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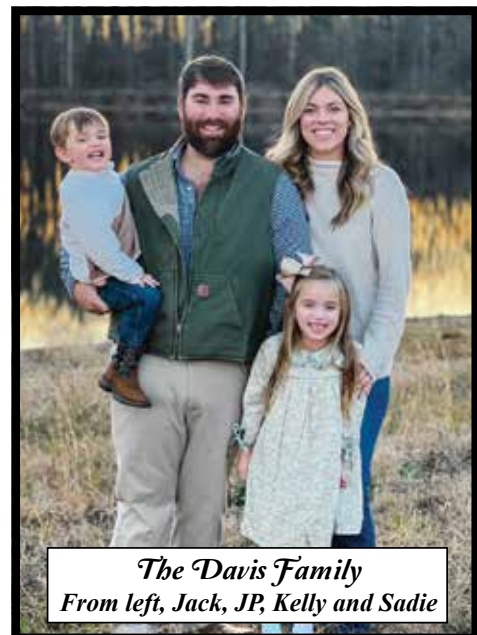
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Vote For Kelly Davis, Limestone County Circuit Court Clerk

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

Athens native Kelly Davis is running for Circuit Court Clerk, and intently desires the opportunity to serve the people of our area. Her commitment as a candidate comes from deep inside, and it is: "With 10 years of experience in the law and financial fields, I know that I have the skills and knowledge that it takes to serve as Circuit Court Clerk. I understand the importance of the clerk's office and

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The Davis Family
From left, Jack, JP, Kelly and Sadie

Carissa's Corner

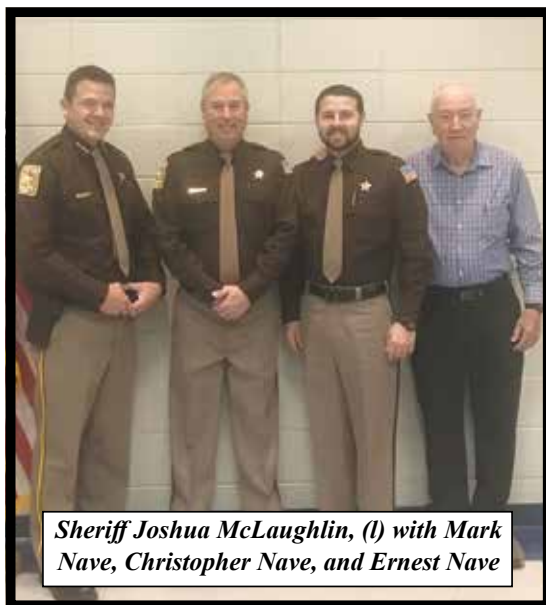
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Sheriff Joshua McLaughlin, (l) with Mark Nave, Christopher Nave, and Ernest Nave

LCSO Reserve Deputies: A Family Tradition And An Invitation To Serve

By Mark Nave and Ali Elizabeth Turner

For 40 years, 85-year-old Ernest Nave honorably served in the Alabama National Guard. He spent much of that time as "First Sergeant" for D Company, 1343rd

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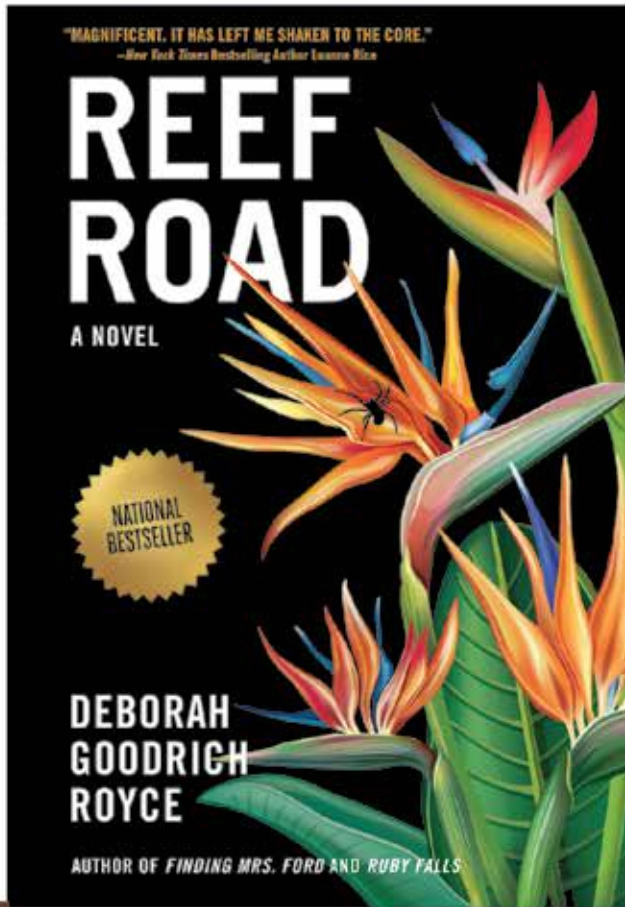
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Coffee with DEBORAH GOODRICH ROYCE

Deborah Goodrich Royce's thrillers examine puzzles of identity. Reef Road hit Publishers Weekly's Bestseller list, Good Morning America's Top 15 list, and was an Indie Next pick by the American Bookseller's Association for January 2023. Ruby Falls won the Zibby Award for Best Plot Twist in 2021 and Finding Mrs. Ford was hailed by Forbes, Book Riot, and Good Morning America's "best of" lists in 2019.



Tuesday, January 16 - 10:30am



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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
- Phil Williams
- Claire Tribble
- Stephanie Reynolds
- Joel Allen
- Carissa Lovvorn
- Roy Williams
- Jerry Barksdale
- Nick Niedzwiecki

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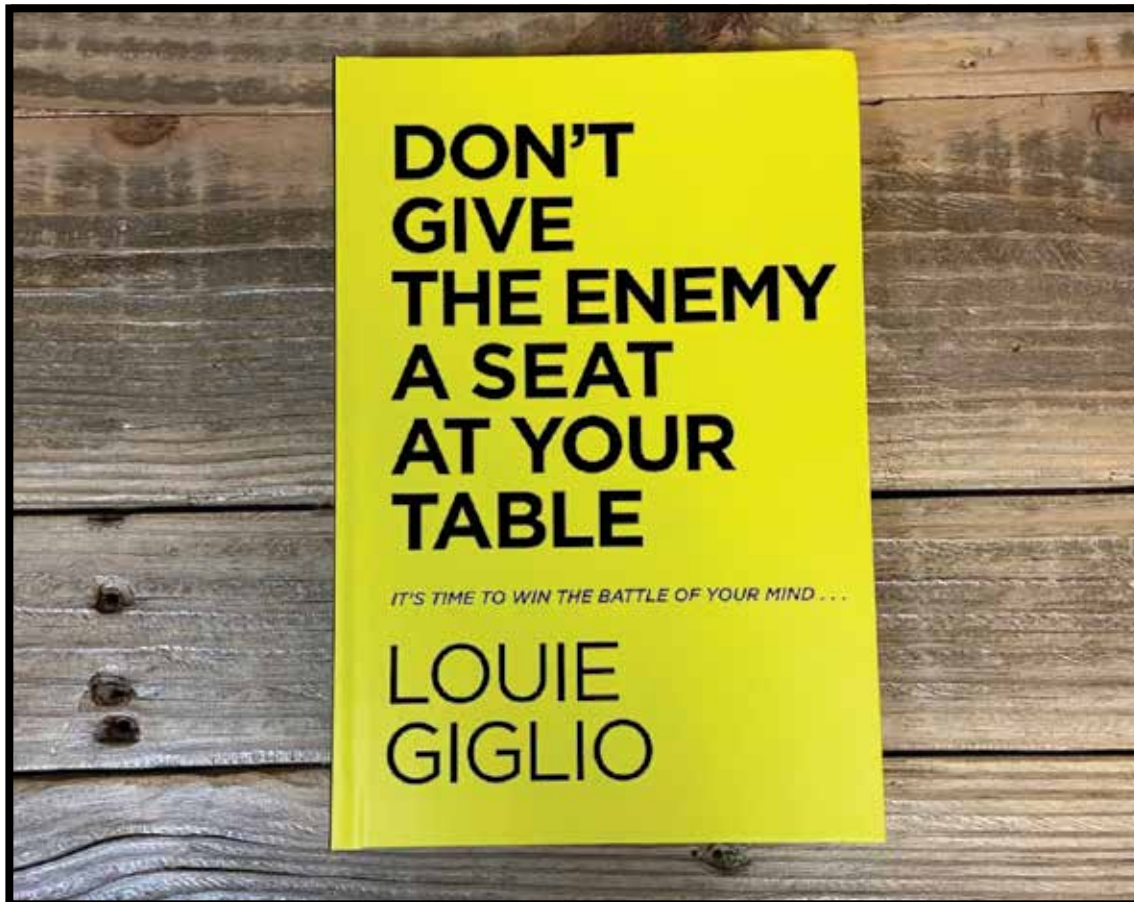
Publisher's Point

It's Time To Win The Battle Of Your Mind

For years, Pastor Lou Giglio out of Atlanta has been known for preaching sermons that are delightfully illustrative and easy to understand. He makes parables come alive by acting out the parts of those in the story, whether they are Bible characters or everyday folks, and he doesn't water down anything. He does what I find both refreshing and endearing: he busts himself, talks about his own struggles appropriately, and thus creates a safe place for the listener to do the same. He also does it with humor, which we all know when administered properly is as good as any medicine ever thought of being. *It's Time To Win The Battle Of Your Mind* is the subtitle of a book

whose actual title is *Don't Give The Enemy A Seat At Your Table*, and it contains one of the best treatments of Psalm 23 I have ever heard. Psalm 23, "The Lord is my Shepherd," who doesn't know that one? Doesn't it end up on every funeral bulletin, been on every inspirational calendar, made into a myriad of memes and cross-stitched into oblivion? Yep, and that's why, at least for me, when someone brings a fresh and accurate treatment of something that we could recite in our sleep, I sit up and pay attention.

When Lou preached the message of the book to



his congregation, he set up a literal table with literal delicious food at the front of the sanctuary, and he sat down and ate it. He did so while playing the parts of the Shepherd/King, the Sheep/Saint, and the defeated one. This guy is so good that he could be a screenwriter or playwright. The response of the congregation was a combination of conviction and chuckles, of "Ouch!" and "Oh, that's good." Everyone could get on the bus called, "That's me," and know that as long as they stayed on that bus, goodness and mercy were going to chase them down and overtake them.

How does Psalm 23 ap-

ply to the "battle for the mind?" Well, there is a table that has been prepared "in the presence of [our spiritual] enemies," and they are NOT supposed to SIT at the table and distract us from our feast and loving conversation with our Shepherd King. They are supposed to watch from a respectful distance and writhe over what has been purchased for us, forever undeserving as we are. But, what do we do when they "pull up a chair" at the feast? We hand them a plate, ignore the King, and listen as they perhaps talk with their mouth full. That, my friends, is the nature of a mind battle, and we have all been there.

The title itself was an actual text sent to Lou, something that he describes as being "nine words that changed my life," and they are, "DON'T GIVE THE ENEMY A SEAT AT YOUR TABLE!" Watch the sermon to get the picture, listen to get the parable, and read, highlight, and dog-ear the book. It's 2024, and it's time to win the battle!

Ali Elizabeth Turner

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



Victory Verticals -- The Power Of Music In War

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



Recently, I experienced one of my favorite things: learning something about WWII history that I had never heard. The source for this edition of *Soldier* is my friend and *Athens Now* columnist Colonel Phil Williams, and for one of his daily radio show monologues entitled *The Right Side Way*, he spoke of what the Steinway Piano Company did for our troops beginning in 1942. They produced around 5,000 of what were known as Victory Verticals, or sometimes referred to as G.I. pianos. Everything about them was ingenious.

The 40-inch uprights were dropped out of B-17s, and were encased in specially designed crates that could handle the shock of the landing while protecting the piano. They were covered first in an anti-insect and especially anti-termite solution, followed by several coats of paint depicting the different service branches and sealed with a special glue to keep them from getting ruined by the humidity of the Pacific theatre or any other weather extremity they might encounter all over the globe. The Army's "Verticals" were painted olive drab, the other two colors were navy blue and gray. They had no front legs, because they would have broken too easily, and were de-



signed to be carried by four soldiers out of the crate and to the place where they were going to be used. They could also just stay in the crate and have the soldiers come to them.

Of course, this was back in the day when all pianos had literal ivory keys, unlike today, but the keys of the G.I. pianos were compressed celluloid because ivory would have peeled off. In the shipping crate were tools for tuning and various songs of

sheet music. One Vertical traveled more than 25,000 miles, and Bob Hope amongst others used them in USO concerts.

Steinway has always been considered the premier producer of pianos worldwide, and it has been common for concert pianists to have their own personal Steinway shipped with them when they are on tour. However, there is only so much abuse a piano can bear, especially when it comes from the bomb bay of

a B-17, and here is an affectionate account of the music produced by a well-traveled Vertical:

"Although 88 noises, not all traditional ones, could be elicited from these pianos," wrote Elizabeth Randall, *"what universally characterized them were their sledgehammer touch, the waterlogged tone, stuck keys, missing ivories, squeaky pedals and their scarred, chipped, olive drab exteriors. No offense to the inherent good breeding of these instruments. They had been subject to a few years of tropics and war command treatment."*

As I think about the fact that it is coming up on 20 years ago this summer

that I had the privilege of going to Iraq, I am glad that in our Morale, Welfare and Recreation Department we got to bless the troops with music. We had concerts and talent shows, gave music and singing lessons, and the visiting Army bands of all kinds were unbelievably accomplished. From salsa to jazz to marching bands, music did what only music can do: bring joy, comfort, and a bit of home to our well-deserving soldiers, and build community.

God bless the visionaries of Steinway for making it possible for my father's generation of soldiers to be able to sing and play while they pushed evil back. And, let us remember to do the same in this generation.

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Calendar of Events

Silver Sneakers

Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday

Silver Sneaker classes at the Athens Limestone Public Library are now meeting from 1pm to 1:45pm on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Classes open to all. Equipment is provided. Donations accepted. More info: 256-614-3530 or jhunt9155@gmail.com.

Coffee Call January 6

Alabama Veteran's Museum, 100 Pryor St W, Athens, AL. 8-9:30am. Coffee Call Veterans and their families are invited for breakfast and fellowship from 8:00AM-9:30AM at the Alabama Veterans Museum and Archive (100 West Pryor Street in Athens). 256-771-7578

Play Outside Day January 6

Families everywhere are encouraged to get outside the first Saturday of every month and play in public parks, enjoy trails, hit the waterways, explore greenspaces and just play! Limestone County offers over 20 trails to explore including walking, cycling, horseback riding and kayaking – perfect for all ages. For more information: 256-232-5411.

VVA Chapter 511 meeting January 8

The first VVA Chapter 511 meeting for 2024 will be on Monday,

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

FB: www.facebook.com/YesterdaysEventCenter

Jan. 8 at 6 p.m. at the AL Veterans Museum, 114 W. Pryor St. in Athens. All VVA and AVVA members are invited to attend.

Gettin' Dirty At The Library January 9

11AM-12PM. Free and Open to the Public. Whooping Cranes Presentation by Travis Roddy from the International Crane Foundation Baraboo, WI. Just in time for the annual Crane Festival in Decatur at the Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge scheduled for the weekend of January 12-14, 2024. Travis will tell the story of the Whooping Crane that faced extinction, but is on the rebound thanks to some clever programs and dedicated conservationists. Limestone County Master Gardeners. Athens-Limestone Public Library, 603 Jefferson Street.

Bradley Walker in concert January 14

Berea Baptist Church in Athens AL will host Bradley Walker in concert on Sun night, Jan 14, 2024 at 6PM. Church location is 16779 Lucas Ferry Rd, Athens 35611. Free admission. Love offering will be received. Contact is Gary Wilson 256-497-9763.

Coffee With Deborah Goodrich Royce January 16

10:30am. Athens Limestone County Library. Deborah Goodrich Royce's thrillers examine puzzles of identity. Reef Road hit Publishers Weekly's Bestseller list, Good Morning America's Top 15 list, and was an Indie Next pick by the American Bookseller's Association for January 2023. Ruby Falls won the Zibby Award for Best Plot Twist in 2021 and Finding Mrs. Ford was hailed by Forbes, Book Riot, and Good Morning America's "best of" lists in 2019.

Digital Literacy Classes

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





Carissa's Corner

Just A Call Away

by Carissa Lovvorn

Over the holidays, my family and I volunteered for Operation Care International's One Day Movement in Dallas, TX. Each year, this nonprofit hosts a Christmas Gift event that benefits families facing economic hardships and the homeless in the Dallas area. This year's event was another great success. There were roughly 5,000 people in attendance which included 2,000 children and their families, 1,200 volunteers, and over 1,000 homeless guests including many veterans.

The night prior to the event, my husband and I went to the Dallas Convention Center to set up the "Storytime with Ms. Carissa" area. As soon as we walked into the convention hall, we were blown away by the magnitude of outreach that was to take place the next day. The massive room was organized into stations for haircuts, dental checkups, Santa visits, and entertainment/ games for the children. There were giveaway areas for coats, toys, shoes, detergent, and food. There were areas for counseling, veteran outreach, evangelism, and foot washing. As I walked through the portion set aside for the homeless guests, one area brought tears to my eyes. It was labeled "Phone Home." This service provided individuals with an opportunity to call home. Regardless of the initial cause, homelessness tends to result in a detachment from friends and fam-



ily members. This void is even more apparent during the holiday season when families strive to spend time together.

While reflecting on the emotional impact of being in that type of situation, I was reminded of what it is like to be disconnected from our Heavenly Father. During my teens and early 20s, I strayed from my

faith and was living a life completely opposite of God's plan. It was a very lonely and uncertain time. It took many years for me to realize that God was always near even though I felt alone. The Bible is filled with scripture concerning calling out to God in times of trouble. Take these three verses for example:

"Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, 'Here I am.'" (Isaiah 58:9 NKJV)

"I called on Your name, O Lord, from the lowest pit. You have heard my voice; 'Do not hide Your ear from my sighing, from my cry for help.' You drew near on the day I called on You, and said,

"Do not fear!" (Lamentations 3:55-57)

"For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in mercy to all who call upon You." (Psalm 86:5)

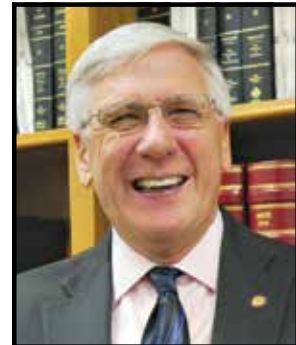
The number of homeless guests that were served that day reflected only a small percentage of those suffering in the United States. The awareness that so many people spend the holidays alone is humbling. I am thankful for groups like Operation Care International who strive to bring joy, compassion, and God's love to those in need. And much like the homeless who called home this Christmas, all we need to do is call out to our Heavenly Father. He is always near.

*Many Blessings,
Carissa Lovvorn*

What Makes Ronnie Roll

2024 Goals And Missions

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



When the mayor and I got together, 2024 had been with us for a little over 48 hours, and there was much to talk about. Mayor Ronnie came bounding in, and as much as the holiday break had been needed, it was good to be “back after it.” Public safety is always the highest priority, because without it, all the other things that make a city “sing” are “off key.” For the purpose of this discussion, public safety had a new sub-category: connec-

tivity. There are several road projects that are on the docket for 2024 that need to be completed in order to take pressure off of Hwy 72 and Hwy 31. With a new hospital in the Huntsville Hospital system slated for the Tanner area, connected roads will make it possible for first responders to get into neighborhoods quickly and not have to drive way out of their way. As Mayor Ronnie said, “When it’s a heart attack or stroke, every second counts.” The con-

nection between Cloverleaf and Hwy 31 as well as the road from Chickfil-A over to Forrest are two such projects.

“We have received a grant that is going to build a sidewalk from Elm that goes all the way to Athens High School,” said the mayor. Other projects will be a new Utilities Customer Service Center down near Mac’s on South Jefferson, and in addition to all the drainage and infrastructure work, Vine Street will get a

sidewalk. Finishing the Swan Creek Park (Make-A-Way) project is a goal, as well as Sunrise Park on Pryor. “Oh, and there will be more green spaces and walking trails as well,” he said.

We moved on to the topic of education, another important aspect of a community’s sense of connectivity and quality of life. “Julian Newman School is being renovated, and we are going to need to go to the bond market to get the rest of the financing,” said the

mayor. He added, “The flood areas are also getting taken care of.”

There is a new fire station getting under way, and in addition to the hospital in Tanner, there will also be a police station and firehouse. The general fund budget of 44.7 million dollars has been approved, and one of the tasks for 2024 will be to distribute appropriations to the more than 20 agencies such as Family Resource Center and United Way, and are in the process of being decided.

Later this winter will be the State of the City breakfast, sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and held once again at the Athens State University gym.

But what had us the most excited, as important as all of the things discussed above, was the Martin Luther King celebration of essays and art created by local students. The annual MLK march will be on Monday, January 15 at the courthouse and will go to the Veterans Museum where the contest will be held. I read one of the essays, a stirring piece that I believe would have made MLK smile. It was about the need for love in our community, and astutely made the case for what we all know to be true: without love, we are nothing.

Speaking of nothing, there was nothing left to do but pray, and so we did. And then, it was time for Ronnie to roll.



The 19th annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Essay & Art Contest, sponsored by The City of Athens, Limestone County & Limestone NAACP, is going on now! All entries are due by Friday, January 5

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BUILDING HOPE

It's Time For A COP-Out

by Phil Williams



I appreciate the freedoms of assembly, association, and the freedom of speech. I have no problem with people gathering to share their thoughts and opinions. We must be able to assemble peaceably to share thoughts and opinions without persecution or backlash of any kind. Having said that, it doesn't mean that I have to trust every assembly of opinionated pundits. In fact, there are some whose gatherings only serve to make me trust them less.

I try not to let myself delve too deeply into conspiratorial darkness, but there are a few groups that I believe are intent on wreaking havoc. Certain groups, once out in the open, speak their nonsense about what they will do if the rest of us don't get on board with their agendas. Every once in a while, there's a gathering that just seems next level -- as if something more is happening than just a cavalcade of opinions. As if evil just massed itself in one place and celebrated plans for world domination.

Sound extreme? Maybe. The two that give me the most pause are the annual gatherings of the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, Switzerland, and the United Nations Climate Change Conference known simply as the COP.

From these two meetings we hear calls to action

that sound like sub-plots from a Hunger Games movie, met by applause by the world's elite who look like Hunger Games characters. Calls to eliminate fossil fuels, to eat bugs, to eradicate national borders, to eliminate cultural norms, to erase biological truths, to declare crises where there are none, and to declare peace where there is none.

The WEF and the COP are the incubators of liberal progressive power grabs, fully sanctioned and attended by world leaders. They're agenda items make it into the policies, regulations, and laws of the nations of the world.

This year's UN climate conference, christened COP28, met in Dubai, The United Arab Emirates. A star-studded affair, with grand speeches and a heady atmosphere that comes from being in a room where everyone is important and every speech is like a sermon filled with words of life-changing evangelism. According to the United Nations website: The world came together to agree on ways to address the climate crisis, such as limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius, helping vulnerable communities adapt to the effects of climate change, and achieving net-zero emissions by 2050.

Impressive. Noteworthy. For the greater good.

Then they announced how they plan to engage the world in their quest

for all that is good, right, and fossil-fuel free.

First off, "after 30 years of waiting" more than 190 nations agreed to a framework to transition away from fossil fuels. Not climate activists and intellectual elites, but actual nations signing on to the COP28 agenda.

But that wasn't good enough. A spokesman for Africa Movement Building Space, adamantly stated: Proposing a transition away from fossil fuels may sound like a step in the right direction, a glimmer of hope amidst chaos. However, let us not underestimate the cunning tactics of fossil fuel giants and petrostates. They will cleverly disguise their products as 'transitional' fuels, especially in the most vulnerable corners of our world. Yet...Even the once unyielding fossil fuel giants and petrostates are now witnessing the inevitable - a world that's free of their toxic grip.

Guess who the "petrostates" are? You got it. The evil U.S. of A. is a charter member along with the UK and Germany. To atone for our sins, we pledged a joint commitment of \$700 million for a global climate reparations fund. Nice.

That was followed by a U.S. pledge of \$3 billion for a "Green Climate Fund" for reducing emissions and adapting to climate change in developing countries. Which then drew a rebuke because apparently we pledged

the same amount during the Obama years but only paid \$1 billion...just \$1 billion. But don't worry because COP28 also launched the first ever task force on international taxation to "tax polluting industries" worldwide with "the potential to unlock billions."

Biden's climate czar John Kerry was there representing the United States in an official capacity, lest anyone think that we are not fully on board with the whole climate-change-is-an-existential-crisis mantra. But the one attendee that really got me was the U.S. Department of Defense. What is the DoD doing at COP28? Aren't their wars to be fought, bad guys that need killing, threats that need stopping, tyrants that need toppling, or something?

Apparently climate change is the one true existential threat we face and therefore it is a matter of national security. It is imperative therefore that our uniformed warfighters attend the annual gathering of evil henchman known as the COP. The DoD was quite proud of its attendance and issued a press release to describe the climate change resilience of the various branches of the military, the commitment to combat global climate change by the armed forces of the United States, and to highlight the attendance of multiple high level DoD officials, announcing: The Defense Depart-

ment's role as a global leader in managing the impacts of climate change on resilience, peace and stability.

These are not rational people, but irrational people are ignored at great risk. Global taxation? Global climate reparations? And the fact that our military is bragging about its participation in an international conference in which the U.S. is excoriated as an evil "petrostate" is something we should not stand for.

The COP is a joke, but the COP is also serious. It is past time for the U.S. to instigate a COP-out.

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

Perfect Your Aim In 2024

by D. A. Slinkard

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

We have found ourselves flipping the calendar page to a new year, and 2024 is already in full swing ahead. I cannot believe how fast 2023 came and went, but I should not seem surprised because the older I get the faster time is passing by. In 2023, I celebrated some major milestones as I celebrated being married to my wife for 20 years along with having an eighteen-year-old daughter. I do not feel old enough to have a child quickly entering adulthood but here I am. It seems just like yesterday I too was beginning my trek into adulthood.

I want 2024 to be the best year of my life, and I want the same for you too! I am geared up for this year, and I already know what topics I will be writing on for each article. And though the times may be changing – my thought process has not changed much at all. I still believe in the power of positive thinking; I still believe in working hard; I still believe in putting our mind to accomplishing big things; and this is going to be the year which we bring it all together.

If you want big things to happen, you must plan for big things to occur, and it starts with goal setting. No matter when you are reading this article, whether it be the first of January or the end of January,

it is important that you start writing down your goals you want to accomplish this year. I still am amazed how many people never take the time to write down their goals, and then wonder why they never do anything great in their life. Begin today by writing down exactly what you want to accomplish this year. Take the time and put your thoughts onto paper, whether it be handwritten or typed.

Sadly, most people will never take the time to write down their goals and this is a major recipe for disaster. We need to visually see our goals, and this is why it is vitally important you take the time to write your goals down and place them in a location you will see frequently. Why is this important? We become so short-minded that we tend to forget what our long-term goals are but when we have that reminder before us, our chances of achieving these goals increase. We need to be reminded of what we want to achieve early and often.

Now is the time to think of some high-traffic areas, whether in your home, your vehicle, or even at work, where you can begin placing your written goals, and yes, you do want them in areas you are going to be seeing on a daily basis. The more often you are reminded of what your goal is, the better opportunities you have to en-




gain the goal into your everyday routine. Does this sound hard? Does it sound complicated? If you answered, “No,” it is because it is not hard and it is not difficult. But too many people pass on this small exercise because they lack the vision of understanding that the only thing standing between you and your goals – is you.


I am a believer that if you can believe it then you can achieve it, but it is going to take some work. Now is the time for you to begin laying the groundwork for a successful 2024. If last year was not exactly what you wanted out of life or even if it was, either way, we cannot look backwards to see our future successes or failures. We can only look forward and our success is going to be determined by what our goals are going to be and what we are willing to do in order

to achieve these goals.

When we do the little things in life, this is where we find the value. When we take small steps to bring us closer to achieving our goals, this is how we win at the game of life; however, if you never write down your goals – you will not be able to gauge your progress. When you


write down your goals, it is important to be as specific as possible. The more specific we are, the greater chances are of achieving our goals because too many of us are walking around without the proper idea of what we want to achieve. Thus, we aim for nothing and hit it every time.



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Clean, Green And Beautiful

New Year, New Goals

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

Keeping with the most popular New Year's tradition, Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful is making resolutions! However, unlike most people, we want our weight to increase! In 2023, KALB was responsible for removing 19,020 pounds of litter from Limestone County public lands and waterways. We have big plans for this next year in education, and events too!

My office assistant Earl and I have started a new program. We go out a couple of times a week and clean different spots in the city limits and the county. We started this at the end of November, and in 13 pickups, 120 bags of litter, many tires, and a lot of scrap metal has been cleaned up by the KALB office alone. According to Keep Alabama Beautiful, each bag averages 20 pounds. To put that into perspective, that's 2,400 pounds of bagged trash alone. We already have a list of locations to clean up next, but if you know of any locations, be sure to let us know so that we can make sure to add them to the list!

We hope that we can increase our volunteer base this year as well! We have so many amazing volunteers that continue to come out and support Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful continuously, and



we can't wait to meet even more great people. Our volunteers truly go above and beyond to help improve Limestone County! In the past five years, KALB has been very fortunate to have 2,300 volunteers participate at our events. We are on a mission to grow our base and make Limestone County better than ever!

Some of our most dedicated volunteers, James and Kathleen Cutting, continue to devote many hours and their hard work to help our community. They are responsible for removing literal tons of litter and trash from Limestone County roadsides and waterways. Last I spoke with Mr. Cutting, he was taking a load of 34 tires to the district shed to be recycled, and still has

22 that needed the rims removed. That's 56 tires they have removed from creeks and roadsides. He removed 13 tires and 4 televisions from Piney Creek at Hall Road alone last week, over maybe a tenth of a mile. James and Kathleen are truly dedicated to Limestone County, and we are beyond grateful for their time and hard work.

We started working on our 2024 Earth Day Expo several months ago. This year, we will have some exciting shows thanks to our generous and amazing sponsors. We have a soap bubble circus planned, Steve Trash - Rockin' Eco Hero, and a petting zoo with a kangaroo! So mark your calendars -- April 20, 2024, will be BIG!

Keep Athens-Limestone

Beautiful is working on fun and exciting new school programs for 2024 and beyond! We have some partnerships in the works to help bring new and exciting programs to all Athens City and Limestone County Schools. We are working with the Limestone County Commission Recycling Department to develop new recycling programs, and we are excited to implement them! We hope to have things ready soon, but we are always available to come speak to

your class or organization. KALB loves being in the classroom, and we are gearing up for a busy spring and fall already!

So cheers to the New Year! We hope that you reach your new goals, as we are working hard to reach ours. We hope that everyone is off to a great start that only gets better from here. And of course. We hope to see you at some of our events this year.



Become a Fan



(256) 233-8000

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www.KALBCares.com



Cooking with Anna

We've Only Got Today

by Anna Hamilton

It is the beginning of the year, and everyone seems to be making resolutions. It is the same thing every year. We decide to lose weight. We decide to save more money. We decide to go back to school. We decide to buy a nicer car. We decide to be a better person. But for most of us, by the end of January, we have already failed miserably at whatever we “decided” to do better.

For me, I set out with good intentions, but looking at a full 12-month calendar is so daunting. It is overwhelming and I set myself up for failure.

“After Christmas” Salad

Ingredients:

- 2 cups cauliflower, chopped*
- 2 cups broccoli, chopped*
- 1 cup red cabbage, chopped*
- 1 cup carrots, chopped*
- 1 ½ cups fresh parsley, chopped*
- 2 celery stalks, chopped*
- ½ cup raw almonds, chopped*
- ½ cup raw sunflower seeds*
- 1/3 cup raisins*
- 3 Tbsp olive oil*
- ½ cup lemon juice*
- 1 Tbsp fresh ginger, peeled and grated*
- 2 Tbsp honey*
- Salt and pepper to taste*

Sometimes looking at the big picture is a big mistake. Instead, we should not think about what can happen in a month or in a year. We should just focus on the 24 hours right in front of us. We should focus on what we can do in that one day to be closer to where we want to be.

None of us are promised tomorrow. We only have

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Directions:

To make salad dressing, place olive oil, lemon juice, ginger, honey, salt, and pepper in a small bowl. Whisk until blended. Refrigerate while you chop the vegetables.

Chop all vegetables and place in a large bowl, toss salad with dressing and serve.

This salad lasts for several days in the refrigerator and just gets better the longer it sits.

Embracing Transformation: *If Nothing Changes, Nothing Changes*

by Nick Niedzwiecki - Owner, CrossFit Athens

In the tapestry of life, change is the thread that weaves its way through every experience and every moment. It is the catalyst for growth, the harbinger of new opportunities, and the force that propels us forward on our journey. Yet, amidst the inevitability of change, there exists a profound truth: If nothing changes, nothing changes. This simple yet profound statement encapsulates the essence of personal and collective transformation.

The Comfort of Familiarity

Human beings are creatures of habit, finding solace in the familiar and the routine. The comfort of the known often lulls us into a sense of security, creating a bubble where change is perceived as a disruptor rather than an enabler. However, this aversion to change can be a double-edged sword. While familiarity offers stability, it can also breed stagnation, inhibiting personal and societal progress.

Personal Growth and Resilience

At the heart of the adage "If nothing changes, nothing changes," lies the concept of personal growth. Growth is an inherent aspect of the human experience, and it is through change that we find the impetus for self-discovery and development. Challenges and setbacks become stepping stones, shaping our character and instilling resilience. By embracing change,

we open ourselves up to a world of possibilities, fostering adaptability and fortitude in the face of adversity.

Breaking the Chains of Routine

Routine can be a comforting cocoon, shielding us from the unpredictability of life. However, it is also the breeding ground for monotony and complacency. To break free from the chains of routine, one must be willing to step into the unknown, to explore uncharted territories of experience. This willingness to embrace change is not a rejection of stability but rather a recognition that growth lies beyond the confines of the familiar.

Professional Development and Innovation

In the professional realm, the maxim "If nothing changes, nothing changes" holds particularly true. Businesses and industries that resist change risk becoming obsolete in a rapidly evolving world. Innovation is the lifeblood of progress, and organizations that foster a culture of adaptability and creativity are the ones that thrive. From technological advancements to shifts in market dynamics, the ability to navigate change becomes a key determinant of success.

Collective Responsibility for Societal Change

On a societal level, the adage serves as a call to action. If we desire a better

world, we must be willing to challenge the status quo and advocate for positive change. Societal progress is not an automatic outcome but rather a collective effort fueled by the recognition that, indeed, if nothing changes, nothing changes. Whether addressing issues of social justice, environmental sustainability, or economic inequality, a proactive stance towards change is imperative for building a brighter future.

Overcoming Fear of the Unknown

The resistance to change often stems from a fear of

the unknown. The uncertainty that accompanies change can be intimidating, leading many to cling to the safety of the familiar. However, it is precisely in facing the unknown that we discover our true potential. By reframing our perspective and viewing change as an opportunity for growth rather than a threat, we can overcome the fear that hinders progress.

Conclusion

In the tapestry of life, change is the constant that propels us forward on our journey of self-discovery, growth, and societal prog-

ress. The simple yet profound truth encapsulated in the phrase "If nothing changes, nothing changes" serves as a reminder that stagnation is the antithesis of development. By embracing change, we open ourselves up to a world of possibilities, breaking free from the shackles of routine, fostering personal and professional growth, and contributing to the collective endeavor of creating a better world. So, let us not fear change but rather welcome it as the harbinger of transformation and the catalyst for a brighter future.



- ATTEND A TRIAL CLASS THAT WORKS FOR YOUR SCHEDULE
- START WITH SCALED WORKOUTS
- FOCUS ON TECHNIQUE AND INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE COACH
- STAY CONSISTENT- RESULTS DON'T HAPPEN OVERNIGHT.
- HAVE FUN!



Vote For Kelly Davis, Limestone County Circuit Court Clerk

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

continued from page 1

am looking forward to the opportunity. I will work tirelessly to ensure that our community continues to be a wonderful place for all of us."

For people who are new to the area, the Circuit Court Clerk has a number of areas of responsibility, each of which is crucial to the smooth running of the judicial offices of our county. According to the Limestone County Circuit Court website, here is a breakdown and description of the ten divisions within that office:

The Circuit Clerk serves as the courts "official record keeper" and business manager on all court proceedings held in the District and Circuit Courts. While the Circuit Clerk serves as an administrative arm of the Court, the primary responsibilities are to maintain court records and manage the collection and disbursement of court funds for the court system

with integrity and security at all times.

On a daily basis, the Circuit Clerk's Office interacts with the public while managing court pleadings, collecting fines and fees, preparing subpoenas and issuing court notices for scheduled trials and hearings. These court records are divided into ten different divisions that include Civil, Criminal, Domestic, Child Support, Traffic, Juvenile and Warrants. Jury management also falls under the duties of the Circuit Clerk.

They also handle passports, evictions, and absentee ballots. In other words, all of this involves the need for having "drop-dead gorgeous" documents and squeaky-clean financial records that are readily accessible to all that need them. Kelly is no stranger to all of these categories, having worked for the law offices of Alexander, Corder and Shelley for six years. Kelly was in the Circuit Court Clerk's office

many times a week, and she describes it as "the hub of the court system." For the past four years, she has worked for Synovus Mortgage, another job that carries a great deal of responsibility. Kelly feels that both experiences, as well as her role in the community, have prepared her well to step into this position.

Backing up a bit, Kelly is the daughter of Greg and Dianne McAlister and is a graduate of Athens High School. She attended UNA, Calhoun, and Athens State, and married her high school sweetheart, JP. They have two children, Sadie and Jack. Kelly has been involved in the community on a number of fronts. When in high school, she became part of the leadership/player team that helped Athens High win the softball championship. Kelly has been the co-chair for the Limestone Chamber of Commerce Ambassador Program, has served on Athens Main Street and United Way. She is also a member of the Athena League. Near and dear

to her heart is being a member of First Baptist Church in Athens, and teaching Sunday school to middle school girls. What Kelly will dedicate herself to if she is elected is what she calls making sure that "every document and every dollar is handled with efficiency." She also wants to utilize her experience working in a law firm to support Limestone County's judicial and law enforcement systems in all that they do as it pertains to managing documents excellently. "My goal is to handle documents and payments in a timely manner, with honesty, security and integrity," she said. More than anything, Kelly wants everyone who comes into the office to "feel heard and cared for." In addition, she wants to "open the doors of service" for the clerk's office in appropriate ways that are within the purview of the office.

Kelly is fully aware that because our county is experiencing unprecedented



Sadie's personal yard sign for her mom's campaign

growth, the increase in the demands upon the Circuit Court Clerk's office has increased significantly as well. In a word, Kelly is ready and willing to be of service. "The opportunity to serve and the passion I feel for this place are not something I take lightly," she told me. Recently Kelly had an experience that served to provide her with a literal banner for her campaign, and it came from her daughter, Sadie. The family was out campaigning with the kids tucked close by within a safe line of sight. "We were just about popsicles, and when I got back into the car Sadie gave me what she had been working on." It was Sadie's version of Kelly's campaign "yard sign," and as only a five-year old can create, it had the perfect "call to action." It simply says, "Kelly Davis Limestone County Circuit Court Clerk." Kelly said further, "It served as a special reminder of one of the big reasons that I want to serve. This community is our home. I want to continue to see it prosper and be the absolute best place that it can be now and for generations to come." If this kind of approach is what you are looking for as part of the leadership of Limestone County, then vote for Kelly Davis on March 5.



KELLY DAVIS
Limestone County
Circuit Court Clerk

Dark Week 2023

by Stephanie Reynolds, Athens-Limestone Tourism Association



- New.
- New year.
- New ideas.
- New projects.
- New you.
- New.

I love the new year. Well, actually I love the week before the new year, between Christmas and January 1. It's that quiet time when the busyness of Christmas is over, but no one's in a hurry to get back to work.

I call that my "dark week." Not dark as in sad or dreary, but dark as in comfy cocoon -- snuggled all in the warmth of hearth and home, shedding the last year's sorrows and strains that were getting too heavy for my heart to carry, working on my little nubbin-wings of ideas and plans, and ready to unfurl my arms out wide as soon as the calendar page turns over.

Resolutions? Eh, maybe. Hopeful plans? Yes, definitely.

New fancy, colorful project management app? Absolutely.

I've learned many things this year:

1. It is okay, and even healthy, to whirl about and glare at those old hurts and traumas and shames straight in the eye and say, "Fine. Yes, that happened. Now, shoo." and let all that go. I think it is shock more than sorrow that keeps us bound to the past. It's the "I can't believe this happened!" struggle between heart and mind that keeps us suspended in that moment of trial.

When we can accept "Yes it did, but that's over now," we free ourselves from being stuck in that time. Our brains and hearts can digest what we have finally decided to swallow.

2. That life is brief, which sounds cliché when you keep it in your head, but when you actually think about it, it becomes the very fuel for your fire of activity. When you live like you are literally, actually on borrowed time, you learn to pare out the waste and seize the moment.

3. That sometimes rules have to be broken for the logical, more reasonable, more helpful, more heartfull good. Rules are useful and comfortable, giving structure to our lives, but the rules aren't the master of love. Love is the master of rules.

4. That motivation only goes about |-| this far. Discipline and systems/habits make the hard things easy. Get to where you don't think about doing, you just

do it. If you give yourself time to think, your brain absolutely will come up with reasons not to do a hard thing. So don't ask for its opinion. Just do the exercise, eat the broccoli, stay off the internet, say you're sorry, whatever you need to do. Don't wait to WANT to do it (no one really WANTS to eat broccoli -- okay, there is one restaurant that makes broccoli taste better than fries, but I digress...). Don't think "Am I going to?" think "I am going to."

5. That new things stretch us and make us fly. They can be scary, but they are rewarding. The caterpillar chooses not to slowly but comfortably inch and wiggle around in the sun at its own whims, but takes the time to create a space to develop, to grow. It means having to say good-bye to the familiar, the comfortable, the habit, and to enter stillness and quiet for a time. But the reward is being able to walk AND fly.

So what are you doing for the new year, my beautiful

caterpillars and butterflies? Are there old shackles from which you need to break free? Are there new horizons that you are eager to reach? Are you needing your own cozy, dark "cocoon week" to get a plan together but are thinking it's too late by the time you read this wonderful suggestion in the paper after January 1? It isn't too late! In reality there is nothing magic about the turn of the year, it's just a convenient bookmark. The turn of the month, the turn of the day, the turn of a second is a great time for a new start. Take it. Do it. I'm pulling for you.

As for us, new things are on the horizon for our office, and I am so excited! We are looking at new ideas, new plans, new engagement with YOU, my amazing Athens-Limestone County people. You have been on my mind and in my heart.

I am listening to you moms who need to know where you can take your kids, you singles who want more than a bar scene, you new people

who are eager to jump into Athens with both feet, you honored elders who hold the knowledge of our county under that amazingly coiffed hair.

I am also asking for your help. Send me your photos (I'm a terrible photographer, you would be doing me a HUGE favor if you would let me use your photos for our Facebook and Instagram), your favorite places, your ideas. I am one who LOVES the photos of your cat, dog, family, flowers, meals. Come to my office by the duck pond and have a cup of tea and tell me what you love about Athens. Email me at stephanie@athensal.com. Follow us on Instagram at [athenslimestone tourism](https://www.instagram.com/athenslimestone tourism). Hit up our Facebook page: Athens-Limestone County Tourism. Help us let other people know how fabulous you are!

New things on the horizon are just waiting for us to run to them. I got my shoes on, who's with me?



LCSO Reserve Deputies: *A Family Tradition And An Invitation To Serve*

by Mark Nave and Ali Elizabeth Turner

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Engineer Battalion. He remembers his time served with fondness for those serving with him. As if working full-time for the Guard wasn't enough, Ernest also served as a reserve deputy with the Limestone County Sheriff's Office for 12 years under then Sheriff Buddy Evans. At the time, Ernest had no idea that he would have a son, Mark Nave, and a grandson, Christopher Nave, follow in his footsteps. "It was a simpler time," Ernest recently told Mark. "There was no real talk about drugs back then, and we didn't do as much training as deputies do today," he added. However, in addition to being on patrol with a full-time deputy, dealing with traffic and responding to calls with a full-time deputy, they did deal with what were, back then, considered to be "bootleggers." Limestone County was still a dry county, and people were bringing in booze from Huntsville.

Several years ago, Mark sought training from Cameron Bucy, owner of Security Defense Solutions. Cameron provides high-level firearms training, security, security consulting services, self-defense classes, and investigation services. I can personally say SDS is excellent. I took firearms and self-defense training from Cameron myself, and I am grateful for the level of confidence his training has given

me. Furthermore, if I know that SDS guys are the ones that are assigned to protect, they will do it well.

These hard skills that Mark learned from Cameron opened up a conversation with Sheriff Mike Blakely four years ago while they were at a Coffee Call at the Veterans Museum. Blakely told Mark that he would be a good candidate for a reserve deputy position. Mark had not really considered it before but was intrigued. He is not ex-military like his father, and did not wish to quit his full-time job at SA Recycling to pursue a career in law enforcement. The reserve deputy position seemed to be a good avenue for applying his "protector skills." Mark said, "The main goal that I wanted to achieve was to earn the respect of all the deputies, and for them to know that I would do everything I could to make sure that they went home safely to their families after every shift."

Mark is currently enrolled in the reserve academy. It is the police academy designed for those who work civilian jobs Monday through Friday, but are willing to attend academy training on the weekends. If all goes as planned, he will graduate in about a year. "None of this would be possible if I didn't have the support of my SA Recycling family," says Mark. "My boss, Jordan Quinton, has been a great encouragement, and I want everyone to know how blessed I feel to work for SA. In addition, Sheriff McLaughlin has been wonderful. He runs the re-



Mark Nave was voted reserve deputy of the year for 2023

Christopher Nave receiving his reserve star from Sheriff McLaughlin

serve program as it should be, and has earned the respect of us all. He certainly has our full support," Mark noted.

Recently, Mark's oldest son Christopher became a reserve deputy for the LCSO, making him the third generation of the Nave family to do so. Christopher has also trained under Cameron Bucy for several years developing the same types of skills as his father. "Christopher loves people and truly has a servant's heart," Mark says. "These are characteristics that you hope every deputy has that is responding to your 911 call," he added. Christopher is considering a career in law enforcement and the reserve deputy program is

a good way to find out if it will be a good fit for him.

Mark further noted, "The reserve deputy is a volunteer position. The main objective is to provide support to the full-time deputies. The reserve must meet the same standards and certifications as the full-time deputies when it comes to the physical abilities test as well as firearms qualifications for each piece of equipment used. In addition, reserve officers need to be able to meet the minimum service hours per month."

So here is the "invitation part" of the article. Sheriff Josh McLaughlin is looking for "a few good men...and women" to consider volunteering as a re-

serve deputy officer. What do you need to be considered and to do well? More than anything, you need to have a heart to serve, a love for the people of Limestone County, and a desire to be part of a challenging and satisfying set of opportunities to give back. The LCSO has room for all kinds of people, including but not limited to ex-military personnel, pilots, doctors, retired officers, first responders, and people involved in the personal/executive protection industry.

Consider joining the ranks, and contact the Limestone County Sheriff's Office at 256-232-0111 to find out how. Who knows? It just might become a family affair!

Longing For Liberation

by Eric Betts, Udemy Instructor in Religion, Leadership and Ethics



As the real work of Christmas love and generosity extends beyond the actual day of celebration, it is important to reflect upon the profound meaning of a text which is commonly studied during the Advent season:

At that time there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon. He was righteous and devout and was eagerly waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue Israel. The Holy Spirit was upon him and had revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Lord's Messiah. That day the Spirit led him to the Temple. So, when Mary and Joseph came to present the baby Jesus to the Lord as the law required, Simeon was there. He took the child in his arms and praised God, saying, "I have seen your salvation, which you have prepared for all people. He is a light to reveal God to the nations, and he is the glory of your people Israel!" Jesus' parents were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them, and he said to Mary, the baby's mother, "This child is destined to cause many in Israel to fall, and many others to rise. He has been sent as a sign from God, but many will oppose him. As a result, the deepest thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your very soul. Luke 2:25-28, 30-35

Through the lens of liberation theologians, this biblical passage from the Gospel of Luke may be interpreted as a prophetic vision of liberation and salvation for marginalized and left behind communities. Simeon's wait for the Messiah indicates an anticipation for divine intervention, which is similar to the longing for liberation and justice among historically pushed aside groups.

The text notes that the Messiah is a "light to reveal God to the nations," suggesting that Christ's mission embraces every nation, tribe, and tongue, embodying liberation and equality for all people. The prophecy that Jesus will cause many to fall and many others to rise may be seen as a call for societal transformation, where exploitative structures are dismantled and disenfranchised communities are uplifted. Additionally, Simeon's prediction of Mary's suffering could be interpreted as a symbolism of the collective pain endured by generations of pushed aside communities, pointing to a liberation that is achieved not without struggle and sacrifice.

Furthermore, Simeon's prophecy provides a nuanced view of liberation. While the arrival of the Messiah signals a time of joy and salvation, it also entails suffering and upheaval, as indicated by his prediction of Mary's future sorrow and the downfall of many. This dual imagery reflects the realities of liberation struggles—paving the way to justice often involves challenging confrontations and substantial sacrifices. Ultimately, Simeon's character and prophecy underscore the central themes of the promise of deliverance, the necessity of active faith, and the understanding that the road to liberation is often marked by hardships and sacrifices.

Consider, my friends, the fortitude of Simeon, who waited for the consolation of Israel,

the strength of spirit that he bore within him. Dreary days turned to weeks, weeks to months, months to years, and still he kept his gaze fastened upon the horizon, hungering for the fulfillment of the Lord's promise. Imagine the silent whispers of doubt that might have sought to creep into his heart, the nagging seeds of skepticism in the face of the passing years. Yet, Simeon stood unyielding, resolute in his faith. He was steadfast, anchored in a hope not of this world, a hope that transcended the trials of time. Every morning, he arose with renewed vigor, scanning the horizon, each passing day a testament to his unwavering belief. His spirit, kindled by divine love, refused to let the flame of hope be extinguished. Indeed, Simeon embodied the essence of true faith, a faith that hopes against hope, a faith that stands firm in the face of adversity.

Now let's flip the script for a minute. Unaware of the profound spiritual journey Simeon was traversing, the people around him in the temple went about their routines with a sense of detached indifference. They bustled along the temple corridors, their voices echoing off the ancient stone walls, engaged in their own worlds of rituals and discussions, oblivious to the divine drama unfolding in their midst. Their eyes were fixed on the ground, on their scrolls, on anything but the expect-

ant man fervently seeking a glimpse of the divine promise. They moved with a rhythm of monotony, their gestures robotic, their minds consumed in the mundanity of the day-to-day. Outside, the world was in flux, yet inside the temple, time seemed to stagnate, with little change or excitement to punctuate the rhythm of religious observances. The contrast between Simeon's active anticipation and the passive indifference of his fellow temple-goers was stark and palpable. The spiritual fortitude that Simeon bore within stood out against the backdrop of oblivious routine, casting him as a lone beacon of faith and hope among a sea of complacency.

This stark contrast between Simeon's fervent faith and the indifference of his contemporaries serves as a potent reminder for the readers of today. In our fast-paced world, where we are often caught up in our own routines and responsibilities, it is all too easy to lose sight of the bigger picture, to become indifferent to the divine drama unfolding around us. We can become so engrossed in our own realms of work, responsibilities, and personal pursuits, we forget to actively anticipate and seek the divine promises in our own lives.

To avoid falling into a similar pattern of passive indifference, it is essential that we intentionally cultivate an attitude of active anticipation, just like Simeon. This involves pausing, reflecting, and consciously seeking out the divine in our everyday lives. It means not just going through the motions of our routines, but actively engaging with our faith, seeking spiritual growth, and remaining open to divine interventions. By doing so, we can ensure that we are not just observers, but active participants in our spiritual journey.

As days turned into nights and seasons into years, Simeon clung fiercely to the divine

declaration bestowed upon him. Each breath he drew in was a testament to his faith, each heartbeat a silent prayer in anticipation of the promised Messiah. The Holy Spirit coursed within him like a mighty river, its rush of divine energy invigorating him, keeping his spirit ignited even when doubt attempted to seep through the cracks. His eyes, aged and weary yet ablaze with unwavering conviction, scanned the horizon day after day, yearning for the arrival of the Lord's Messiah. Every sunrise was a renewed promise, every sunset a day closer to the manifestation of the prophecy.

In our quest for meaning and purpose, we often find ourselves standing in Simeon's shoes. Each day, we face trials and tribulations, moments of doubt and despair, yet we persist, fueled by the faith and hope that resides deep within us. Our lives are a testament to our unwavering belief in the promises of tomorrow, our hearts echoing silent prayers with every beat. Our faith, much like Simeon's, remains undeterred by the passage of time, untarnished by the doubts and fears of the world around us.

Simeon's story is a powerful reminder to us all. It teaches us patience, perseverance, and undying faith in the face of adversity. His unwavering belief in the fulfillment of God's promise is a beacon of hope, illuminating our path through the dark corridors of doubt and despair. As we navigate our individual life journeys, let us remember Simeon's faith and draw strength from his unwavering belief. May his story inspire us to hold fast to our faith, to keep hope alive in our hearts, and to persevere in our quest for divine fulfillment. For in the end, like Simeon, we will witness the manifestation of our hopes and dreams, the fulfillment of our divine destinies.



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The Case of the Smarty Pants Would-Be Governor

by Jerry R. Barksdale

www.jerrybarksdale.com fb.com/jerry.barksdale.7



It was the mid-1970s when an RV with Kentucky plates and escorted by two motorcycles headed south on I-65 and crossed into Alabama. Limestone County Deputy Hargis (not real name) sat in his patrol car watching for speeders when the RV caught his attention. Why was it being escorted by motorcycles? He decided to check it out. He followed for a few miles before turning on his red light. The RV pulled over on the shoulder, and a middle-aged man wearing shorts and beach shirt stepped out.

"What's the problem officer?"

"What'che haul'n?" asked Hargis.

"Nothing."

"I'm gonna take a look-see," said Hargis.

"Not if you don't have a search warrant," said the man. "I know the law, and you don't have probable cause to board my vehicle and search."

"I don't need a search warrant – and don't get smart," warned Hargis. An argument ensued. Hargis boarded the RV and walked to the back, the man protesting all the way.

"Well, well, lookee here," said Hargis. Stacked in back of the RV were several cases of Kentucky beer. Alabama taxes hadn't been paid, and that was a crime. Hargis explained

that Limestone County was "dry," and it was illegal to possess alcohol. And more seriously, Hargis was charging the man with transporting alcohol, which if convicted, could result in one to six years imprisonment, not to mention his RV would be confiscated and sold.

"You got to be kidding me!"

"Don't get smart with me," warned Hargis for a second time.

Deputy Hargis wrote out the tickets charging the man with speeding, transporting, violation of the prohibition law, and possession of alcohol on which Alabama tax hadn't been paid.

Later that day, when Hargis filed the paperwork with the court clerk, he placed a small star in the upper right corner of each ticket. The cases went to Judge David L. Rosenau for eventual trial.

I was in my office when my secretary buzzed. "Mister Wayman Sherer is on the line." *Why would the U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Alabama be calling me?* I won-

dered. Perhaps it was a social call. I had known Wayman, Marine, FBI agent, and lawyer from Oneonta, Alabama for at least 10 years. When Nixon was elected President in 1968, Wayman was appointed U.S. Attorney. Over the phone, we exchanged pleasantries, then Wayman said, "One of my fellow U.S. Attorneys in Kentucky has been arrested in Limestone County and charged with a host of crimes. He needs a lawyer. He'll probably run for Governor of Kentucky and the Alabama charges will ruin him."

"What are the facts?" I asked.

"Well, he and his staff were going to Gulf Shores on a working vacation. They were preparing to prosecute a big criminal case in Kentucky and wanted to get away, enjoy some sunshine, and prepare the case, all at the same time. They were carrying beer, and he is charged with transporting. They are threatening to take his RV. I'd consider it a personal favor if you would help him out of this mess."

"I'll see what I can do," I said.

I visited Judge Rosenau and related the facts. "Judge, they were going to the beach for a little relaxation and at the same time prepare for a big criminal case they're about to try," I said.

"Your client got smart with the deputy," said Judge. "There was a star on the complaint. That means he caused trouble. I don't like that."

Judge Rosenau didn't cut any slack with anyone just because they were high and mighty. I have heard the story about the governor's cabinet member busted for speeding in Limestone County. The governor's assistant called Judge and said the governor would appreciate it if he would dismiss the case. "You tell the governor to run Alabama and I'll run my court in Limestone County. Have a nice day."

I knew I faced an uphill battle.

Judge finally said, "Well, it's the sheriff's case, talk to him."

I visited Sheriff Buddy Evans and explained what had happened.

"He's law enforcement just like you," I said. "Anyway, he's planning to run for governor in Kentucky and this case will kill his chance to win."

Buddy wasn't impressed.

"And there's another reason," I said. "The deputy didn't have probable cause to stop the RV and search it without a warrant. All evidence of the illegal search will be excluded from evidence."

Buddy saw the problem. "The only case left to prosecute is speeding." I said.

I never sent the would-be governor a bill for my services and don't know if he ever ran for governor; he never called and thanked me for snatching him from the clutches of justice.

"Getting smart" is not a crime, but we older Southerners know that getting smart with your mama will get your jaws slapped. My advice is don't be a smarty pants with your mama or with a policeman – no matter who you are.

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13971 Highway 231/431
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Bathroom Break!!!

by Joel Allen



Hello, folks! Happy New Year to everyone! I hope your new year is better than your last.

Years ago when Zues walked the Earth with me and worked as my service dog, we were in Walmart. We had been running errands all day and I did a neglectful thing; I forgot that Zues was like anyone else and needed a "potty break." He tried to tell me in his own way but I did not pay attention. And because of that, the unthinkable, for those of us with a service dog, happened. Right in the middle of the aisle, Zues had an accident. I was so embarrassed, and I stayed around, found the janitor and cleaned up his mess because I was the respon-

sible party. After that, I ensured that I remembered Zues should get potty breaks too. Now sometimes our service dogs can become sickly, whether it is a virus or just an upset tummy. But whatever the cause, we are still responsible and should always clean up after our service dogs.

Case in point, my wife, Pamela, and I were in the local Hometown and I had Houston, my service dog. He was acting a little off, and then it happened. He had diarrhea right in the frozen food section. I rushed him quickly out and my wife cleaned it up. After I ensured Houston was all right, I put him in the vehicle and let him rest

and returned to assist my wife in cleaning up the mess. Things like this do happen, folks.

So, what does a person with a service dog do to ensure accidents like this do not happen? Honestly and realistically, they cannot all be prevented. There are steps one could take to prevent most if not all accidents like this. What I always try and do is ensure that Houston gets a potty break at least 4 hours into anything we might be out doing. My boy gives off hints when he has to go...besides gassing me out, LOL. He will begin to pant when he is not hot, and when he does that, I know he is trying to hold it until we stop. And be-

lieve me I stop! Another precaution I take is I will ask him if he has to go, and I depend on his demeanor to determine if he does. Believe me, I have learned those looks he can give. Those of us with service dogs should learn our dog's expressions because they will tell through their body language and those faces they can make. Another sign I notice some dogs give is they will start to shiver for no reason. My Zoey, when I work her, has done this when she needed to go pee really bad but would hold it until we got out of the store. So, accidents do happen, and we have to be responsible service dog owners so that people

who see us don't see a bad example being set. Now, I have seen where people with regular pets visit a store that is pet friendly and allow, yes I said allow, their dogs to pee wherever they wish. I shake my head when I see this. Sometimes, I will be walking Houston in these stores, and he will stop to smell the "pee mail" an irresponsible pet owner has allowed to happen. Sorry about that tirade but I just had to share that observation.

Okay, now everyone with a service dog try to not make the mistakes I have, and learn from mine. But, if an accident were to transpire, be responsible enough to set a good example by cleaning the mess. Take preventive measures like breaks and such. Also, it would not hurt to keep something in the pouches your service dog carries for a "just in case" deal to assist in clean up.

Well, folks that's all for now. I hope everyone is safe and has the strength and determination to succeed in their New Year's resolution. My Prayer Warriors remember me in your prayers.

"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



The ABC's of Mental Health

by Lisa Philippart,
Licensed Professional Counselor



"I am working on learning how to be whole and free within myself, to acknowledge my brokenness, manifest my own happiness, and succeed and fail gracefully."

- Beau Taplin

Welcome to 2024! I am excited about a brand new year full of possibilities, challenges, and successes. (I am a realistic optimist.) Even if you are a spontaneous-type person, I hope you are thinking about what you want for yourself, your family, and your community this year. I'm not talking about New Year's resolutions that you will forget about by February 1. I'm talking about life goals. If you don't have a destination, how will you know when you get there? So, here is my plan for us for this year: every two weeks, we will be exploring the ABC's of mental health. With 26 letters in the alphabet, and 26 issues published a year, you can see how perfectly this will work. Today we will take a look at ANXIETY, but from my perspective as a holistic therapist and human being. (I will not be going in alphabetical order... that's too predictable!)

I have always had anxious-tendencies. But for most of my life, I was able to manage my anxiety

through a variety of coping skills: positive self-talk, affirmations, reframing, and grounding. I even decided to become a mental health counselor mid-life because I felt like I was an expert at managing my own stress, so why not share what has worked for me with others? About 5 years ago, I was under a lot of stress. I remember thinking my anxiety level was constantly riding around a 9-10, with 10 being unbearable. I noticed I was periodically short of breath and constantly battling fatigue. One night I came home and just felt "off." I went to bed and woke up at about 5 in the morning with my head spinning. I felt my eyes moving back and forth as I struggled to focus and stand up. I thought I was having a stroke. At the hospital, the doctors ran every kind of test from an MRI to CT scan to blood work. The good news, everything came back normal. The bad news, the doctors believed I had stress-induced vertigo.

I tell you this story because as a holistic healer, I believe that our bodies, minds, and spirits form interconnected circles. What affects one area affects all areas. The stress of my mental health finally spilled over in to my physical health. So after this vertigo event, I made some changes. If you suffer from anxiety



that is becoming harder and harder to manage, this is what I recommend. Physically, listen to your body. Ignoring pains or body changes is not helpful. Can you make one small dietary modification...cut out diet Coke? How about walking 20 minutes a day? Maybe take a supplement? Get more sleep? Pick one thing and do it. Mentally, are you your own worst critic? Do you wake up every day worrying about everything? See a therapist for some effective coping skills. Find work that challenges your mind. Read. Listen to self-help podcasts. Volunteer.

And finally, spiritually...what is your source of strength? Most of my clients believe in a higher power, but have forgotten that this belief allows for them to have a purpose. Your spiri-

tual side can be nourished through gratitude, prayer, worship, and meditation. We all need a direction, guided by our morals and values and faith, which brings me back to: Where are you going this year? Write it down. And don't allow anxiety to interfere with discovering the best you that you can be.

In conclusion, I want to share with you a book I am reading by Andrea Petersen called, *On Edge A Journey Through Anxiety*. My number one take-away from this book was her definition

of anxiety. According to Andrea, anxiety is the anticipation of pain - emotional pain, mental pain, physical pain, and spiritual pain - which is why anxiety can affect more than one area of the self. So, as you prepare your course for the year, include specific plans for growth of the mind, body, and spirit.

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

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





The Alternative Approach

Starting 2024 With Purpose

by Roy Williams

It's 2024, and with the right information, you just may be able to make this one of the best years of your lifetime -- and that is what NEWtritional HEALTH CARE is all about. We are dedicated to bringing to the public the most accurate and beneficial information that is available at this time. This article is about YOU and how you can make life better for yourself, and it may be easier and more fun than you ever imagined.

Know that we are now recognized as one of, if not the, sickest nations on earth. We have spent the last 75 years believing that science and technology would give us the ability to live longer and have less disease. But, in reality, more of us are fully aware that we have more disease, take more medications, and are now beginning to decline in the length of time we are expected to live than we were just three decades ago.

Now is the time to make a few changes that can have a huge impact on our futures. First and foremost is to admit that we are a nation in decline due to our lack of

enough exercise, the lack of proper nutrition in our food supply, and our decisions to turn our backs on God and His word. As a nation, it is time to say no to those who have failed us but keep on asking for more money and time so they can fix the problems they have brought into our society.

A wise man once said, "Don't listen to or take advice from the ones promising a solution to a problem that they created." We need to wake up and realize that each of us individually must take responsibility to solve our own problems. When it comes to the problems concerning exercise, nutrition, and faith, each of us must step up to the plate and take control.

Do you have a dislike for the word exercise? If so then allow me to tell you about a relatively new, fun, and inexpensive way to get more exercise called PICKLEBALL! My wife, Gwen, and I fell in love with it from the first time we got on a pickleball court. It is low impact, easy to do, and more fun than you would ever imagine. It is great for any age group, with many members over

the age of 60 and some in their 70s and 80s. Many members are telling us that they finally have a way to get more exercise that's fun, don't have to join a gym, and the people are wonderful.

Gwen and I are active members of the Athens Alabama Pickleball Association (AAPA), which is having a membership drive. It is an incredibly wonderful community of individuals who enjoy playing and love to help others develop their skills. They provide everything you need to try the game including upcoming introductory lessons, pickleballs, and paddles. If you like the experience, a one-year membership is only \$20. The Association also provides open playtimes at the Athens Recreation Center Tuesday-Friday 8 a.m.-noon, Wednesday 4:30-8:30 p.m., outdoor play at Swan Creek and the Duck Pond, and AAPA hosts multiple social events throughout the year. More importantly, you are going to create new relationships with some really wonderful people while improving your health with fun



exercise. Registration is simple... can the QR code and fill in the blanks. No better time than NOW to get started.

When it comes to covering all the bases of good nutrition, the only real option is to supplement your diet with the vitamins, minerals, amino acids, and essential fatty acids that we simply do not get from our food today. The easiest way to do that is to go by Herbs & More in Athens or NHC Herbs Shop in Killen or visit our website at www.nhc-herbs.com. Remember to listen to Today's Health Update Monday-Friday 9 a.m. on WKAC 1080 AM.

If you simply don't know where to start with a supplement, consider our foundational product called MSM+C. For under \$25 a month you can expect these results. Better pH throughout your body, improved digestion, stronger circulatory system, less pain

especially in the joints and back, smoother softer skin with fewer wrinkles, stronger fingernails, prettier faster growing hair, and most important for our customers is that within three weeks their energy and stamina go back to where it was when they were ten to fifteen years younger.

And last but most important, as a nation, we must turn back to God. Even our money tells the whole world where our security lies because it says, "In God We Trust." When a society puts God first in their personal lives, they begin to experience God's blessings. But we must remember the opposite. When a society moves away from God and His word, that society will begin to decline in every area of their lives.

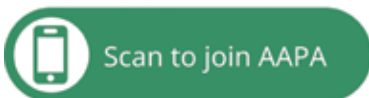
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Abbie Cooper





Cooking with Anna (continued from page 13)

We've Only Got Today

by Anna Hamilton

today to make it the best day possible. So, if you knew you only had the 24 hours in front of you, how would you approach each day. I know I wouldn't put off telling the people around me what they mean to me. I know that I would eat food that will fuel my body and make me feel healthy. I wouldn't let the small things of life make me angry. With only 24 hours ahead of you, does it really matter if you get upset with someone that doesn't immediately go when the light turns green? I think that we would find that worrying about the mundane parts of life wouldn't matter.

The Bible tells us to focus on the tasks right in front of us. The end of Matthew chapter 6 tells us to not worry about our life. "Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?...Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?...So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

So, this year, I don't have a resolution other than focusing on the day in front of me and striving to be the best me for that one day. I want to truly be present for each day given to

me. God's words really ring true, tomorrow has enough worries of its own. Taking away the burden of worrying about tomorrow and things out of my control should offer a chance for peace, a chance to breath and enjoy the things around me.

I encourage you to truly focus on what is in front of you. Focus on the family around you. Let God take the burden of worry from you. He will worry about tomorrow and make sure you are well taken care of. Matthew 7:7-11, tells us that God, our Father, will take care of all our needs. "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!"

This weeks' recipe is a delicious, crunchy salad to help knock out all the candies we've been enjoying over the holidays. I know I am craving something fresh and healthy. Something to make me feel light and refreshed. My family loves this salad on its own or paired with a delicious piece of grilled chicken or fish. I hope you enjoy it as much as we do!

*"Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you; He will never let the righteous be shaken."
Psalm 55:22*

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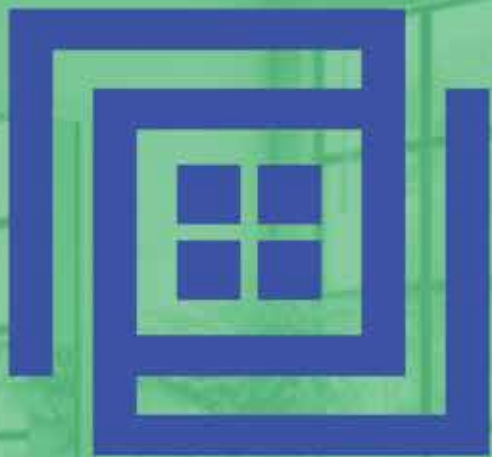
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