-workers, or volunteers feel free and are encouraged to ask questions or question why things are the way they presently exist.

The NASA program would not have advanced in its efforts during the space race if it were not for Katherine Johnson’s penchant for asking questions and challenging her supervisors and mentees. Many organizations fail because they refuse to change. This is because the right questions are not asked to challenge the status quo and the decision makers concerning the present circumstances. This mindset of asking questions didn’t begin at NASA, but was part of her entire educational path. Wilkins says that Johnson asked questions for both herself and others. “In her classes her hand was always in the air. Sometimes she would notice her classmates or sibling struggling during their lessons and she would ask questions that she knew they were too shy to ask. Often, they were questions she already knew the answers to.”

While at NASA, Katherine Johnson was surrounded by backward attitudes. In that environment, it was customary to view research mathematicians as beneath the

positions of engineers. Therefore, they kept apart from each other in their meetings. Additionally, women and African Americans were not included in various meetings. Katherine questioned both written and unwritten rules within the space program, and pointed out how they were a hindrance to scientific advancement. She felt that she needed to know what the engineers knew and that engineers needed the advice of the research mathematicians. She explained that excluding co-workers due to gender or race is counterproductive to progress. She refused to be denied access to the important meetings among the engineers. Characters and personalities with the qualities of Katherine Johnson are important attributes for leaders who expect to bring change and to make a dynamic impact upon the world around them. Wilkins added, “She stood up for herself by asking if there was a law that kept her out of the meetings. There wasn’t and Catherine became the first woman to attend. She became known among the engineers for her extensive knowledge of geometry, her leadership skills, and her inquisitive nature.”

Author Ebony Joy Wilkins outlines the unforgettable legacy which Katherine Johnson left behind. Wilkins stated, “During Johnson’s 33 years spent at Langley, she co-authored 26 research reports. In 2015, at age 97, President Barack Obama awarded her with the prestigious Presidential Medal of Freedom, though sadly in February 2020 Johnson passed away at the age of 101.”



## The View From The Bridge

# *I Am On A Mission To Feel Lighter And Shine Brighter! How About You?*

by Jackie Warner

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

As I thought about our topic for this month, I remembered clips of video footage from a very famous actress that struck me so, and it was as if I was being handed a bag of gold full of strength to cover my heart and my soul.

Letitia Wright is humble, full of purpose, and overflowing with gratitude.

I'll share with you some very profound statements she made recently:

*"Worrying will kill you, man," she says, with a slow shake of her head. "It will... Eat. You. Up. But in the Bible, Jesus is basically like, 'Chill out, guys.' If you gracefully trust that everything is going to be okay, you start to feel lighter. You've just got to let go and let God."*

*"For me, anything I attach myself to needs to have a purpose. And if it feels like a red light in any way, I don't do it."*

*"I want to encourage young people. You don't have to be young, you can be any age, but I want to encourage you – anyone going through a hard time... God made you and you're important," the actress declared. "There might be some of you here who might be going through a hard time. I just want to encourage you, and God loves you. Just let your light shine."*

*"I knew something about my life was meant to be meaningful, that I've got something to do here," she says. "I don't know how I*

*knew, but I was sure I'd make an impact."*

*"Where I go, where He takes me, that's where I need to spread the love of God. Because people's souls are dying. My soul was dying. And He saved me."*

- Letitia Wright

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## *Touches*

by Deb Kitchenmaster

Horses enrich our lives and provide opportunities to open our hearts. So I want to share a story that I heard recently about a horse who had previously been owned by a young blind boy.

This boy and horse were completely devoted to each other. The horse was patient and attentive to this boy, giving the child the gift of freedom. For unknown reasons the boy had to sell his horse. The new owners had questions on how to safely connect with this horse. There in its new environment, she stood with her head down in a corner of her stall; depressed, aggressive, and misunderstood. Two options came to mind. One, to put her down or call for help. A call was made. Observing the horse's facial definitions, eyes, ears, and swirls (swirls on horses are the equine equivalent of fingerprints on humans, they are like stamps marking each unique identity), the handler knew the behavior of the horse was not in alignment with its personality. This gal decided to put

the horse on a longe line. A longe line measures from 25 to 35 feet long to enable the handler to ask the horse to travel in a comfortably sized circle. Almost immediately, the handler was attacked by the horse, with neck snaked out and ears pinned to its head. Previously, the horse had been whipped for such behavior, but because the handler understood the importance of identifying each horse separately and understood personality traits by swirl patterns, she restrained from force and simply stood her ground. When the horse saw she didn't scare, charging stopped. Her behavior was a reaction to the whip. Once the whip was put away, she was a joy to handle and to ride.

Horses have emotions too. When our focus is not just on riding but on connecting, on partnering, her loneliness must be acknowledged, but how? Time and touch. Spending time with her in the stable and paying extra attention to her. Helping her realize that though she missed her old friend, new humans were



also there for her. She proved to be an amazing horse. She was able to be ridden with only a stiff rope around her neck, which gave her a feeling of trust and freedom.

Magic? No. This came through understanding the horse's personality. This horse was the kind of horse who would do anything for you, if only one would choose to relate to her as an

intelligent being. See, she had been treated by her previous owner as an individual, not just a horse. Her sense of herself had strongly taken root inside her, therefore she was unwilling to cooperate with people she did not know or with someone she had not formed a bond with. Immediately, her response to domination or punishment was aggressive resistance!



When a horse, or a human, is misunderstood, there is one out of four directions to go. No. It's not north, south, east, or west. It is to flee (escape), fight (aggression), freeze (immobilization), or faint (unconsciousness). What is at the root of these four responses? Misunderstanding, fear, and/or pain.

Your hands are powerful. You can be used as weapons on your horse or you can use them for release relaxation, assurance, and healing. You can hurt people with your hands or bring encouragement and healing, support, and provision.

May perfect, unfailing love touch your heart now... TOUCH -- Truth Opens Understanding Compassionate Hands.

Jesus went to the village Nain. His disciples were with him, along with quite a large crowd. As they approached the village gate, they met a funeral procession -- a woman's only son was being carried out for burial. And the mother was a widow. When Jesus saw her, his heart broke. He said to her, "Don't cry." Then he went over and touched the coffin. The pallbearers stopped. He said, "Young man, I tell you, get up." The dead son sat up and began talking. Jesus presented him to his mother. That day's outcome did an about-face through the touch of love. The touch of LOVE can change the outcome of your horse's destiny, training, and purpose...and humans, too.

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# Procrastination

by Lisa Philippart,  
*Licensed Professional Counselor*



*“You may delay, but time will not.”*

**- Benjamin Franklin**

If you struggle with chronic procrastination, there’s a good chance you’ve tried all the tips, tricks, and productivity solutions without much success. This means you may need to take a deeper (and possibly more uncomfortable) look at the psychological undertones of your procrastination habit. Here are some ideas that might help you get to the root of your procrastinating problem.

Our culture tends to frame procrastination as a bad thing that we should avoid or try to overcome. However, it may be your mind’s way of sending you an important message: You don’t really want the things you say you want. Obviously, there are some things we just have to do (take a shower, submit taxes, etc.). But most people who struggle with chronic procrastination procrastinate on things they tell themselves they want...starting a new hobby, exercising, or socializing. In other words, you want to want that thing but you don’t really want it. For example, you love the idea of doing CrossFit at the local gym. All your friends are doing it, so you tell yourself you want to do it too. But maybe deep down, you don’t actu-



ally want to do CrossFit. In this case, procrastination is your mind trying to help. It’s saying, “Stop lying to yourself! Yes, it’s the cool, trendy thing to do right now, but there’s probably a form of exercise that’s much more conducive to your personality...which would make it easier to stick with it long term.”

Or your mind may be telling you that you do want the thing, but you aren’t clear enough about why. Consequently, procrastination is a values problem not a productivity problem. Values help motivate us to stick with and follow through on difficult tasks...but only if they’re really clear and specific. For example, maybe you value creativity, but in the abstract that will not motivate you to write that book you keep thinking about. If you could clarify your value

of creativity, it might be more motivating. Saying to yourself, “Creativity matters to me because I feel most alive when I’m creating. I love the excitement and the rush or flow of being so caught up in the moment, I totally lose track of time.” Working harder is rarely the solution to chronic procrastination because it begs the question of why you can’t work harder. The uncomfortable but obvious solution is often that we can only work hard for longer periods of time if we truly value the thing we are working on. The question to ask is this, “Do I procrastinate because I’m lazy or do I procrastinate because I’m not totally honest or clear with myself about how much I value my work?”

Many people grow up with a deep-seated belief that you have to be hard

on yourself if you want to be successful. And it seems to work! However, correlation is not causation. Just because you beat yourself up with self-criticism anytime you had a tough challenge ahead, and then succeeded, that doesn’t mean you succeeded because of your self-criticism. In my opinion, most people are successful despite their self-criticism, not because of it. So rather than being critical ahead of a big challenge, try being supportive, like you would for a friend. Remind yourself that it’s normal to feel re-

sistance to doing meaningful, hard work. Give yourself a few examples from the past where you felt really unmotivated but still got the job done. It’s simply giving yourself permission to not be a jerk to yourself. You are the only one who can substitute a self-criticism habit for a self-compassion habit.

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

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# American Heart Month: *Why Regular Testing Is Critical For Protecting Women's Heart Health*

courtesy BrandPoint content

February marks the start of American Heart Month - a month dedicated to raising awareness about cardiovascular health and heart disease prevention. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), every 34 seconds, one person dies in the United States from cardiovascular disease (CVD). For women in particular, CVD is the number one killer, resulting in one in three deaths each year.

Despite these staggering statistics, few people recognize the impact of cardiovascular disease on women compared to other health issues that affect women such as breast cancer, reproductive disorders, mental health conditions and more.

As a cardiologist, physician researcher and advocate for women's health, shedding light on these hard truths surrounding CVD is a mission that's near and dear to me. Cardiovascular disease is one of the greatest health threats our communities face, and it has never been more important for individuals to understand their risk for CVD during this American Heart Month and beyond.

Accordingly, I'd like to underscore the importance of regular testing for women and why heart health checkups should be added to your regular medical calendar.

The importance of regular cardiovascular testing

Cardiovascular health is impacted by several factors such as diet, physical activity, tobacco use, alcohol use and more, as stated by the CDC. Since these variables can impact an individual's cholesterol levels, and in turn, one's cardiovascular health, getting your cholesterol numbers checked regularly is one of the best ways to manage your cardiovascular risk.

Unfortunately, a survey by the American Heart Association (AHA) found that 76% of women don't know what their cholesterol values are. With this in mind, the AHA recommends that adults over the age of 20

check their cholesterol levels (including total cholesterol, LDL-c and HDL-c) every 4-6 years, as long as their risk remains low. For individuals who have a higher risk of cardiovascular disease, cholesterol levels and other risk factors may need to be checked more regularly.

Knowing your numbers is key to understanding your individual risk levels and what changes - such as lifestyle choices or prescribed medicines - need to be made to reduce your risk for CVD. Because lifestyle choices that impact cholesterol levels change over time, regular checkups and

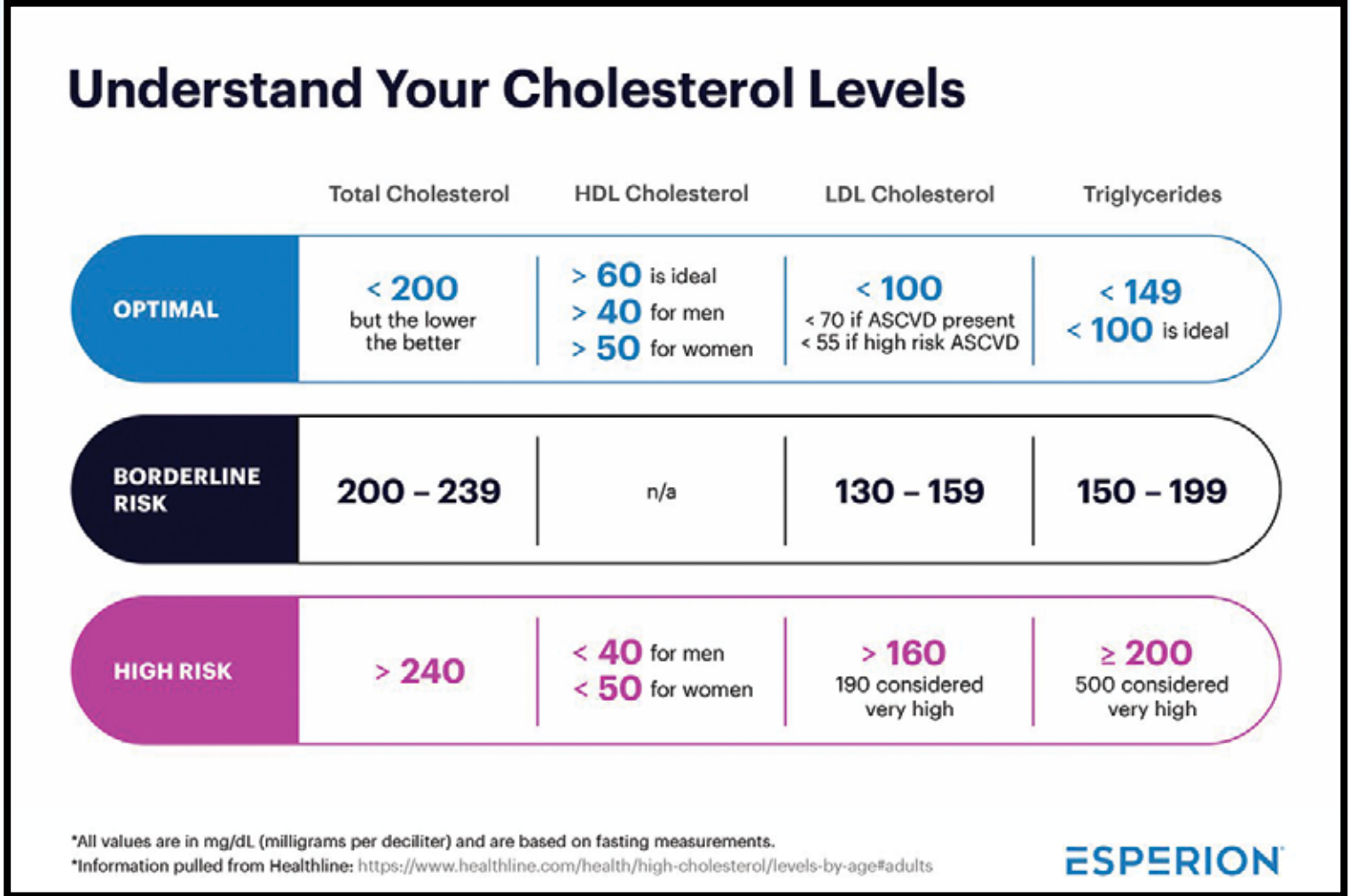
testing are crucial.

As you embark on your journey toward better heart health, having baseline numbers to compare against can be helpful. Here's an infographic that overviews the levels of total cholesterol, including HDL-c, LDL-c and triglycerides, and the ranges of each that we should strive for in pursuit of optimal heart health:

Today and every day, my hope is that we can spotlight heart health as a foundational women's health issue, raising awareness of the risk factors that are contributing to rising levels of cardiac events in women. With this in mind, I'd like

to encourage everyone to get their numbers checked if they haven't done so recently, and to consider small changes to improve cholesterol levels, such as eating heart-healthy foods, exercising regularly, losing weight and drinking alcohol in moderation. Even small changes can make a big impact on your heart health.

Our heart health is important 24 hours a day and 365 days a year. Gradual changes in lifestyle choices paired with regular checkups and testing with doctors can make all the difference for our heart health.





Cooking with Anna (continued from page 13)

## *Straighten Up!*

by Anna Hamilton

*continued from page 13*

*My mind is a steel trap of every time I have disappointed myself or someone else. Every time I didn't feel accepted by my peers. Every time I felt as if I had failed. All of these negative feelings and thoughts piled on me like a 1000-pound weight. I could not break free from the weights that entangled me. I felt so heavy that there was no way I could ever ask God for his help. Why would He extend his love to me?*

*But, God does love unconditionally. God does not want me to feel that I am not worthy of His love, and He doesn't want you to feel that way either. We are children of God. Romans 8:14-17 so beautifully reassures us that we are God's children. "For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ." We are no longer slaves to all the negative thoughts that have kept us bent. We are children of God! We are heirs, just like Christ, of God.*

*Taking on Christ and becoming a Christian does not keep us free from the feelings of this world. As Christians, we suffer from anxiety, fear, and depression just like others in the world. For myself especially, anxiety can be crippling at times. I will literally pick at my fingers until they bleed when I can't quiet my mind from running rapid with negative thoughts. I feel heavy, like I can't breathe. When I feel anxiety crushing my spirit, I have to quickly remind myself to not lose heart, and let me assure you that it is very difficult to do when you are battled.*

*To me, 2 Corinthians 4 is one of the most encouraging and beautiful chapters in all of the Bible. It assures us that we have the ministry of God living inside of us and even in our bent state and anxiety, God can use us to shine His light. "Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from*

*God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed." 2 Corinthians 4:1, 6-9*

*Satan wants us to believe that anytime trouble, anxiety, comes our way we are to remain burdened. We are to keep our heads down and continue to carry the weight of the shame we feel. Oh, what a lie we have believed. What a lie I have believed! This is the year to throw away those feelings of not being worthy of love.*

*You see, just as 2 Corinthians 4 says, we carry around treasures in jars of clay. The world will press us on every side but we will not be crushed, we will be confused, but we will not despair; we will be persecuted, but God will never leave us; we will be struck down, but God will never allow us to be destroyed! Whatever Satan tries to take us down with, God will destroy. We have taken on Christ, and we are worthy of God's full love. He knows everything about us, and He still loved us so much that He sent His only son to die for our sins. God has seated us with Christ (his son) in the heavenly realms. "But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus." Ephesians 2:4-6*

*Stand up straight! Walk upright and let the love of God flow from you. Walk upright and be an example to all those around you of how the love of God can completely change your life. Walk upright and believe that you are worthy of God's love.*

*This week's recipe is as good as any Chinese takeout. It's a delicious pepper steak with squash. Feel free to serve this yummy stir-fry with cauliflower rice. I know my family loves this, and I am sure yours will too! As always, feel free to swap the beef for chicken, salmon, or shrimp, all of which would be delicious!*

*"Therefore, we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal." 2 Corinthians 4:16-18*

# The Importance Of Holidays

by Mae Lewis

It's around this time of the year, Valentine's Day especially, that I hear an undercurrent of complaints about the WHY of holidays, usually by unhappy singles bemoaning the fact that they cannot find a partner. "Holidays are pointless;" "Holidays are just invented by the greeting card companies to create revenue." And Valentine's Day is not the only day that this complaint is made. I hear this often throughout the year regarding what seems like superfluous holidays: Halloween, President's Day, even Christmas sometimes brings about a response akin to "Aren't we making too much of this?"

But holidays are important for several reasons; while they may be over-marketed by the greeting card companies, they are important

for us to not only remember, but celebrate and be fully present for. Here are three reasons why:

1) A rhythm to life: Holidays mark the times and seasons. They help us to establish a rhythm to life and keep track of the passing of time. They turn life into a delightful melody that we know and can sing along with: New Year's, Valentine's Day, President's Day, Easter, 4th of July, Labor Day, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and repeat. They offer us a time to relax (if we know how!) and connect with family and friends and the things that make life meaningful. Children grow older, marry, and have their own children. Holidays help us to remember and mark the passing of time as the sea-

sons change and we grow older.

2) Reminder to be present. Holidays help us to slow down and take a look around us. Smell the roses. Enjoy the moment. Soak in the laughter. Holidays offer a moment of respite from the busyness of life, and help us to remember what is truly important. In holidays, we have opportunities to create the bonds between family and friends that connect us to our community, our history, and our culture. Celebrating traditions is an important part of this.

3) A reminder to celebrate. Life is hard. REALLY hard. But we have much to be thankful for. Holidays remind us that there is always something to celebrate. Everyone wants more love and laughter

and life in their days, but holidays remind us that we have to be intentional in creating and preserving love, laughter, and life. Whether it is cherished memories or new chapters, there is always something to celebrate on any holiday.

4) Creating a sacred space. The word holiday literally means holy day, and anything that is holy is set apart, sacred, or consecrated. Holidays days are literally set apart from the rest of the ordinary and mundane days of life. They are a reminder that all of life has a divine element to it: beauty, truth, bravery, honor, love. But just like a temple or a church creates a space where the divine touches the common, holidays are a space where the sacred meets the mundane.

Even on Valentine's Day,

amidst the candy and the chocolate, we are reminded that love is the most powerful thing in the human heart. And while Valentine's Day tends to bring romantic love to the forefront, it is just as important to remember the other loves in our life: family, friends, and pets; it's a reminder to cherish what you have, and appreciate the divine and holy gift of love.

As another example, Memorial Day is a day that we can celebrate and acknowledge honor, bravery, and sacrifice -- even if we don't personally know of anyone who has served.

Holidays are a reminder that we have extraordinary, divine things to be thankful for, to celebrate, and to share. And while we need to be intentional about creating moments, we do not have to get caught up with the hustle and bustle of holidays in order to make them meaningful, or in order to appreciate them. It is often too easy to rush past, or barely acknowledge, a holiday simply because we feel it doesn't apply to us.

For each holiday, ask yourself what is sacred about it, and take a moment to find the meaning in that holiday. Then find a way to intentionally celebrate, acknowledge, and embrace that value on that day: Be present, create a tradition, slow down. It doesn't have to be an elaborate banquet or gift exchange. It can be simply meeting a friend for coffee! But holidays are reminders of what is important about being human, and we are never "making too much" of the things that make us human.





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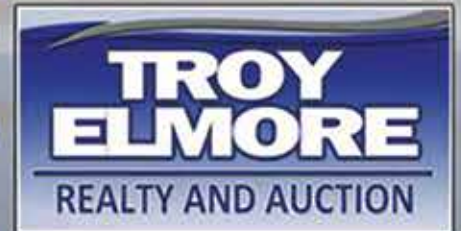
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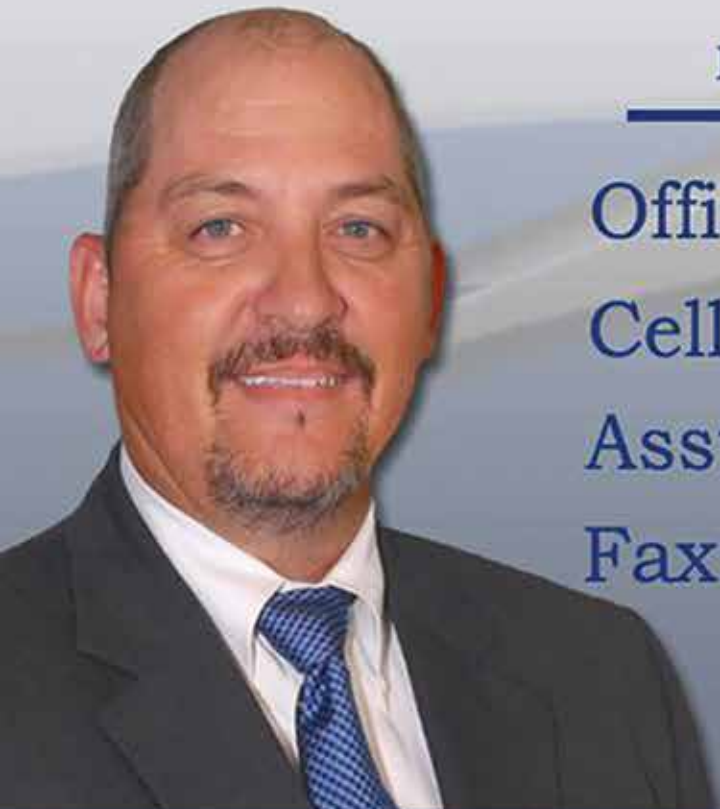
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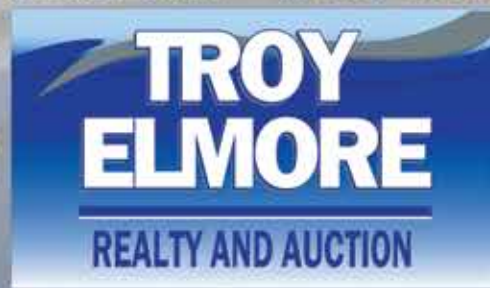
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*It always seems impossible until it's done.*

*~ Nelson Mandela*



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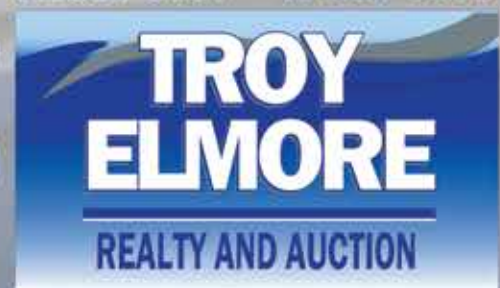
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