

July 16 - August 05, 2021

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CrossFit Athens: Clean Food, Functional Fitness, And Community

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

Nick Niedzwiecki grew up in Athens, and by his own admission, was heavy most of his life. He was the class clown, never lacked for friends or sweethearts, and played football as an offensive lineman for

Athens High School, graduating in 2010. "I always had to wear the 'husky' jeans," he told me. For several years before and after his high school football career, Nick was close to 100 lbs overweight. He attended UNA and got his degree in Geographic In-

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Publisher's Point

The Smile Of The Fellow Traveler

I have written a few times about the life lessons that have been hidden within the modality of a 5K race. For those of you who are new to this column, I am 67 years old and started participating in 5K races five years ago. I took the plunge, got "couch-to-5K training," and it changed my life. I try to do one organized run each month during running season, and I love the challenge as well as the community. Most particularly, the transferable skills are all about doing things outside of one's comfort zone, persevering, and the enormous satisfaction of completing something that stretches several limits.

About a week ago, I headed out to Joe Wheeler State Park for the re-scheduled Shady Lady 5K which had been originally slated for April but called due to weather. Lest you chafe at the term "shady lady," the race had been named for the fact that it was largely for women, and it would be held in the woods, where it is, not surprisingly, mostly shady. It was sponsored by the League of Outdoor Women, who describe themselves as an outfit that is somewhat akin to being a Girl Scout troop for grownups.

I was up at 5, and as I do most mornings, I spent some time journaling and praying before I left. I had the sense that the Lord was going to be running with me, and while we are assured that He is always with us, whether or not we perceive it, that promise

was going to come to mean a lot later on in the morning.

But first, let's talk about the "fellow traveler" piece. In my life, "fellow travelers" are people who are on a similar path as mine. They may be going through the same kind of trial, or maybe they have a particular goal they wish to achieve as do I. This year I have had several fellow travelers as we have traversed the death of a parent together, and I have been most grateful for the strength they have given me.

When it comes to the running community, the fellow travelers are the ones who are perhaps older, maybe not in tip-top running shape, and most often slower. We cheer each other on, and one thing I will say for the running community is that almost always the last one to cross the finish line gets the loudest yells. The youngsters and the elites seem to have a genuine respect for the ones who don't set records, but finish nonetheless.

Every race is different, and this was the first trail run that I had entered where you faced your competitors on their way back. Thankfully, the trail was wide enough to accommodate two people on it at the same time, but at first I clutched as I saw runners approaching me who had clearly beaten me soundly in terms of race time. I had decided I would make eye contact, smile, and hope for the best. What was the wonderful surprise was how I was greeted with en-



couragement by each one I passed. "You're almost there!" "Keep going, you can do it!" "You're doing great!" I never felt patronized, and was fascinated by how much it helped to have fellow travelers be my cheerleaders, even though they were way out of my league.

And then it happened. I was about 2/3 of the way through with a couple of people behind me, and I don't know, maybe I got cocky, but at the very least I was not being situationally aware and I hit either a root or a rock. I ended up sprawled across a downward trail. A hideous yelp rocketed unbidden out of my solar plexus, and for a moment I just lay there, really ticked off. But then came the love and the lesson. "Are you going to let this stop you?" That is what lightly but firmly lifted me

up, bruises and skinned appendages et al, and propelled me toward the finish line. I took first in my age group (only because I was the only 67 year old), and made a new friend in the form of the woman who patched me up. I took home a practical prize: an enameled denimware camp cup with the race logo on it. This week it has cradled my coffee, and will continue to serve to remind me of the power of the smile of the fellow traveler. And, I have decided to let the lesson of the spectacular splat be to pay attention, and smile back.

Ali Elizabeth Turner

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Remembering The Extortion 1-7 By Running

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



Ten years ago, on August 6, 2011 the Navy SEALs suffered the worst loss in their history. A Chinook helicopter carrying 30 warriors and a service dog was shot down in Afghanistan by a rocket-propelled grenade and exploded into a fireball, killing everyone onboard. By all accounts, it was a lucky shot, and sadly, that unexplained, "shouldn't-have-happened" anomaly sent superbly trained "frogmen" to their deaths.

The call sign for the Chinook was Extortion 1-7 (not "seventeen"), and seeing as most often when helicopters are in combat they fly in twos, the other bird's call sign was Extortion 1-6, and it was not harmed. I am sure that

the survivors have had their more-than-fair-share of struggles with the fact that they were spared, and supporting them is part of the purpose of this race as well.

As part of the Travis Manion Foundation's mission to remember those who fell and those who served in the Global War on Terror, Joggin' for Frogmen was created to honor the Extortion crew as well as all those who have sacrificed so that we can be free. It also supports their families. Joggin' for Frogmen started out in San Diego as a 5K, and was held a year after the Extortion 1-7 tragedy. As has been the case with the Travis Manion 5K which was started to honor those who



fell on 9/11, Joggin' for Frogmen has become a national race.

This year the race is ten years old, and is being

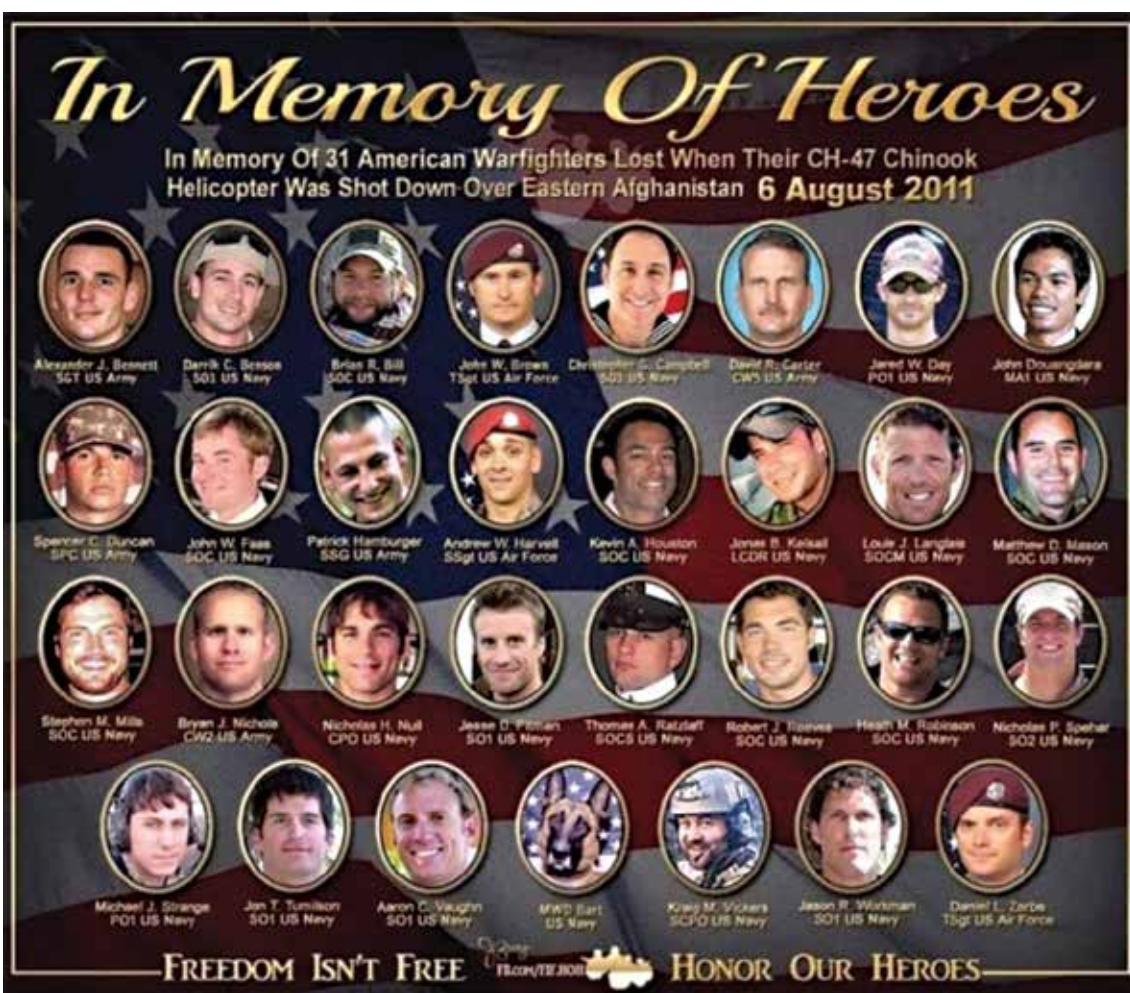
held on the anniversary of the Extortion 1-7 loss. While there will be an actual race once again in San Diego, for the rest of us this year's 5K will be virtual. And while I greatly prefer the type of race that is with other runners, I have found that virtual races have their benefits, too. First of all, you are not bound by start time or locations. I have done them in Athens and out at Joe Wheeler. You can gather your own team and run together, and if you don't wish to run, you can help raise funds for service families.

In honor of the tenth anniversary, there is also an option to run a total of 31 miles throughout the month of August; one mile for each one lost in Extortion 1-7. It can be done all at once or a bit at a time. JFF and Travis Manion also stress that you can walk it or ruck it; just do it! The joy of communities coming together and

people all over the country and, in some cases, the world to say "thank you" is highly addictive in a healthy way.

In this technological age, you can track your distance and your time through your smartphone or smartwatch, and if you wish to submit your time to see how you fared against other runners, you can. New this year is what is known as a Shadow Event, which is when you sign up at least 5 runners, walkers, or ruckers and have your own mini-event at a park or other place where you are safe and so are the people around you.

Come and jog for the frogmen on August 6! It is a good way to spend some sweat and hopefully no blood and to take some time to remember the Extortion 1-7's 31 as well as support their families. For more information and to register, go to www.jogginforfrogmen.com



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Calendar of Events

2021 Summer Concert Series:

Singing on the Square

July 16

Limestone County Courthouse Eastside Steps, 150 South Marion Street in Athens. 7pm-9pm. Grab some takeout, nestle in with your camp chair, and enjoy the music with Athens-Limestone Tourism as they present Trippin' Dixie. Free; donation welcome. Marion Street will be closed off starting at 5:30pm to allow for setup. For more information: VisitAthensAL.com/singing-on-the-square or 256-232-5411

Alabama Back-to-School Sales Tax Holiday

July 16 - 18

From Friday at 12:01AM to Sunday at 12:00AM statewide. The Alabama Back-to-School Sales Tax Holiday allows shoppers to purchase select back-to-school items free of state sales tax. Local tax may apply.

Athens Saturday Market:

Tomato Sandwich Day

July 17

State-certified farmers market. Enjoy fresh produce, baked goods, music with Silver Silos, art, and crafts at the Green Street pavilion (409 West Green Street in Athens) from 8:00AM to 12:00PM with free Tomato Sandwiches while they last with sponsor preAMBL Development. athensmainstreet.org

Annual Mud Volleyball for a Cure

July 17

With County for A Cure at Swan Creek Park. 100 U.S. Highway 31N in Athens. 8:00AM-5:00PM benefiting Relay for Life. Players: TBA. Register at Active.com

Swamp John's for Elkton TN Police Rodeo

July 21

Elkton Community Center. 160 Main Street in Elkton, TN. 3:30pm-6pm for carry out only. Plates available featuring catfish filet, chicken tenders, shrimp or combinations plus french fries, slaw, hush puppies and drink. Pre-sale tickets: \$10.00 at Elkton City Hall (168 Main Street in Elkton, TN); at the door \$12.00. All money raised goes toward the 2021 Elkton Police Rodeo.

Bama Zack Memorial Scholarship

4-Man Scramble

July 22

Canebrake Club Golf Course. 23015 Founders Circle in Athens. Starting at 11:30AM with registration and lunch at 12:00PM. Shotgun-start at 1:00PM to raise funds for the scholarship to honor local "Bama Zack". \$600.00 per team includes lunch, 18 holes, golf cart, range balls and golf tournament t-shirt. Limited

to 25 teams. Registration deadline: June 30, 2021. For more information: Allison 256-777-2381 or Garth 256-777-6530.

Athens Lions Club Kiddie Carnival

July 22 - 24 and 29 - 31

Opens at 309 East Forrest Street in Athens. At the corner of Beaty and Forrest Street across from Athens Middle School. 6:30-9:30PM. Tickets are \$0.50 each, 1 ticket for each ride. Concessions available.

Will Haney Foundation Race of Champion 5K "Night Edition"

July 30

Athens Stadium. 100 U.S. Highway 31N in Athens. Starting at 8:00PM. Join the race in person or virtually and walk or run to race funds for the Will Haney Foundation. The race course is USTAF distance Certified and is multi-surface, high school stadium track, asphalt, fine gravel running trail, and boardwalk. A multi-surface shoe is suggested. The course is flat and fairly fast. Fee: \$30.00 until Jul 28, 2021. To register: runsignup.com/Race/AL/Athens/WillHaneyFoundationRaceofChampions

Homecoming Weekend


July 30 - 31

Athens State University. 300 North Beaty Street in Athens. With Homecoming Dinner Celebration "Roaring Twenties" on July 30th at 6:00PM, tickets are \$10.00 each; July 31st will be the Summer Commencement at 9:00AM, and activities honoring the newest 50 Year Club - the Classes of 1970 and 1971. You may contact the Office of University Advancement at 256-233-8185 or email advancement@athens.edu with any questions or to reserve your tickets for the dinner.

Swamp John's Dinner Fundraiser

July 31

West Limestone Fire Department at the Station. 25800 AL-99 in Salem {Elkton Postal} 4pm-7pm featuring plates of catfish filet, chicken tenders, shrimp or combinations plus french fries, slaw, hush puppies, onion, pickle spear and glass of tea (sweet/unsweet) for \$12.00.



For the health and safety of our volunteers and the public, we regret that the VVA Spaghetti Day has been canceled until further notice. Thank you for your support and understanding.



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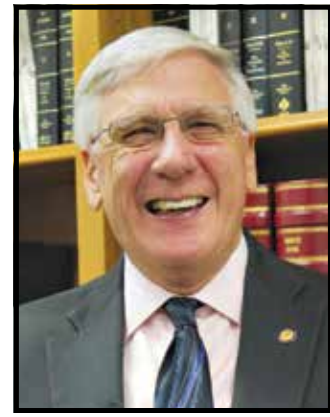
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What Makes Ronnie Roll

The 2021 Electric Cities Of Alabama Conference

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



For the last ten years, there have been a handful of times when we have had to do our interview by phone. Such was the case this past Monday when Mayor Ronnie, along with Athens City Council members Chris Seibert, Dana Henry, and Harold Wales attended a conference held at Gulf State Park regarding electric power usage and challenges in our area. The technical title of the event was the Annual Meeting and Governmental Affairs Conference. As always, their focus was how to take what they were learning and apply it to meeting the needs of our community, which we all know is growing exponentially. "Currently we have 52-thousand residential electric customers in Limestone County, and the building of the Mazda-Toyota plant called for the construction of a new substation," said the mayor.

When we spoke, Mayor Marks was fired up by the morning address of the keynote speaker, attorney Jonathan Turley, who in his remarkably diverse career has argued a number of famous



and controversial cases, participated in the Clinton impeachment hearings, and is the youngest person in the history of George Washington University to have been awarded an academic chair. At GWU he occupies the Shapiro Chair for Public Interest Law, and teaches constitutional law, torts, and criminal procedure. He also taught at Tulane University.

Turley challenged the group through an address entitled "Institutional Faith And Failure," and more than anything, sounded the alarm with specific regard to the level of censorship to which everyone from President Trump on down is being subjected, and why it is so important to push

back. "We cannot raise a generation of censors," Mayor Marks said firmly. He reiterated something he has mentioned on several occasions, that is, that we need as individuals as well as a community to keep educated and stay on top of what's going on. There were also several updates from representatives from both houses of the Alabama legislature who addressed the conference and discussed developments and regulations that pertain to exploding growth throughout the state.

There have been a number of times through the years that the mayor has expressed his gratitude to the utilities workers who deserve the title and honor



of first responders. They put their lives on the line in ways that no other department does, what with dealing with weather and electricity, an inarguably deadly combination. "They are heroes," he said, and their contribution to our

quality of life throughout the state was something he especially wanted to convey.

The City of Athens is looking for a permanent location for the recycling station, which may end up with them staying where they currently are operating on Lucas Ferry Road and Hwy 72. And while he couldn't give any details, he wanted to mention that there are two new retail developments in the works. They will include hotels -- plural -- as well as other retail ventures.

Monday mornings are always busy, and this one especially so. The brief break at the conference was over, and it was indeed time for Ronnie to roll.





New Titles And New Chapters

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! email: playactionsports@hotmail.com

Southern Vortex 09 won their division at the USSSA state softball tournament in Cullman. Shockers 14 and Shockers 10 were the runners-up in their divisions. The 6-year-old Athens Allstars finished second at the USSSA Rec softball tournament, with wins over Florence, Curry and Madison County. The Limestone County Allstars came in fifth.

Limestone County won the 11-year-old Dizzy Dean state baseball tournament, defeating Madison County. The 12-year-old Limestone Legends defeated Madison City Blue and Madison County and won a rematch with Rock Creek to win the title. At the World Series, the 6-year-old Limestone County Allstars fell to Middle Valley 20-5 in round 1, then beat the Houston Havoc 20-9 before being eliminated by the Madison County Stars 20-2. The 12-year-old Legends topped the Indianola Allstars 5-1, lost to Rock Creek 12-6, turned back Indianola for a second time 8-6, and finished as runner-up to Rock Creek 8-2.

Athens High's Caroline Bachus committed to play basketball for Auburn. The 6'2" rising senior had previously committed to Wake Forest. She was tapped for the 6A All-State 2nd team and was named to the North girls' all-star team that will compete against the South during All-Star Week this month. The Golden Eagles' Carter Pettey committed to UT Southern's golf team.

Ardmore named Stephen Baugh as their new ath-

letic director and assistant principal. Baugh has been the softball coach at the school. He's also the special guest on this week's edition of the PlayAction Sports Report, available on all major podcast platforms, in the podcast section of the PlayAction Sports app, on your Amazon Echo or Google Home device (say, "Open PlayAction Sports podcast") or online at www.pasnetwork.net.

Announcements

The Ardmore Youth Football and Cheer Association will have a youth camp July 19-20 for ages 7-12 at Cooper Field at Ardmore High School. For more information, email thomas.combs079@gmail.com or call 256-885-5361.

Youth flag football registration will continue through July 20 for ages 5-12. Cost is \$50. For more information, call 256-233-8740.

Primetime Basketball Academy will host 3-on-3 play on Tuesdays and Saturdays in August. Deadline for signups is July 21. For more information, call 256-206-6078.

The Clements Kids Basketball Camp will be going on July 26-28 at Blue Springs Elementary from 8 till 11 a.m. for kindergarten through 6th grade. Cost is \$50 per camper with a \$25 sibling discount. For more details, go to the Clements basketball Facebook page.

Athens youth football signups will go through July. For more information, call 256-366-3502 or 210-885-0175.

Youth fall baseball and softball will be going on through the month of July for ages 5-13. Cost is \$70 for baseball and \$50 for softball. For more information, call 233-8740 or visit the Parks and Recreation page on the Athens City website at www.athensal.us.

Athens Performance Volleyball will host a clinic August 3-5 for ages 7-12 from 5 till 7 p.m. at the Athens Rec Center. Cost is \$75. For more information, call 233-8740 or sign up at the youth volleyball link online at www.athensal.us.

James Clemens will host various youth camps during the summer. For more information, go online to www.jcathletics.net and



look for summer youth camps under the "More" tab.

Wallace State will be offering girls' basketball camps in August. For more information, go online to www.wallacestatewbb.com.

UAH women's basketball camps will be going on through August. For more information, go online to www.chargerbasketball-camp.com.

Grit and Grind Hoops Basketball Training is offered on Sundays and Wednesdays at the Athens Rec-

reation Center. For more information, call 256-233-8740.

Various fitness classes are being offered Monday through Saturday at the Athens Rec Center including Super Circuit, Yoga, Balanced Bootcamp, and more. Call 256-233-8740 for more information or visit the Parks and Recreation page on the Athens City website at www.athensal.us.



Athens High's Carter Pettey committed to UT Southern's golf team (Courtesy photo)



From the Alabama Veterans' Museum

Meet SFC Sergeant First Class James (Jim) Ripley

by Sandra Thompson, Director, Alabama Veterans' Museum

Meet Retired SFC Jim Ripley! Jim was born in California in 1966, but actually grew up in Branson, Mo. When asked about why he decided to go into the military, Jim said "I did not want to look back on my life and wonder if I could have been more."

In 1983, Jim initially thought about joining the Navy, but then decided that if he was going to be shot at he would prefer his cover was not the target! The Army seemed to offer him the challenges and opportunities he needed and wanted. Jim was initially classified as Military Police, but he chose the path to Special Forces Engineer and then eventually into Special Forces Intelligence. He says he was lucky that he had great mentors along the way.

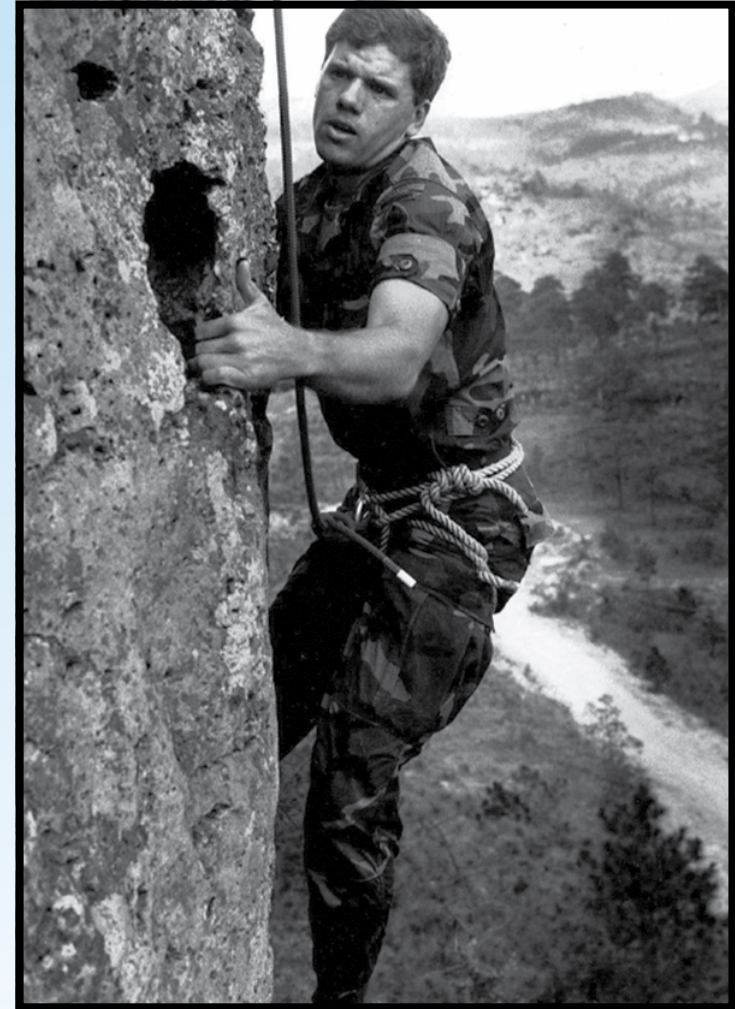
Jim's more than two decades of service took him all over the world. He started as an MP at Ft Jackson, South Carolina; then to an

assignment at Ft Buchanan, Puerto Rico; and finally, his last duty as an MP was at Ft Greely, Alaska. While in Special Forces, he was technically stationed Fort Bragg, NC, but he spent most of his time in Central and South America in the 7th Special Forces Group, a Spanish-speaking group. He was also in Special Forces when he deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq. These assignments created lasting memories while off duty also, everything from scuba diving in Puerto Rico to hunting in Alaska. Jim's on-duty adventures with Special Forces allowed him to go Combat Snow Ski Training in Colorado and mountain climbing in Colorado. He went to Mule-Pack Training in the Grand Canyon; he went to a horseshoe training course and even helped the Army rewrite and update its *Horse and Mule packing Manual*. I bet not many people can say that they were on horse and ATV patrol in the moun-

tains of Afghanistan!

"A lot of our patrols in Afghanistan were done on horseback. I was able to put some very different training I had done into real world use. We had a donkey that I had rigged a pack saddle to carry our mortar and ammo for horse and foot patrols through places that a vehicle just could not go. I was also privileged to be a Master Trainer for Special Operations Mountaineering. I would spend time in Colorado teaching mountaineering techniques to fellow Green Berets who were assigned to a mountain team. The mountains are a very unforgiving environment where a small error can literally snowball in to a catastrophe. Training and teaching mountain movement, rock climbing, and high-angle rescues added to my successes in our mountainous area of Afghanistan."

After 25 years of service, Jim decided to retire in 2009. Although he could



have retired right at 20 years of service, he decided to stay to deploy with his team to Afghanistan and Iraq. He now spends time with his son volunteering for Boy Scout activities. Jim also does contract work teaching and evaluating soldiers trying out for Special Forces. Jim is a life member of the Special Forces Association and the Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association (CVMA.) It helps him to stay in touch with his brotherhood while allowing him to help other veterans.

Jim is married to Retired Army Aviator CW4 Stormy Ripley. They have one son, Shane Ripley, who is a plumber in Huntsville. Jim's dad (Ed Ripley) was a retired police officer and

a former police chief in MO. In his early years, he worked on the Minute-Man Missile system. He joined the Army during the Korean War and the Armistice was signed as he was en route to Korea, so he ended up serving 3 years in Tokyo, Japan. Jim's mom (Mary Ripley) was a retired real estate agent in Branson, MO. Jim also has a brother (Steve Ripley) that works as a customs officer in Alaska on the border with Canada, and he served in Army Infantry out of high school.

"I am amazed at all that the Alabama Veterans Museum does to honor and remember veterans. I am continually humbled by the heroes here," says Jim.



Slinkard On Success

Will You Jump?

by D. A. Slinkard

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



We recently enjoyed the birthday of our great nation with our family and this time always means laughs, hotdogs, hamburgers, and swimming! The kids really do love swimming laps in the pool, and seeing how beautiful the water looked, reminded me of my youth. I was taken back to the countless times I would swim as a kid. I remember going swimming in Missouri and early in the spring, I would dip my toe into the water to check the temperature. Brrrr, it was cold. There are two ways to get into a swimming pool. The first way is to step in and wade out, while the other way is to just jump in.

I have noticed that too many people go about life taking the first approach in which they take one step at a time, trying to be cautious and not go too fast. Now, I am not saying this is a bad approach to living, but I am going to say that sometimes we need to just jump fully into the water. If the water's cold, I do not want to take my time wading out to get acclimated. I want to just jump in and get covered head-to-toe. My body will adjust to the temperature much more quickly this way.

There are many things in life we should just jump into and get started this very way. However, too many peo-

ple simply want things to be perfect before they start living their life. Jump in, and just get started living. You will adjust. In fact, if we take our time wading into the waters of life, sometimes it is too easy to turn around and retreat to the shoreline. We give up too easily where if we had just kept on going, we would have been fine.

Jumping right in pushes us out of our comfort zone and forces us to take actions. A person's success will depend upon his or her ability to take the right amount of action. I believe too many people fail in life because they underestimate the appropriate amount of action they should be taking. We like to plan for the "if-everything-goes-according-to-plan" approach, and life has taught me it hardly ever goes as planned. We need to be prepared to take additional actions in our lives to ensure our quality of life is better than expected.

I know I have been guilty in the past of underestimating what I needed to achieve to have success. The reality is that when things get tough, many people end up tucking their tails and running for the house. You cannot tuck tail and run



away, you must be prepared to stay the course and fight for success. We have been lulled to sleep with the "now" mentality. We want success and we want it now. If anything takes any time at all, we want to reconsider whether it is worth it. Success in life takes hard work. Plain and simple. However, we have given in to the mentality of not wanting things to be tough.

I am glad my grandparents did not give up when things got tough. I am glad my parents did not give up when things got tough. I am glad they knew what they had to do to have success, and that was to jump into life and not wade into the waters. If you go about life just wading around, not fully committing to success, do not be sur-

prised when you are met with failure after failure. You must be willing to jump feet first and begin to act. You will not have everything figured out, but you must begin by taking the first step. There is a quote that says: "You do not have to see the entire staircase, just take the first step." We need to take the step and then continue moving on to build up momentum.

If we just get busy taking actions each day that brings us closer to our dreams and our desires, we will eventually get there. However, the road may not be easy, it may be difficult; we cannot retreat to the shoreline. We must continue moving forward toward our destination. We all have a choice to make

when it comes to our lives, do we wade into the waters with the idea of the shoreline behind us or do we jump in knowing we will have discomfort only for a little while? Will you make the jump?

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Rita Aaron,
Owner



Clean, Green And Beautiful

Plastic Recycling Returns To Athens-Limestone Recycling Center

by Ruby McCartney,
Plant Manager Athens-Limestone Recycling Center

On Tuesday, July 6, plastic recycling returned for residents at Athens-Limestone Recycling Center (ALRC). However, we want to make sure that residents understand what can and cannot be recycled at ALRC.

When it comes to plastic recycling at ALRC, only container plastics #1, #2, and #5 are recyclable, with **CONTAINER** being the key word. There is a number inside of a recycling symbol usually located on the bottom of the containers. If the container does not have the numbers 1, 2, or 5, it is not recyclable at our facility.

There are other plastic items that may or may not have these numbers, but they are not accepted by our plastics



#1



#2



#5



#2

buyers, so they are not recyclable at our facility. Examples of items **NOT ACCEPTED** are plastic toys, lawn furniture, siding, garden hoses, children's riding toys (the batteries in these may be brought for recycling but not the toy). The best rule to follow is if it is not a container, then please do not bring it for recycling. If any of these items are dropped

off, they will go into the trash, so please help us keep our cost down and dispose of these items properly in your trash.

Plastic bags and film recycling also returned at ALRC, but this is not just limited to your grocery and retail bags. It also includes plastic film such as your dry cleaning bags, newspaper sleeves, case over-wrap from paper towels, napkins, and bathroom tissue. Examples of other plastic bags and film items accepted are bubble wrap and air pillows, electronic film packaging, mattress bags, furniture wrap, produce bags, cereal box liners, bread bags (must be turned inside out and crumbs removed), reclosable plastic food storage bags that are clean and dry (no food residue can be left inside), and ice bags (turned inside out and clip removed and allowed to dry).

The following plastic bag items are **NOT** recyclable at our facility: frozen food bags, pre-

washed salad mix bags, laminate film, cheese bags, and degradable bags. **PLEASE DO NOT** put these items in with your recycling. It requires employees to take the time to pick them out by hand, and they will go into the trash.

ALRC is still accepting the following for recycling: flattened cardboard boxes, office paper, magazines, junk mail, shredded paper (please leave in bag), newspaper, books, steel/tin cans, any scrap steel, aluminum cans and any scrap aluminum, glass bottles and jars (sorted by colors clear, blue & green, and brown), used motor oil, used cooking oil, electronics (there is a \$10 fee for televisions),

and batteries (except alkaline).

ALRC is happy to be able to accept all of these items again, but our hours are limited. Drop-off hours are Monday through Friday (unless there is a holiday) from 6:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. (bins are pulled promptly at 2:30 pm). Unfortunately, it will still be a few weeks before the community collection centers (trailers at schools) are in place and open again. We are working hard to make this service available for our residents as soon as we possibly can.

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Cooking with Anna

Mopping The Ocean

by Anna Hamilton

Hello, my name is Anna and I feel the need to always be in control. I need to find a group of controllers' anonymous. You see, I am the oldest of four children and, by nature (and somewhat nurture), I feel the need to be in control of most all situations. I most definitely suffer from Eldest Child Syndrome. According to Everyday Health, "Firstborn children are thrust into a leadership role from the time they gain a younger sibling. That spells decades of at-home leadership experience, which, at times, could be plain bossiness. They like to be in charge. A few firstborns will have trouble delegating; they will not trust others to do the job well enough."

I am in that "few firstborns" that have trouble delegating and don't trust in others to do the job well enough. I always hated group projects in school. Not because I didn't like the socialization, it's because I didn't trust the project to be done properly. When I handle it all myself, I know everything will be turned in on time, everything will be researched properly, and I will be more confident in the finished product. You see, I have a major problem with control.

So, what happens when you are faced with a situation in which you have no control? You can see what is happening and you know good and well that it would be better if they would just do it your way. But it's not your problem to handle. They didn't ask for your help or advice. Do you jump in and start bossing people around and handle it your way or, do you step back and allow people to handle things their way? You see, in my vast experience (and it is vast), when you try to control something that is none of your business, it always turns out badly.

Trying to control things that you can't look like someone trying to mop up the ocean. As silly and impossible as that sounds, that is exactly what always being in control looks like. My last article focused on worry and when we worry, we are saying to the world that we don't fully trust in

God's promises for us. Always trying to be in control of your life and others also is very dangerous. God has told us that he has great plans for us. We must trust in him to help and guide us on our path in life. Sometimes that means that we are not in control.

We sometimes don't know what to expect next in our lives. For me, this has proven extremely difficult. I do not like surprises, I do not like not knowing what is coming. You can ask my husband, before any trip I do research on everything. I want to know where we are eating, where we are going, which is the best road to take. I even start two weeks before we leave making a packing list down to what outfit and jewelry I am wearing each day. My husband just throws stuff in a bag and is happy as a clam. He doesn't worry about any of that nonsense.

Feeling out of control makes me nervous and anxious. When I start feeling this way, I must trust in the promise of God of direction. God promises to direct our steps. You see, always being in control and worry are cousins. One piggy-backs off the other. I wrote about worry last week because it is a part of my life that I have to constantly work on and so is control. My husband has helped me relax and realize that I don't have to have my hand on every project. Does he still have to talk me off the control ledge? Yes, at least once a week. Am I better than I was? Oh, yes!

Realizing that God is actually in control of your life and that you are his servant is very humbling, but necessary if you want to live a life of peace and faith. Trust in the Lord today, cast your care and burdens on him, and he will direct your paths.

"The Lord himself goes before you and will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged." Deuteronomy 31:8

This week's recipe helps take the worry out of supper. You just pop everything into a slow-cooker in the morning, come home after a long day of work, and enjoy. I sure hope you enjoy it as much as we do!

Slow-Cooker Balsamic Chicken

Ingredients:

- 2 cup Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved
- 2 cup baby red potatoes, halved or quartered if large
- 4 boneless skinless chicken breasts
- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1/3 cup chicken broth
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 2 tbsp. grainy Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp. dried thyme
- 1/2 tsp. dried rosemary
- 1/2 tsp. dried oregano
- 1/2 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- Freshly chopped parsley, for garnish



Directions:

In a large slow cooker, add Brussels sprouts and potatoes in an even layer and place chicken on top. In a small bowl, whisk together balsamic vinegar, broth, brown sugar, mustard, thyme, rosemary, oregano, crushed red pepper flakes, salt and pepper. Pour marinade over chicken and vegetables. Scatter all over with garlic. Cover and cook on high until chicken is fall-apart tender, 4 1/2 to 5 hours.

Garnish with chopped parsley and serve with the juices from the slow cooker.

His Ways Are Not Our Ways

by Steve Leland

This column will have a bit of thought that is in common with my *Let It Go* column.

My point there was that my natural inclination was to handle the situation in a way that made the most sense from the standpoint of the law and, of course, my rights; without considering that Yah might not have those same priorities.

How often do we put Yah in a box when we pray for specific things to happen in people's lives to get them out of a pickle that they have gotten themselves into? (Not that we would ever get in one.) The truth is that it's so much better to pray that His will be done. Yes, it is very unimaginative, but His imagination is so much broader than ours.

Remember what He said, that we see what is on the outside, but He sees the heart. That would include the heart of the matter.

Yah showed me one time that we are like little boys that are playing with toy soldiers. We set up a whole scenario about how we envision the "campaign" to take the ground could go. We have this group ready to flank that group, another group attacking and splitting the middle group, etc. A perfect plan, all it needs is Yah's blessing.

With one sweep of his hand, He makes a pile of the whole bunch. Out comes the lower lip, "But whyyy? It was such a good plan!" Except that it wasn't. Unseen by us humans,

the enemy had created a trap. Destruction would have been the result of proceeding in the manner that we intended. He did create us; it's probably best that we listen to Him.

Reading through the New Testament, we see healing after healing after healing. We see Yeshua honoring faith in healing. It's easy to come to the belief that everyone who needs healing will be healed, that we just need to have faith and ask.

But Paul wanted a healing and didn't receive one. Yah told him, "My Grace is sufficient for thee..."

Often I have wondered just why he wasn't healed, but the reality is that because of this one single testimony by a man

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who was a mighty warrior, we know that Yah does not choose to heal every time.

On one prayer that I was making for a person's healing, the answer that I got back was: Not at this time, because she

is glorifying Me with her life in spite of the disabilities, and encouraging people to walk that would otherwise give up.

Thy Kingdom come, Thy will (not mine) be done, on earth as it is in Heaven.



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The Success Circle

by Nick Thomas, owner of Prime Performance Training, and Certified Sports Nutritionist



Be careful who and what you allow in your life if you want success.

If there is one thing I have learned, it is that no matter how hard you try, your success will be directly affected by your surroundings. What you read or watch, who you are around, what you eat, what activities you participate in, and so much more. Everything ultimately filters into your life and affects your success. The intelligent choice is to keep focus and discipline throughout all areas of life. Compartmentalizing will NOT lead to success.

There is a direct correlation with what goes in and what comes out... in other words, a few things need to happen for success to be achieved. Laziness cannot be accepted and success be obtained, especially the success which is specifically desired for individual life, the kind that's a step above the world's standards. After all, that is the true-life achievement, personal happiness, and the peace and joy that brings.

Human nature craves hard work, although it may not feel like it. There is nothing that can replace the

blood, sweat, and tears of hard work physically and mentally which ultimately leads to the achievement of goals. This is why those in the fitness world so enjoy the medal at the end of a race or those who perform enjoy the applause at the end of the show, or why the academic rejoices receiving their diploma or the hard-working CEO loves their year-end bonus and promotion. It is the sense of accomplishment. There was hard work and a culmination including an appropriate celebration and reward. If something is just given, it seems to ultimately prove a bit anticlimactic. There is no sense of pride, and what is easily attained seems to be easily forgotten or taken for granted. Remember the first paycheck in a real-world job which you received? It may not have been much but it sure felt good. Phone calls were made, probably to mom or dad, and a conversation of pride was had! A fair day's work for a fair day's wage, even the Bible speaks to this. God addresses this topic a few different ways in Deuteronomy, Proverbs, and Psalms. And to be clear, a "wage" may not always be money.

Achievement stems from internal drive – it is a personal achievement for which no one else can be the substitute and give the same feeling. What is easily or falsely attained will lack satisfaction. The absence of hard work will always leave a feeling of discontentment, no matter what possessions or accolades are in your name. It HAS to be real!

Internal drive is some-



thing which takes immense focus. It takes a constant mindset and attitude in private and in public, a special and rare thing called integrity. It takes a lifestyle which supports the overall goal in all areas. Clear goals demand a circle of people who not only understand what the goals are but provide support in every way as they are pursued. This typically means a small but fierce few will form around you. Success ultimately demands leadership. This means that control of life has been taken and an incredible and common side effect of this disciplined control IS leadership. Those on a

similar path attract each other, even if the ultimate goals are not the same. Those who desire a similar dynamic result rally around someone who is clearly and wholly focused on a specific goal. Respect and trust are built here and longevity is developed because what is done in private and public is the same! When this is proven, it will resonate with this small group of loyal, like-minded people. This tight knit group will feed off of each other and achieve life goals. Keep it tight. This is the *Success Circle*. What goes in will come out and what is desired will become reality!



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CrossFit Athens: *Clean Food, Functional Fitness, And Community*

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

continued from page 1

formation Sciences. It was at UNA that he met his truly lovely wife, fellow CrossFit coach and co-owner, Jordan. “She has been by my side all the way, and none of this would have been possible without her,” said Nick, as he pointed both to the fitness center, (known in CrossFit parlance as a “box”), as well as to himself. He is a “product of the product,” but becoming a CrossFit “box” owner was not a part of his life plan.

In January of 2014, Nick and two college buddies set a New Year’s resolution that actually “took.” They bought a membership at a local gym and began to work out regularly. Nick saw results to the tune of becoming 80 pounds lighter, and then found himself stuck. At the same time, his job as a defense contractor specializing in utility mapping called for lots of travel, and he decided to move closer to work. It was at Empire Fitness and CrossFit Madison that Nick experienced for himself just how well the CrossFit approach could work. He lost the last 20 pounds, changed his nutritional approach to fitness, and began to feel a pull toward helping others the way he had been helped.

With the help of CrossFit Madison, Nick and Jordan opened their *box*, which is located in Athens at 15258 Hastings Road, on August 5, 2019. They weathered COVID, have grown to about 90 members, and offer classes for kids on up to people of any age, any level of fitness, for any goal. “To join the adult class, you have to be 13, but here we have classes for kids aged 5-12,” said Nick, and helping kids become fit and healthy is something that is a true passion for him. Currently, CrossFit Athens members range in age from 5 to 65.

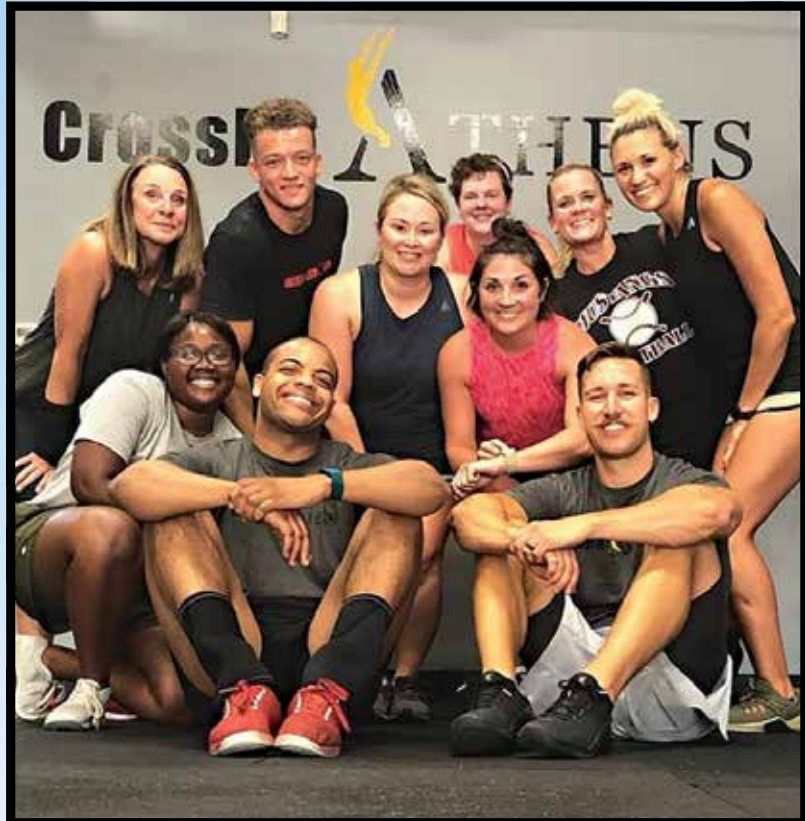
What sets CrossFit apart from other fitness approaches? It is the focus on functional fitness, which essentially means that your body is the machine, not the treadmill. They do use barbells, kettle bells, weights, rings, high bars, rope climbing, and a rowing machine, but it is the use of all of your muscles to get the job done, rather than isolating your muscles, that makes the difference. “Everything is unplugged,” said Nick. The moves come from several genres: gymnastics, weightlifting, use of medicine balls, resistance bands, plyometrics (jump training), running, and at some facilities, swimming. Another feature is the continual change up in workouts. They are different every day, but each

day a member works out for an hour; there is a 20-minute warm up, 20-minute workout, and a 20-minute cool down/ stretching session. CrossFit is used by first responders, military, and anyone who wants to be “ready for anything.” In addition, CrossFit is used by the Royal Danish Life Guards, and the Miami Marlins, along with several American and Canadian high school sports teams.

Here is what CrossFit says about their philosophy and approach:

CrossFit is a lifestyle characterized by safe, effective exercise and sound nutrition. CrossFit can be used to accomplish any goal, from improved health to weight loss to better performance. The program works for everyone -- people who are just starting out and people who have trained for years.

Crucial to the success of anyone “inside the box” is a lifestyle change when it comes to nutrition. There are no diets, portions, carb or calorie counts, but Nick told me people are encouraged to “eat meat and vegetables, nuts and seeds, some fruit, little starch, and no sugar. Keep intake to levels that will support exercise but not





sica Bzdell and the pending arrival of Baby Ollie! I didn't see any of these "pregnant" men doing a handstand walk like Jess can. Just sayin'.

Your body will thank you!"

"The will to win, the desire to succeed, the urge to reach your full potential...These are the keys that will unlock the door to personal excellence"—Confucius

I think it's safe to say that you won't see that level of fun while working out many other places, and you can come in for a no-sweat, no-obligation introductory session to see what I am talking about.

Start your journey towards personal excellence today!

CrossFit Athens

15258 Hastings Road
Athens, AL 35613

256-262-7884

info@crossfitathens.com

Class times:

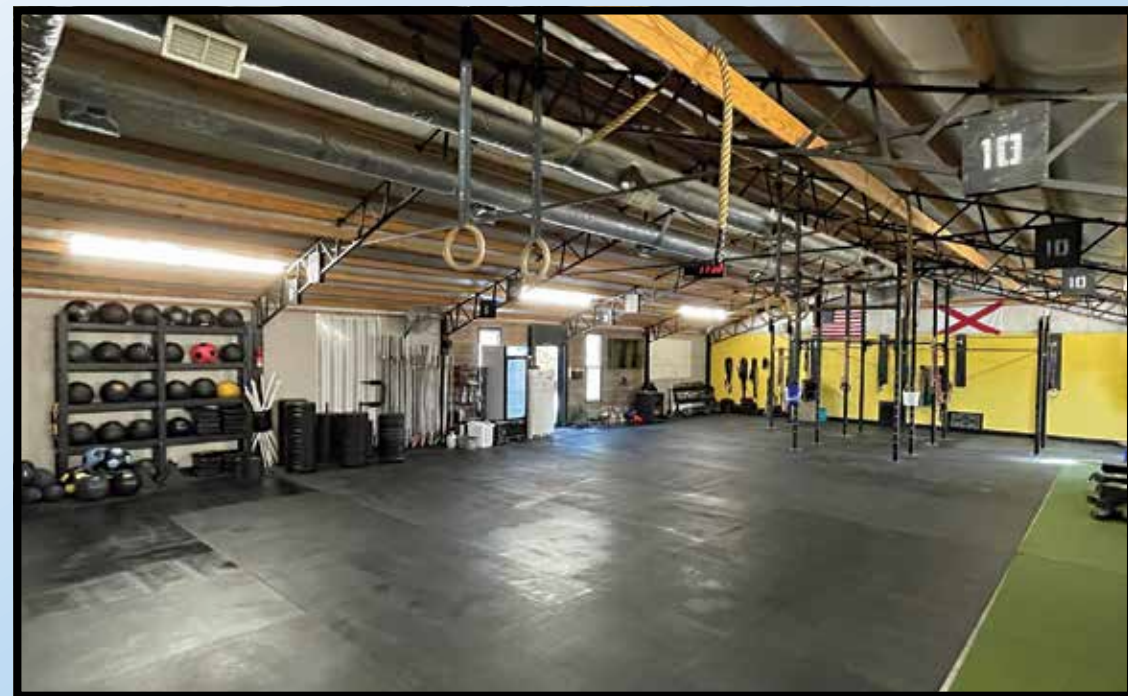
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Nick truly feels he is walking in his calling, and it shows when you talk to him. Here is his commitment to the CrossFit Athens community and people who are looking to change their lives:

"Come join our CrossFit Athens community today!"

Day), they attached medicine balls to the front of the guys with plastic wrap in order to see how they would do, and here was a Facebook comment: *Had a hilarious WOD today celebrating John and Jes-*







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body fat." The most important thing is to stay away from sugar and processed foods, and as Nick says, "Off the carbs, off the couch." If people are interested in having healthy meals prepared for them so they don't have to think about it, there is a service called Fit Five Meals that delivers to the box two times a week. Fit Five's tagline is: "Fresh food that fits your life, and macros, and schedule, and diet, and budget, and tastes." Nick told me that the cost is between \$8 and \$10 per meal. It is "fresh, flavorful food you can feel good about eating." You can find them at fitfivemeals.com, and you can get 20% off your first order when you use the coupon code: fitfive2020.

Another feature of the CrossFit Athens box is that they have a doctor who will assess would-be members prior to joining to see if there is any question about whether CrossFit is a good approach for that individual. His name is Dr. Nicholas Prylinski, also known as "Dr. P the Iron MD." He also practices concierge medicine, and his website is www.thei-

ronmd.com. His practice is located in Madison at 970 Balch Road, and is inside Empire Fitness. His phone is 256 617-1857.

Everything we have discussed, i.e., functional fitness, nutrition, unlimited workouts, the built-in coaching, and the all-important change ups each session need to be in place if a "CrossFitter" is going to see results, but the "secret sauce" is the community and bonds that are forged at each box. Especially since COVID, people are "crazy for community," and Nick smiled most broadly when he talked about how much of a team spirit has been formed amongst the members. Young, old, male, female, it doesn't matter; when someone meets a goal or has a breakthrough, they all celebrate. A particularly charming feature of CrossFit Athens would be the two sweet dogs that belong to Nick and Jordan that are always there whenever the place is open. They are Jackson and Chief, and they make the place feel like home.

One coach at CrossFit Athens was pregnant, and worked as well as worked out until a week before she delivered. For a WOD (Workout of the

Dreams, Potential, And Legacy

by Eric Betts

Assistant Director, Curtis Coleman Center for Religious Studies and Ethics at Athens State University



Who was Mary McCloud Bethune? She was a woman with remarkable "potential in her youth, who had the courage to change old ideas and practices and directed the power of her dreams toward good ends."

She was a woman whose character was marked by determination, self-discipline, courage, and a remarkable desire to maximize her potential as well as that of others. She did not allow past or present circumstances dictate her future. She dreamed, planned, and executed gigantic missions and allowed nothing to discourage her. Her life is a model for all those who were born of humble beginnings, yet through faith

lifted herself and others to places many would have thought impossible. She was a former sharecropper, homemaker, educator, human rights leader, college founder, and a presidential advisor.

According to educator, Barbara Summerville, *Mary Jane McLeod was born July 10, 1875, in Maysville, South Carolina. Mary was the 15th of 17 children. Her parents, Samuel and Patsy McIntosh McLeod, had been enslaved. Many of the McLeod children had been enslaved. When the McLeods were freed from slavery after the Civil War, they were able to buy a 5-acre farm called the Homestead. Samuel and the children plowed and*

planted their land with cotton. Young Mary grew up working the fields. She once claimed that she could pick 250 pounds of cotton in a day.

Because she dared to pursue her dreams and to maximize her God-given potential, she accomplished what many who began life with greater privileges never accomplished. She was the child of enslaved parents and was herself a sharecropper, yet she became a great American leader and a frequent guest in the White House. Her name lives on today as a mighty trailblazer for freedom, justice, and equality. Her legacy is one of a gifted teacher, who sacrificed so much that others might learn, whose dreams were ultimately realized

Mary didn't wait until she had an official position or career to exercise her gifts. She pursued not a career, but a calling. She took every advantage to walk in her gifts, rather than wait for everything to fall in place for her. Her goal was to be a teacher, but she did not wait until she was hired as a teacher to be helpful in her calling. She put her skills to use while working toward her dreams. Because of her commitment to her dreams, and her willingness to take advantage of opportunities to use her gifts, opportunities opened

before her. As one historian noted:

She helped her family and neighbors who could not read. She read the Bible to her grandmother. She read letters for her neighbors. She kept track of her father's cotton sales...

Throughout her life, Mary had powerful dreams.

One dream was about many young people.

They were wearing suits and dresses. They were waiting for someone to help them. Mary decided to start a school. She and little Albert moved to Daytona, Florida...

Mary had \$1.50 to start a school. She rented a small house. She found four young students. Mary opened her school in 1904. It was the Daytona Educational and Industrial School for Negro Girls.

Mary opened her school with four students. She still needed supplies for the school. She searched the neighborhood. Mary found charred wood to use for pencils. She mashed berries for ink.

She made beds out of large sacks stuffed with moss. Mary needed money to teach more students. A man named Mr. White respected her goal. He gave her \$250. Mary used the money to build a school. It was called Faith Hall. This was the start of Bethune-College in 1906. In 1925, Bethune joined with Cookman, a nearby school for boys.

Mary was president of Bethune Cookman College. [She later] became a friend of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt.

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Mary went on to become an advocate of freedom, justice, and equality for all peoples. She was widely respected on the international stage. Bethune-Cookman remains the pride of historically black colleges. It has produced engineers, scientists, lawyers, doctors, business leaders, judges, and civic leaders. Her legacy and dream continue to live on. She had a dream of children waiting for someone to help them; she followed her inner dream and committed herself to be the person to help them.

What was it that gave her the drive which she possessed? It was her inner dreams that she believed was put upon her heart because of her faith. She would not rest until she saw it fulfilled. This was the secret of her success.

She once said, "For I am my mother's daughter, and the drums of Africa still beat in my heart. They will not let me rest while there is a single Negro boy or girl without a chance to prove his worth."

The lesson of her life is a testimony that past or present circumstances never make one a victim in life, and can never undermine or limit one's future greatness. Anything is possible if one dares to believe and works toward those beliefs; they can accomplish what seems to be impossible and silence the naysayers.



Thoroughly Equipped

by Jackie Warner

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



If He is calling or has called you to it, He will equip you through it.

When we feel defeated, or that nothing seems to be working right, God is our strength and power. *He will not call us and then abandon us.*

The scriptures say, *"I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ."* (Phil 1:6) So no matter what God has placed in your path, He can enable you to do it, and remember it is for His glory. Again, for HIS

Glory!

Let us take a moment to reflect on the times we have told God, *please take this away from me or if not Lord, please remove me from this situation* or perhaps the people on your path. I believe this is where we get messed up and derail the purpose of our trials and tribulations.

I was listening to a devotional online and when I heard what was being shared, I had to think about all the times I have asked God to take something away or remove it

from my path. When we really think about it -- that thing, person, or situation -- their purpose is to teach us and improve our lives for the journey. We are to trust God, knowing that He has prepared tasks for us to do beforehand and that He will provide what is needed. Many times, we think we are helpless and are in over our heads, but do not doubt that God has not brought you to something without placing the right tactics and tools in your possession to proceed.

We will face challenges

and struggles, but God has provided all the tools we need. It takes time to grow into the person God wants us to be. When we are in those challenges and struggles, don't lose faith; God has provided and equipped us for the journey.

Ephesians 2:10, NIV *For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

Jeremiah 29:11, NIV *For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper*

you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Philippians 2:13, ESV *For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.*

Until Next Time, Be Sincere, Kind and Intentional

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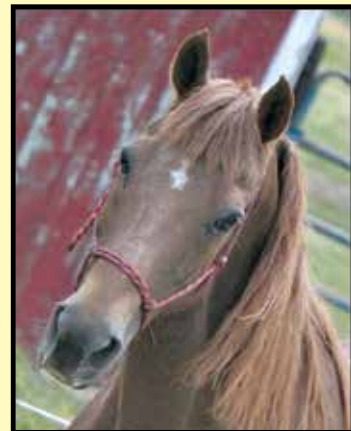
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Thoroughly Equipped for God's Work



Celebrating Independence; Celebrating Remembrance

by Deb Kitchenmaster



"I am well aware of the toil and blood and treasure that it will cost us to maintain this Declaration, and support and defend these States. Yet through all the gloom I can see rays of ravishing light and glory. I can see that the end is worth more than all the means." John Adams to Abigail Adams, on the passing of the Declaration of Independence

"This nation was founded by God with a special

calling. The people who first came here knew that they were being led here by the Lord Jesus Christ, to found a nation where men, women, and children were to live in obedience to Him...This was truly to be one nation under God." Peter Marshall

Here are a few translated excerpts from quotes made by Christopher Columbus about why he came here. "It was the Lord who put into my mind (I could feel his hand upon me) the fact that it would be possible to sail from here to the Indies. All who heard of my project rejected it with laughter, ridiculing me. There is no question that the inspiration was from the Holy Spirit, because He comforted me with rays of marvelous inspiration from the Holy Scriptures."

"United we stand" is one of our nation's mottos and "Out of many, one" is another. These are true words only because a few of the first Americans were willing to pay the price. If we will humble ourselves before our covenant keeping God and renew our re-

lationship with Him (loving one another), He will hear, forgive our sins, and heal our land! This is absolutely possible.

CELEBRATING REMEMBRANCE:

- Secret place
- Hosted two young women attending Women's University Of Psychology in Tokyo, Japan, with equine interest
- Trail riding
- Round pen session
- Safely giving treat
- Mucking
- Eye/hand coordination
- Preparing for Western Pleasure Class

Let us each follow intentionally after our Good, Good Father on paths of righteousness for His name's sake, our nation and our future generations.

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horsinaround188@gmail.com*



A Healthy Marriage

by Lisa Philippart,
Licensed Professional Counselor



“A healthy marriage isn’t something you find; it’s something you make...and you have to keep on making it.”

- Gary Thomas

My last two articles have covered the topic of infidelity. And lest you think that all is lost in our ability to make marriages work, I would like to share with you some of my thoughts by answering two separate questions: “What is a healthy marriage?” and “How can you have a healthy marriage?” Let’s look at some of the characteristics of a healthy marriage. Even though each marriage is different, many strong marriages share some common traits. In my opinion, a healthy marriage is based on honesty and trust. There should be no secrets. Honesty is the basis for trust, and trust

is earned, not a right. The easiest way to maintain honesty and trust in a marriage is through respect. You can disagree with your spouse and still show respect... through your tone of voice, the way your respond, your attitude, and your ability to hold your spouse’s opinion higher than others. (The exception would be if the spouse is wrong, either morally or ethically.) This includes respecting boundaries within and around your marriage. I believe that respect is strongly tied to patience! I am always amazed when couples tell me that they rarely spend time together. Friendship, connecting, and spending time with each other, is a necessity for a healthy marriage. Knowing your partner on a deeper level requires intentionality, time, and effort. Connecting with your spouse daily must be a priority.

We choose to spend time on what matters to us. And our spouses need to come before friends, extended family, hobbies, and all that extra stuff. How is your communication with your partner? To communicate effectively, a minimum of two skills are required: assertiveness and active listening. Each partner needs to be able to express thoughts and feelings in a safe environment and to expect to be heard. My hope for couples is that they can grow together while the marriage evolves. Your marriage started out on the same path, but as time goes by, couples may end up taking separate parallel paths, still in the same direction (living together like roommates) or separate divergent paths (simply each going different ways as in a divorce.) Take a look at your marriage. Are you working together to achieve

livelong marriage goals, with a continued commitment to each other? Does your partner bring out the best in you?

Did you notice I have not yet mentioned love? It’s because if all the previously discussed things are present, then love flourishes. So how do you work toward a healthy marriage? Here are some suggestions:

- Compliment each other...daily.
- Learn to fight fair, and then forgive each other.
- Exercise together, even if it is just a weekly walk in the neighborhood.
- Pay attention to the little things.
- Show appreciation to each other.
- Show you care for each other in front of the kids. This lets them know that you love one another and sets the example for what to expect from a future spouse.
- Find something you

enjoy doing together and then actually do it.

- Be willing to compromise.
 - Work on finances together...know where your money is going.
 - Create and maintain boundaries. It’s okay to balance independence/alone time with time spent together.
- Pick one suggestion from the list to start on today. Change won’t happen overnight. But as you work on your relationship, you will be working towards creating a happy and healthy marriage that you both desire.

Lisa Philippart is a Licensed Professional Counselor, who divides her time between her own private practice in Huntsville and providing personal counseling services at Athens State University.





The Alternative Approach

Bowel Health

by Roy Williams

Maintaining a healthy bowel could prove to not only lengthen your life, it could also improve the quality of your life as well. Many health professionals have told us that, "All disease begins in the gut." Improving the health of your gut is not as expensive or as complicated as you may think.

First things first. Why do so many Americans suffer from poor digestion? As I answer that question, you will begin to feel a freedom that comes from knowing that your body, when given the proper nutrients can, in most cases, heal without becoming dependent on the medical profession or the pharmaceutical industry.

One of the main reasons for most of the digestive issues in America is that antibiotics are prescribed for almost everything. The American Medical Association and the pharmaceutical industry push antibiotics like a candy store pushes candy. The result can be devastating. The pathogens can become antibiotic resistant, which could result in sickness and death.

The antibiotics also destroy the natural healthy bacteria in our digestive system, which is up to 80% of our immune system. These beneficial bacteria actually identify and destroy the bad or toxic bacteria that gets into

the gut. Once the good bacteria are dead, then the bad bacteria can get a foothold and cause infections such as diverticulitis, ulcers, ulcerative colitis and polyps, which can lead to cancer.

Some of the symptoms of too much antibiotic are gas, bloating, belching, and IBS or irritable bowel syndrome. Over time, a weakened immune system can lead to chronic sinus infections, allergies, pneumonia, cancer, and even auto-immune disorders such as psoriasis, rheumatoid arthritis, Lupus, or Crohn's.

Of course, the sicker the public, the more dependent on the pharmaceutical industry we become. One great example is the COVID-19 virus. Even though 99.6% of the people who contracted it would survive, they used their powerful media to convince us that without a vaccine it would become a pandemic. Fear is their favorite tool.

Because antibiotics compromise our immune system, we are more susceptible to disease. It is a well-known fact that people who take the most antibiotics also have the most allergies, sinus infections, ulcers, and cancers.

Another cause of digestive disorders can be linked to the amount of sugar Americans consume. On average, Americans consume over 150



pounds of sugar a year compared to only 5 pounds 100 years ago. Consuming too much sugar has been directly linked to many digestive disorders including colitis, ulcers, colon cancers, obesity, and Crohn's.

A lack of fiber in the American diet is another cause of digestive problems. Without enough fiber, fecal matter can cake up on the lining of the small intestine and colon, which can lead to polyps, colitis, growths, cancers, and infections such as diverticulitis. Early symptoms can be gas, bloating, belching, burping, and low bowel cramping.

Supporting Bowel Health

When it comes to maintaining bowel health or reversing some of the disorders mentioned above, there are some

real giants in the nutritional industry that have absolutely no negative side effects and can be used along with any medications. Many people swear by the positive results.

Most Americans with gas, bloating, belching, burping, low bowel cramping, or IBS should consider taking a high-quality probiotic such as PB-8, which has 7 or 8 strains of beneficial bacteria such as Lactobacillus sporogenes, acidophilus, salivarius, bifidum, longum and ramannosus. A daily dose contains up to 8 billion of the living bacteria. We have so many reports of 90-100% improvement when taken along with a product called Super Enzymes by NOW.

The combination of PB-8 and Super Enzymes can help your

gut recover and may even prevent many of the other digestive disorders such as colitis, ulcers, and diverticulitis. Add some fiber to your diet and drink plenty of water and your digestive system will become healthier and your quality of life will improve.

Gall Bladder Issues

For those who have had their gall bladder removed, consider taking one Thurston Compound at the end of every meal. Thurston Compound is designed to do what your gall bladder did. Many tell us that it is wonderful to be able to eat the foods they like again.

When it comes to digestive health, we suggest trying it God's way using His creations first. The natural way is safe, effective, inexpensive, and has no negative side effects. To learn more, go by Herbs & More in Athens or NHC Herb shop in Killen or call 256-757-0660. You may also choose to go to our website at www.nhcherbs.com.

Your Friend in Health,
Roy P. Williams

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Gracious Generosity

by Mae Lewis

Chloe's dad wrote letters to his 2-year-old daughter, and posted them on the Forum MEDIUM as "Chloe's Dad." He wrote letters of wisdom, advice, and family history for her future self to absorb.

In 2017, he wrote a letter addressing what he had learned about generosity and graciousness, and what he is teaching her is wisdom for all of us.

At first, he shared some of the things we would expect in talking about generosity and graciousness – things like the importance of giving and how it affects the giver, and how it reflects a faith that you are being taken care of...what he calls an "abundance awareness." Giving generously, he asserts, is "Affirm-

ing within yourself that you have the capacity to give. It means you have the state of mind that I am taken care of and have enough to be able to give."

Another good point he makes: "Of course monetary donations aren't the only way to give, but I think it sets a solid foundation for generosity. The most lovely and impressive people I have known are those who are generous with their time, their hospitality, and their skills. I'd take these over politeness or superficial niceness any day."

I agree with him. There have been times that I have needed to call on a friend or a colleague, and they have given to me of their precious time, listening to my woes or helping

me to solve a problem. Maybe they were just generous with advice. Either way, I have grown to appreciate that generosity is not limited to money.

Others can be generous in spirit, reserving judgment and personal feelings in an uncomfortable situation. The human spirit has an ability to see the discomfort in another. I can think of many times that a kind word from a stranger or an intervention at a chance moment diffused a dangerous or difficult situation. If you have the power to bring peace, that is an area where you can be generous.

But with all of these areas of generosity, Chloe's dad went on to make a point that I feel is more important than learning to give: The complement to gen-

erosity is receiving. "It takes a certain graciousness to receive another's generosity well and it's a skill that (for some) takes some developing." We must learn to be gracious receivers.

"Receiving graciously is, in my opinion, as important as being generous. I used to feel embarrassed to receive. In some cases, I would want to make sure there's equity with others, that I'm not somehow being unfairly favoured. In others, I would feel awkward and so not really respond at all. Or I would respond with how I might be able to pay back the generosity at some future time.

"Here's what I've learned:

- Look the person in the eye and say "Thank you" with a genuine smile

that lets them know that their generosity means something to me. It's about connecting and acknowledging the value within the gift.

- Drop any thoughts about whether I deserve it or how I might repay in the future. So, in the moment, be genuinely grateful. And enjoy the gift. How better could I respect the person who's giving and allow their gift to give its full benefit?

- Know that in some cases I will be able to repay the kindness, but that won't always be the case. And not to worry about that. (Sometimes people will give you more than you can ever repay them, and that's called "paying it forward." Someday, you can do the same for someone else.)

"In the end it all comes down to people and time. Being able to give to others through gifts, helping out, making things better, cooking, hosting, or whatever it is feels good and lets us enjoy the time together. Being able to receive graciously respects them, makes them feel good about giving, and also frees us all to enjoy time together."

Consider, what are the things that you have an abundance of? If you don't already, I challenge you to practice "abundance awareness" in your life, and be aware of all of the ways that you have the capacity to give, and graciously receive, more good in the world.



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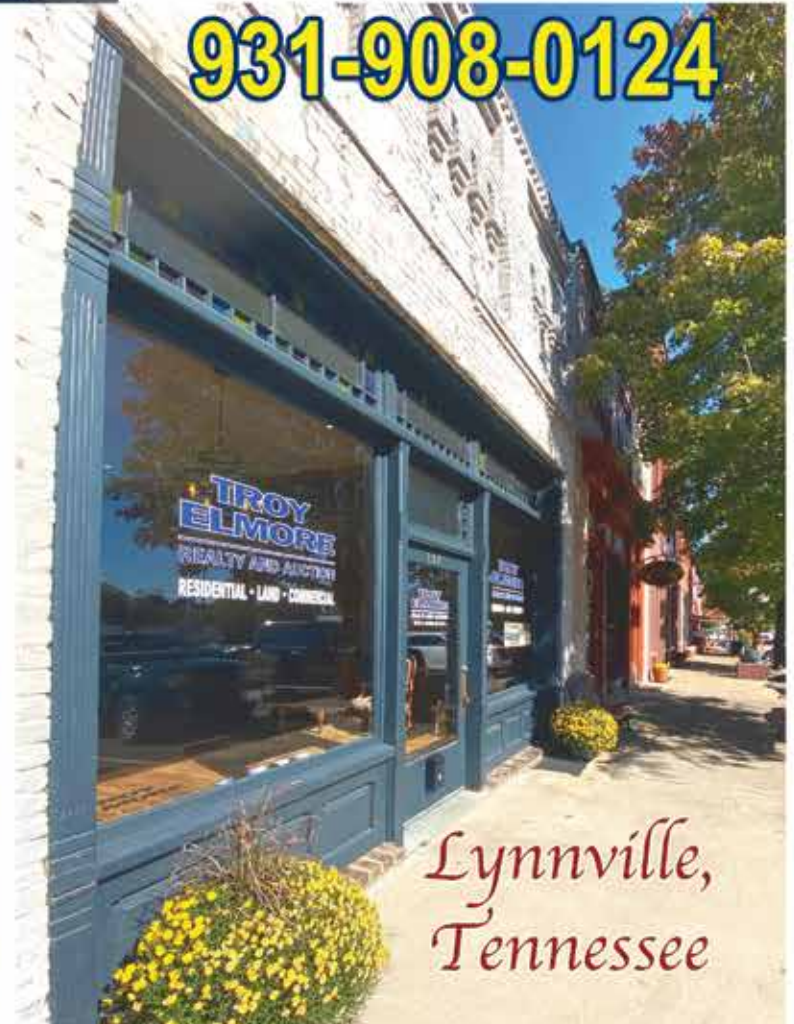
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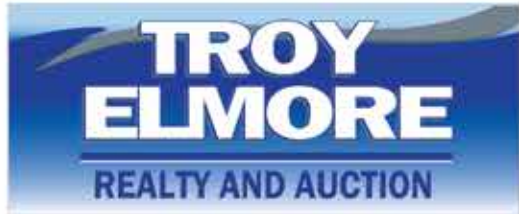
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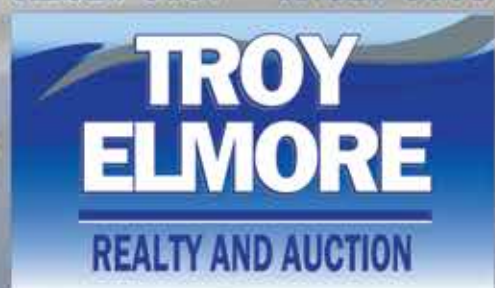
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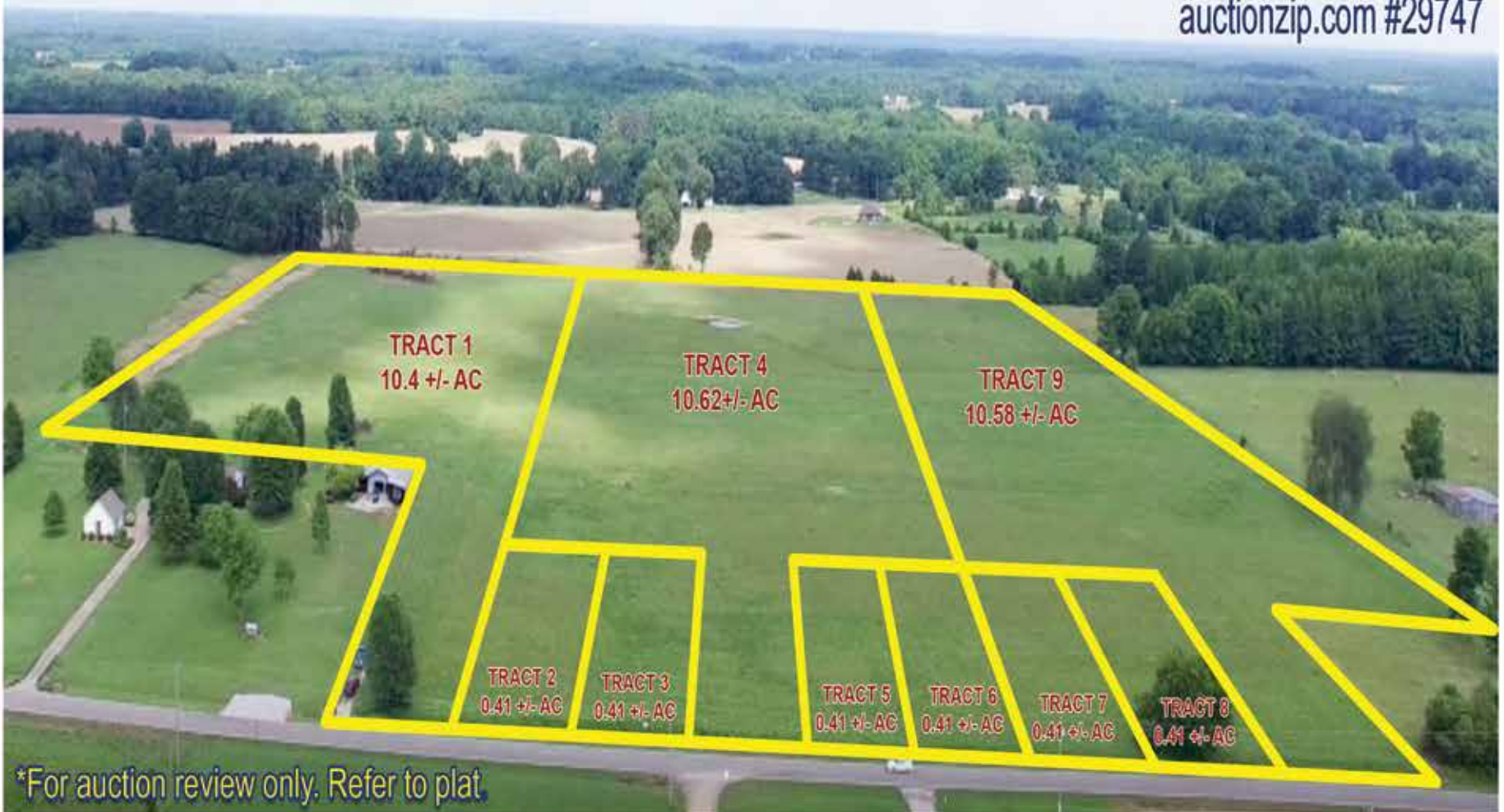
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