

March 19th - April 1st, 2021

Athens Now

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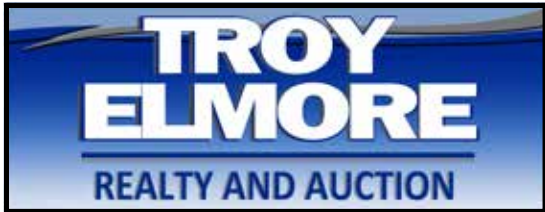
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Express Employment Professionals: *Strengthening Athens One Job At A Time*

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

Kim Whitworth and Richard Shirkness are a married couple with North Alabama roots, five children between them, grandkids, and both had a burning desire

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I feel as though I'm starting to sound like a broken record, but I am frustrated and I feel as if a lot of you out there are too!...

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From left: Camilla Spencer, Tevvy McDole and Whitney Young of B&B

Belles And Beaus On Jefferson: *Charming, Affordable Children's Wear*

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

In 2019, Athens born-and-bred Tevvy McDole purchased Belles and Beaus from her friend Jenny as a different venue for expres-

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Publisher's Point

240 Pubs Down...

No, I promise that I am not hitchhiking across the UK and comparing pints in charming little burgs! In the parlance of the *Athens Now* gig that I inherited thanks to Steve Turner, Jerry Barksdale, and Wayne Huff beginning March 18, 2011, "Pub" stands for "Publication," and is most often attached to the word, "Week." Hence, a "Pub Week" does not mean any more than I am facing down "putting the paper to bed" once again. I now have 240 Pubs under my belt, and honestly, by the scandalous grace of God, I don't think I have yet hit my stride. I have come to believe that in many ways, I am just getting started.

From the "Never-Say-Never" Department, I can truly say that the last ten years were never a part of my five-year plan, my ten-year plan, or part of any long-term goals. I came to this adventure woefully unprepared but stoked by obedience and a fierce sense of Kingdom adventure.

Most of you are probably unaware of how I got here, 240 Pubs later. The short version is, we came to Amazing Athens in 2000 after serving in the mission field and starting a school at an orphanage in Juarez, Mexico. Steve was super ill, (that's a whole 'nother story) and it took close to two years for him to get well. Following Steve's recovery, I spent three years in Baghdad, and when I came home, my book about my adventures was pub-



lished by Morgan James out of New York. It is called *A Ballad For Baghdad*. When I got back in 2007, I took a year to write the book, a year to market it, and then it was time for my next adventure. That occurred when the late, great Jerry Barksdale turned down an offer to write for *Athens Now* from the late, great Wayne Huff, the founder of the paper who then asked me. His wife, Deborah, became a patient mentor and dear friend, and for a year I wrote for them. Then, in March of 2011, they decided to sell the paper, and my husband, Steve Turner, Wayne, Deborah and Jerry all believed I could do it long before I had a lick of faith that it was possible. Truly, going to Iraq and living amongst neighbors who would have been content to put my head on a spike was easier than becoming the publisher of the paper.

The learning curve on the way to becoming a genuine publisher was brutal, and everyone paid a price for backing me -- chiefly Jon Hamilton, my design guy; Teddy Wolcott, my web gal; Rachel Clark and Yvonne Dempsey, our copy editors; Deborah Huff, Steve, Wayne, and my family. But, with time, I kinda began to get the hang of it. Now, I am humbled to say, we have between 12,000 and 16,000 people reading the hard copy of the paper every two weeks, and last year people from over 80 countries visited us online 1.3 million times. I remain stunned and humbled. My deepest thanks to the people who have written, called, or come up to talk to me and tell me how much they appreciate the articles, and the columnists who work so hard to make our tagline true: "Information & Inspi-

ration." Y'all have made all this all possible! In the crazy COVID era, Degan Wilder came along side to help with delivery and sales. Before Degan, Tiffany Abernathy, Hunter Williams, and Daniel Aaron also helped me sling bundles. I am getting really nervous that I am going to accidentally leave someone out. If I do, please forgive me.

So, I'll quit while I am ahead, and say thanks to any and all who have made the "visit" to 240 Pubs possible, and Heavenly Father, thank You most of all. Here's to 240 more!

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Old Man Strength

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



There is a belief among some, including my 41-year old son, that a certain type of strength that is a combination of wisdom, experience, and physical prowess belongs to and is the special purview of the seasoned. It is called “old man strength,” and this summer, 59-year old Staff Sgt Monte L. Gould is going to “show ‘em how it’s done” when he arrives at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina for basic training.

Gould became a Marine in 1978, and was career enlisted. He then served with the Army in Afghanistan in 2004, and later in 2009 decided to get out in order to spend more time with his family. After a more than 10-year hiatus, he is going back in the Army Reserve. Although he still retains his former rank of SSgt, because of the amount of

time he has been out he must go through basic training again. He has already handily passed his physical training requirements, ranking at the top third of his class. He was in much better shape than many recruits who were decades his junior, and even helped the struggling train hard so they could pass.

“It’s kind of cool that they get to see somebody who is 59 and isn’t all fat, beat up with diabetes, and on their death bed,” said Gould. It is interesting to note that he still does ruck marches each week with 50 pounds on his back, and also practices jiu jitsu.

As important as his physical accomplishments have been at his age, because of something I observed while in Iraq, I would guess

that he has been a much-needed father figure with and for his fellow “grunts.” We used to talk at length about “daddy hunger,” the emotional need of young soldiers who grew up without a dad, and how that could cause them to be like human Velcro toward older male officers and NCOs. It’s not an easy thing to deal with, and could be especially unnerving in an already challenging combat zone.

Another unusual thing about Gould is that he is going to be serving with his son, Jerrod, who is a Specialist. They will both be with the 405th Civil Affairs Battalion’s detachment out of Las Vegas, Nevada. Can you imagine the stories they’ll have and the people they will touch? I don’t mean to go all “Kumbaya” here, I just



think the whole thing is great, and apparently, so does SSgt Gould. Here’s what he has to say about what’s ahead:

“If I’m lucky, I got 20 more years and then I drop dead,” Gould added. “To me, this is a last hurrah. To have the opportunity to serve again is a thrill. I’m looking down the gun barrel at 60, and I know all the health problems that come after that.” My personal hope is that the

care SSgt Gould has taken to build and preserve his level of wholeness will garner him a healthy life far beyond the age of 79, but more importantly, I give him great honor for being willing to sacrifice so much for our country once again. May his time with his son serving in the same unit be a treasure for them both. And, may the “daddy hunger” of many be, at least in part, satisfied.





Blake's Beat

Listerhill Credit Union Announces Athens Branch And Sponsorship Of Athens Saturday Market

by Blake Williams

Athens Saturday Market has secured a new presenting sponsor for the 2021 season.

Sarah Evans with Listerhill Credit Union says they are proud to become the Presenting Sponsor of the Athens Saturday Market for the 2021 season which begins on Saturday, June 5. Evans said, "Listerhill Credit Union will be opening a branch in Athens later this year and is excited to be involved in the community while they build at the corner of Bab Daly and Highway 72 which is still underway."

President and CEO for Listerhill, Brad Green, commented, "The market is the perfect partnership for Listerhill as our philosophy of people helping people at the local level is a great match to their mission to support local agriculture and increase economic opportunities for farmers, small businesses, and artisans."

The state-certified market runs for 13 consecutive Saturdays (except July 3) at the pavilion on West Green Street from 8 a.m. to noon. According to Evans, it provides a vibrant place

to access healthy local foods and to see friends and neighbors.

"Athens Main Street is thrilled to welcome Listerhill Credit Union to Limestone County," said Athens Main Street Executive Director Tere Richardson. "They have demonstrated their commitment to the community through the sponsorship of our Athens Saturday Farmers' Market."

Listerhill Credit Union plans to break ground on March 19, 2021, at 10:30 a.m. The address is 22223 Highway 72 in



Athens at the corner of Bab Daly and Highway 72.

For those interested in learning

more about the Athens Saturday Market, visit this link <https://bit.ly/3vz2J7F>.

Annual Elkmont Beauty Walk Scheduled For April

by Blake Williams

The 16th Annual Elkmont Beauty walk is scheduled for April 9 and 10, 2021. The registration fee is \$35, and an additional \$5 if participants want to enter the photogenic category. Registration is going on now and the deadline to register will be March 24. This walk is open

to anyone in the community.

On April 9, kindergarten through fifth-grade entries will start at 7 p.m. on the campus of Elkmont High School. On April 10, babies through preschool divisions will start at 2 p.m. and sixth- through twelfth-grade girls and twelfth-grade guys will be that night. In

between categories, beauty walk organizer Keila Berzett says there will be lots of entertainment.

There will be a \$5 charge for attendees. Attendees can vote in the People's Choice contest for their favorite contestant. The money raised benefits the Elkmont Band.

For more information or to receive an entry packet, contact Keila Berzett at kberzett@ardmore.net or (256) 777-8216.

New Initiative Hopes To Bring COVID-19 Vaccine To Minority Communities

by Blake Williams

The Limestone Ministerial Coalition (LMC) recently announced the Vaccine Equity Initiative that launched in Limestone County. LMC's goal is to help make the COVID-19 vaccine easily accessible for minority groups throughout the community.

In partnership with Athens-Limestone Hospital, the LMC will be hosting on-site vaccine registration on March 27, 2021, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for the first 500 registrants which will ensure that the first 500 eligible registrants receive an appointment to be vaccinated on April 10 with the Pfizer

vaccine.

Keith Shoulders with the LMC said, "We believe in doing everything we can in order to help those in need gain access to immunity. Our goal is to partner with local officials for the greater good of all citizens in the community."

LMC says there will be no waiting lists, no missed callbacks, and no online registration.

The address for the vaccination and registration is at Round Island Mission Center located at 13829 Lucas Ferry Road, Athens, AL 35611.

Community Can Honor Local Physicians On National Doctors' Day

by Blake Williams

Throughout the month of March, the Athens-Limestone Hospital (ALH) Foundation plans to honor physicians through their 2021 Doctors' Day campaign.

According to Caroline Canestrari, director of the Athens-Limestone Hospital foundation, the hospital and community has been blessed beyond measure

to have a large group of talented physicians to care for our community during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Canestrari encourages the community to make a donation and leave a personal note, to show appreciation for a special physician at ALH. According to Canestrari, donations provide resources for

those caring for the Limestone County community. Physicians will receive their notes on National Doctors' Day which is March 30.

Donors can donate online at <https://bit.ly/3bVH0Pv> or mail in donations and special notes to ALH Foundation 700 W. Market Street Athens, Alabama 35611.

Calendar of Events

Vidalia onion pre-sales Happening Now

Athens Ladies Civitan Club is now taking orders for its annual Vidalia onion sale. Ten pound bags freshly dug from a Georgia farm are \$10 and will arrive the first or second week in May. You may order as follows: from any ALCC member; by calling: Phyllis at 256-232-6086 or Marilyn at 256-771-7672; or by mail to: Athens Ladies Civitan Club, P. O. Box 1814, Athens, AL 35612. Make check payable to ALCC, include your name, address and telephone number and number of bags ordering.

Deadline for orders and payment is April 10, 2021.

8th Annual Eli's Block Party Car Show & Cruise-In March 20

Bethel Church of Christ, 26772 Capshaw Road in Athens. 9:00AM-2:00PM. Shine your ride and roll in with judged-show parking or cruise-in parking. Over 50 trophies and awards including this year's featured class: CORVETTE. New award for 2020 -- Pre-registered rides only, "The Best Story" Trophy for the best essay about your car. Prize drawings every hour, plus \$100.00 cash every hour for registered participants only. Judged participation: \$20.00; Cruise-In \$8.00. For more information, registration and other details, visit: Elisblockparty.org/register

Bring Your Basket to the Bunny March 20

With UG White, 101 North Jefferson Street in Athens. From 11AM-2PM. Kids young and old can bring their baskets and have the Easter Bunny and his helpers at UG White prepare the perfect Easter Basket full of favorites (prices vary by selection please see store for details) for pickup Friday, April 2nd. Enjoy a picture with the Easter Bunny, food samples, and a story from the cotton-tailed host at 1:00PM. For more information, 256-232-4540.

Come-and-Go Egg Hunt March 21

For Special Needs Children and Young Adults with Make A Way Foundation at the courtyard of Athens High School. 655 U.S. Highway 31N in Athens. 1:00PM-2:30PM including bunny spotting and other activities. Families are asked to bring their own baskets and park in the north parking lot near Entrance D where they will be instructed how to go to the enclosed courtyard.

Ask A Master Gardener March 23 & 30

At the Athens-Limestone Public Library. 603 South Jefferson Street in Athens. From 10:15AM-2:15PM with the Athens-

Limestone Master Gardeners. For more information about the Master Gardeners, you can contact them at limestonemg@yahoo.com.

Running Buck Wild Extreme 5K March 27

Joe Wheeler State Park. 4403 McLean Dr in Rogersville. This 5K will take runners across different terrains such as hiking trails, asphalt, and gravel roads. The race will run a 4-mile portion of the "Awesome" Trail System starting 7:00AM from the Marina. Runners will be sure to enjoy the natural beauty of Joe Wheeler State Park. Registration on or before March 8th, 2021 = \$30/ After March 8th and Race Day = \$40. For Race information or to help sponsor the race, call the Park Office at 256.247.5466 8am - 4:30pm Monday - Friday or visit runningbuckwild5k.itsyourrace.com/event.aspx?id=476

Drive-Thru Egg Hunt March 27

With Friendship Lucas Ferry Campus. 16479 Lucas Ferry Road in Athens. 4:00PM-6:00PM starting at the north entrance on Lucas Ferry. Each child in the vehicle will receive a bag of eggs will with candy and small prizes as you cruise the campus before exiting onto Washington Street. First come, first served.


Take A Hike in the Park Day March 30

Joe Wheeler State Park. 4403 McLean Drive in Rogersville. 10:00AM-11:30AM. Meet in the West portion of the Lodge parking lot, near the beginning Blue Trail for a 0.9-mile hike. Be sure to wear appropriate clothing and shoes and don't forget your mask.

April 4th

Annual Community Easter Son-Rise Service

Alma will host the annual Community Easter Son-Rise Service on April 4th, 6:30-7am. The event will be held at Swan Creek Park Pavilion on Hwy 31S next to Athens Middle School. Everyone is invited.



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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When The Mask Drops Out Of The Cabin Ceiling

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



On Monday when we met, the Grammy Awards had been broadcast for a long 3 ½ hours the night before. It was worth it to wade through it because Alabama Shakes founder and lead singer, Brittany Howard, put Athens on the map once again. Mayor Ronnie was celebrating her win for best rock song, and reminded me that his wife, Sandra, had gone to high school with Brittany's grandmother, Ruby Carter. He played her response of shock and near disbelief to winning the award, and it was dear. We moved on to some of the points made by Pastor Tony about "putting on your own mask first when it falls out of the ceiling."

Essentially the sermon was a discussion about proper self-care, and it fed into our ongoing exploration of intellectual capacity as laid out in Robert Glazer's *Friday Forward*. "Putting that cup on your face first is not selfish," said the mayor. "Nope, it's not," I replied. "That way you have enough to help others," he added.

The idea of building intellectual capacity has nothing to do with intelligence, and everything to do with essentially being a life-long learner. And, one of the things that helps people to have the extra energy to make life-long learning, well...life-long, is having a morning rou-

tine. Getting up before everyone else does and spending time "getting extra oxygen" is something Glazer addresses when he discusses the habits of high achievers:

"They get up early and play offense rather than react defensively to the world around them. They start each day with intention and focus on what's most important to them, not to everyone else. They run their days rather than having their days run them. Most people insist that they just can't get up any earlier. I would argue,

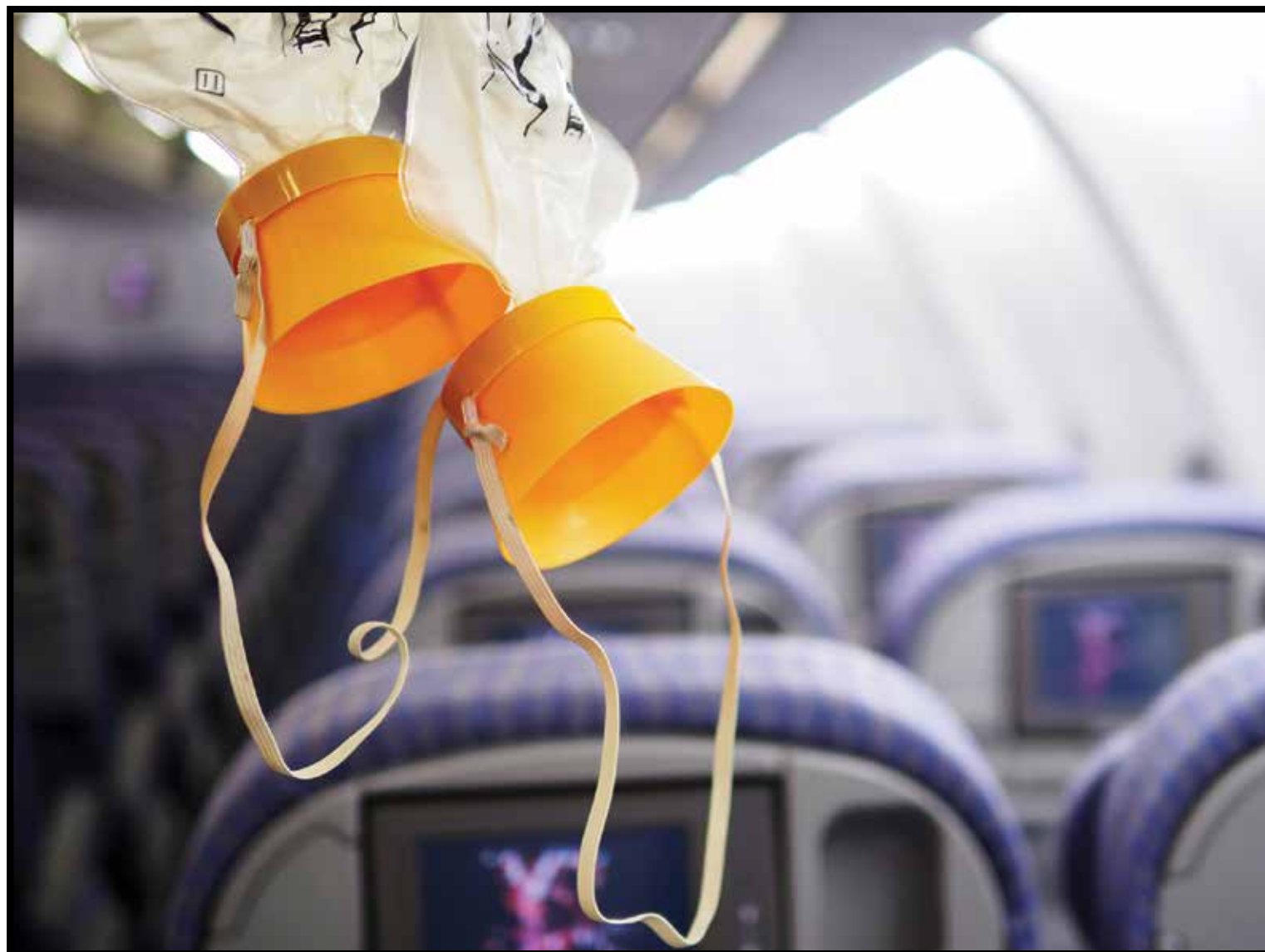
from my own experience that you can't afford not to." To be clear, Glazer is not suggesting that you embrace a morning routine to increase your intellectual capacity so that you become more self-focused or self-involved. It's to take the time to invest in yourself so you can have something to invest in others; in other words, putting the cup securely on your face before you help others with theirs.

We then went to the topic of economic growth, especially as it pertains to food establishments lo-



cated just off of the I-65 exit and Hwy 72. There is interest in Ruby Tuesday's. There is a possibility that Shoney's is going to re-open. Hard-

ee's is definitely going to be re-purposed as a different dining outlet. There is going to be a park built at the old Pilgrim's Pride site. "We have so much going on with arts and music, and the documentary on the life of Dr. Charles Lincoln, called *Coming Through The Fire* is going to be shown at the theatre," Mayor Ronnie said. There will be more on that excellent production soon in an upcoming edition, and we needed to get to prayin'. Then it was time for Ronnie to roll.



Slinkard On Success

They Became Fools

by D. A. Slinkard

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



Recently, I have had on my heart the scripture of Romans 1:22, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." I have been thinking about this Scripture more and more; and I believe this Scripture to hold truth in the world we live in. I am amazed at the lack of common sense being displayed by the supposed intelligent people in our society. What it shows me is you cannot confuse education with intelligence. You can have a high degree of education and still be an idiot.

I wonder what my 2nd grade teacher would have said to me 30 years ago if I tried to argue with her and tell her there were more than two genders? I can just imagine her asking the following question, "If I had a dollar for every gender, how many dollars would I have?" Now, some people think the answer would be \$7, or \$64, or \$71, or \$100. However, the answer would be \$2, being male and female. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.

There is a famous riddle, "How many legs does a dog have if you call the tail a leg?" The answer is four because calling a tail a leg does not make it a leg. However, the society we live in suggests otherwise. We have a lot of confusion in our society, and

it is quite a shame. We have become a society in which we worry more about people's feelings than we do about being honest with others. We are more concerned with people's feelings than we are with facts. Ben Shapiro once said, "Facts do not care about your feelings." We live in a society that is run by what we feel, and we overrule truth based purely on how a person feels. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.

How do we fix this? How do we get rid of the con-

fusion? How do we turn society around? It starts with our way of thinking. We have abandoned living our life for God. We have turned our back on taking what God's Word says and using it for our *faith* and for our *practice*. We treat the Bible as if it is some kind of smorgasbord -- we take what we want and leave what we do not want. Honestly, we should be taking all of God's Word and chewing on it daily. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.

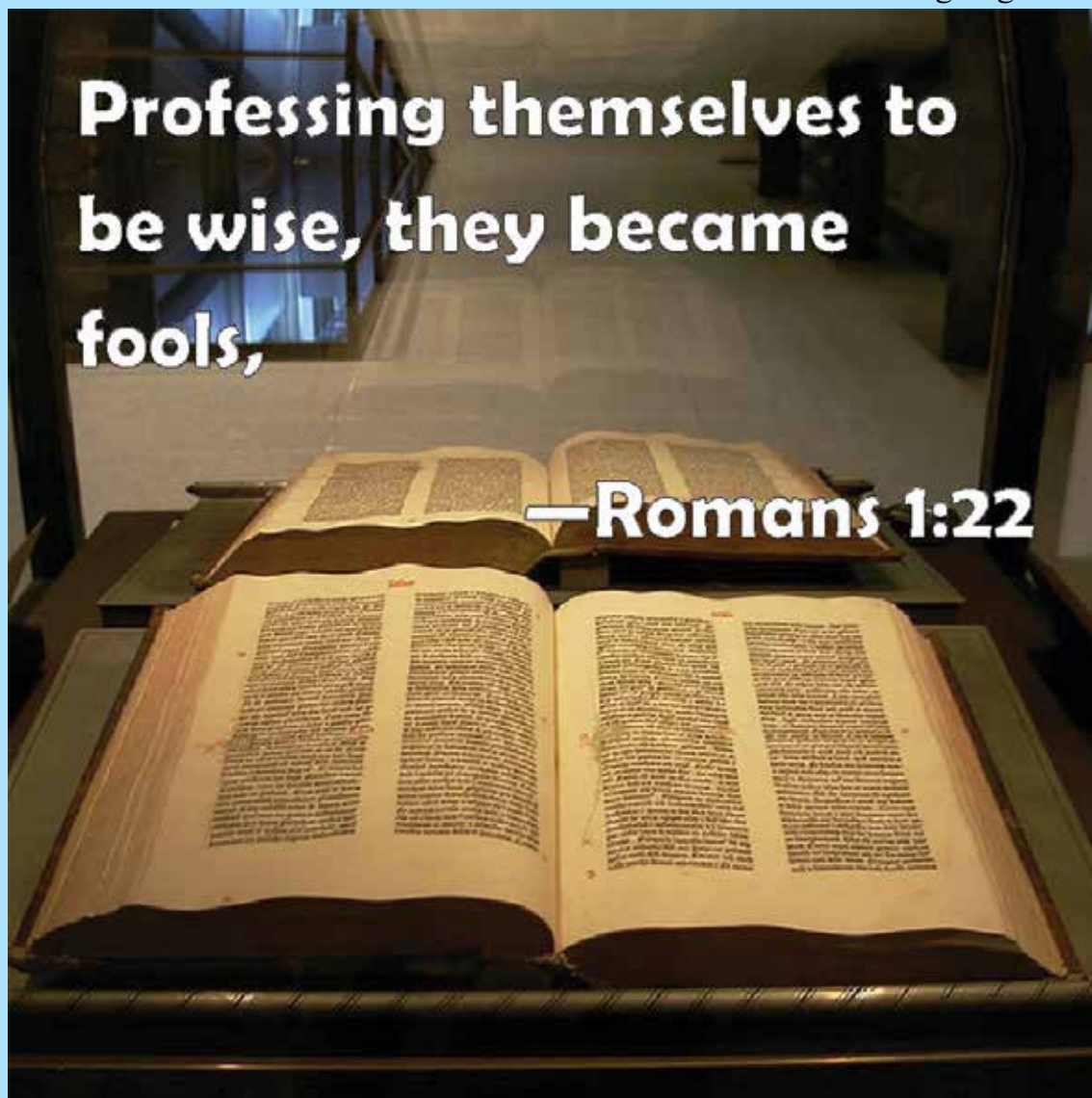
Our society is messed up

because we have separated ourselves from God. We have started doing what we see fit in our own lives, and this has created issues we cannot quickly and easily come back from. Charles Spurgeon said, "May God give you grace to see sin as it really is in his sight, for then you will realize your need of a Saviour." How different would our society be if we looked at sin in the same manner that God does? What would happen if preachers would start preaching against the abominations and the whoredoms going on in

our nation? Yep, most do not because that does not draw a crowd. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.

We need to turn back to God. We need to get back to the basics of Christian living. We need to get back to the days of, "No Bible, no breakfast! No Bible, no bed!" We need a revival to sweep the United States of America. I urge you to open your Bibles and begin to read God's Word. I urge you to spend time with God in prayer. When you go to God in prayer, this is your ability to speak to God; and when you spend time reading God's Word, this is God's ability to speak to you. The Bible tells us our lives are but a vapor and I do not want to waste this life not serving God. We have a lot of wicked going on in society, and the only way to fix our society is to turn to the true God. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.

To some people, I may seem like a fool with the words written; but know Romans 14:12 tells us, "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." When it comes to your time to stand before a Holy and Righteous God, how will it be for you? Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. Do not be the fool.



Colonel Melvin J. McLemore – Part 2

by Sandra Thompson, Director, Alabama Veterans' Museum



In last month's story, written by the beloved Jerry Barksdale, we learned about Mel's childhood, high school, and early military years. We now pick up with Mel in 1963; he has just gotten his family settled in Athens and heads off to Ft. Rucker for a new adventure called Vietnam!

Mel's first tour in Vietnam was with the 73rd Aviation Company; their mission was to support combat operations by performing visual and aerial photographic reconnaissance and surveillance, artillery adjustment, combat command and control, and other combat support operations as required. The 73rd Aviation Company proved the value of regular aerial surveillance of the operational areas and targets. They were so successful in proving the value of aerial surveillance of the battlefield, that ten additional bird dog units were formed and deployed



to Vietnam. That success also led to commanders of today demanding unmanned aerial vehicles for battlefield surveillance. The 73rd was the first Army Aviation unit in Vietnam to be awarded the Meritorious Unit Citation, the highest unit award authorized in the theater at that time.

Mel's next assignment in support of Vietnam was to the 1st Aviation Brigade, the Golden Hawks, supporting The Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) and U.S. Operations. The omnipresent use of the helicopter in Vietnam led to the formation of the brigade so that the Army would have the means to maintain tactical and administrative control over all of the divisional and non-divisional aviation assets in country. The brigade and all of its components made up the larg-



est operational aviation brigade in the Army and were involved in practically every noteworthy operation in Vietnam. Even after leaving the country, Mel continued to support missions to Vietnam. He was assigned to Fort Benning, GA, where he began flying and testing the versatile de Havilland

Canada DHC-4 Caribou, designated by the United States military as the CV-2 and later C-7 Caribou. These tactical transports were highly desired due to their short takeoff and landing capabilities.

Other key assignments in Mel's career include: Germany, Central America, Fort Monmouth, Fort Gordon, Ft. Leavenworth, Maxwell Air Force Base, Mac Dill Air Force Base, Fort Ritchie, Ft. Bragg, and Ft. Hood, as well as other multiple deployments. Mel retired as a full colonel (06) in 1991, his last assignment was as Director of the Army Fixed and Tactical Air Traffic Control, including Military and National Airspace Operations. In his 30-year

years. While working for Allied Signal/Honeywell and Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), he provided technical support for the Aviation Missile Command in Huntsville. Currently, Mel is an invaluable volunteer in the community. He is active in the Vietnam Veterans of America and the Alabama Veterans Museum, where he serves on the Board of Directors and the Veterans Museum building committee. He also currently serves as the President of the National Army Otter-Caribou (CV-2 multi engine aircraft) Association.

Mel gives credit and appreciation for his success to his wonderful wife Wanda, who represented Army Aviation Safety for many years, known as "PEARL." He also gives credit to his two daughters, Stormy (Sandi) and Debbie. Stormy is a retired Chief Warrant Officer (4) from the Army; she flew the Huey and the Blackhawk helicopters. She is currently a Department of the Army civilian safety manager at Redstone Arsenal. Stormy is married to retired Army Special Forces member, Jim Ripley, and they have one son. Mel and Wanda's daughter Debbie is a senior manager at the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command at Redstone Arsenal; she is also an Army War College graduate. Debbie has two daughters and a son.

career in the Army, Mel served as a signal officer and earned the distinction of Master Army Aviator on both fixed and rotary-wing aircraft. After it was all said and done, he had flown over 954 combat flight hours.

After retirement, Mel still had flying in his blood and continued to work in the industry for the next 22

In Mel's own words: "We are a proud and grateful family supporting our dedicated military forces and civilians. Army Strong."

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New Faces, New Records

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

James Clemens named Chad McGehee as their new head football coach. McGehee has been Hoover's defensive coordinator for the past three years. He also played at Alabama from 1995-98; was defensive coordinator at Grayson, North Paulding, Parkview, and North Cobb in Georgia; and was the head coach at Elkmont from 2005-2006.

East Limestone's Jirah Rogers was picked as a member of the Alabama girls' all-star basketball team and scored eight points and pulled down four rebounds in their 102-70 win over Mississippi.

Spring sports highlight scores:

Baseball

- ABS 9, Clements 0
- ABS 22, Falkville 20
- ABS 19, Elkmont 11
- Ardmore 16, Mae Jemison 0
- Athens 7-3, Southside Gadsden 4-4
- Athens 21, Lee 1
- Athens 15, Westminster 1
- Elkmont 17, Rogers 7
- Elkmont 7, Brewer 6
- Elkmont 10, Lauderdale County 7
- James Clemens 11, Madison County 1
- James Clemens 8, Madison Academy 5
- James Clemens 21, Pinson Valley 3
- James Clemens 20, St. Clair County 5
- James Clemens 8, Athens 3
- James Clemens 3, Huntsville 2
- James Clemens 11,

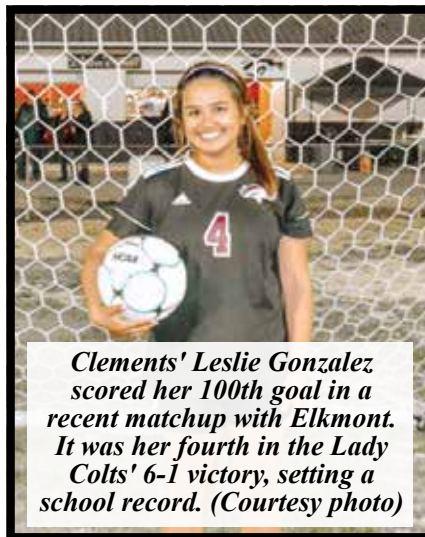
- Enterprise 1
- Lindsay Lane 9, Rogers 1
- Lindsay Lane 22-23, Mae Jemison 0-3
- Lindsay Lane 11, Skyline 0
- Lindsay Lane 6, St. John Paul II 2
- West Limestone 13, Brewer 1
- West Limestone 4, Lexington 1
- West Limestone 11, Ardmore 6
- West Limestone 14, Ardmore 12
- West Limestone 11, ABS 1
- West Limestone 1, East Limestone 0
- West Limestone 10, East Lawrence 9
- West Limestone 20, Lee 8
- West Limestone 7, Wilson 6
- West Limestone 10, Central-Florence 0

Softball

- ABS 17, Shoals Christian 0
- Ardmore 15, Clements 0
- Ardmore 16, Mae Jemison 0
- Ardmore 6, James Clemens 2
- Athens 11, Lauderdale County 1
- Athens 4, Ardmore 3
- Athens 20, Columbia 0
- Athens 3, Hazel Green 0
- Athens, 3, Austin 0
- East Limestone 5, West Limestone 4
- East Limestone 9, Clements 4
- East Limestone 4, Decatur 1
- East Limestone 8, Lexington 3
- East Limestone 10, Brooks 6
- East Limestone 7, Phil Campbell 3

- East Limestone 5, Brooks 3
- Elkmont 9, Huntsville 8
- Elkmont 9, Colbert Heights 3
- James Clemens 5, Huntsville 4
- James Clemens 6, Falkville 5
- Lindsay Lane 16, Tanner 6
- West Limestone 7, Clements 3

At the Hazel Green tournament, the Athens varsity won their gold bracket; Ardmore's varsity won the silver bracket, defeating West Morgan, Scottsboro, and North Jackson.



Clements' Leslie Gonzalez scored her 100th goal in a recent matchup with Elkmont. It was her fourth in the Lady Colts' 6-1 victory, setting a school record. (Courtesy photo)

Soccer

- Ardmore girls 3, Elkmont 2
- Ardmore girls 3, West Limestone 1
- Ardmore boys 3, East Limestone 1
- Athens girls 4, Hartselle 1
- Athens boys 1, Westminster 0
- Athens girls 6, Clements 1
- Athens girls 3, Buckhorn 1
- Clements girls 6, Elkmont 1
- Clements girls 7, West Limestone 0
- Clements boys 5, East Lawrence 2
- Clements boys 5, ABS 1

- East Limestone girls 4, Elkmont 0
- East Limestone girls 5, Madison Academy 2
- East Limestone boys 7, Lawrence County 1
- East Limestone girls 3, Madison Academy 1
- East Limestone girls 6, West Morgan 0
- East Limestone girls 3, Hartselle 1
- East Limestone girls 9, Ardmore 0
- Elkmont boys 5, Ardmore 3
- Elkmont boys 10, East Lawrence 0
- Elkmont boys 4, Clements 2
- James Clemens girls 4, Grissom 0
- James Clemens boys 6, Oak Mountain 1
- James Clemens boys 2, Decatur 0
- James Clemens girls 7, Florence 1
- James Clemens girls 2, Bob Jones 1
- James Clemens boys 4, Sparkman 1
- James Clemens girls 2, Oak Mountain 0

- Tanner boys 13, Clements 0
- Tanner boys 8, Susan Moore 1
- Tanner boys 9, Ardmore 1
- Tanner girls 4, Ardmore 1
- Tanner boys 10, ABS 0
- Tanner boys 14, Whitesburg Christian 0
- Tanner girls 2,

- Whitesburg Christian 1
- Tanner boys 8, Columbia 2
- West Limestone boys 5, West Point 4
- West Limestone boys 1, Clements 1

Tennis

- ABS girls 5, Shoals Christian 4
- James Clemens boys 6, Florence 3
- James Clemens boys 7, Sparkman 2
- James Clemens girls 9, Sparkman 0

Track

At the James Clemens Invitational, the host Jets were first as a team--Esaion Rolingson won the 300 meter hurdles. The boys' 4x800 meter relay team also won their event. Keenan Walker was the top finisher in the high jump. Willie Campbell was first in the triple jump. The Lady Jets were second with Madison Rose winning the long jump. Athens High's Jack Anderson was first in the 3200 meters. The Lady Golden Eagles won the 4x100 meter relay.

Wrestling

Athens High's Will Anderson won his 113 lb. division at the state meet. The Golden Eagles' Andrew Maxwell finished seventh in the 120 lb. division while Gunner Birdsong came in fourth in the 126 lb. category.



Clean, Green And Beautiful

Litter: *If You See Something, Say Something!*

by Leigh Patterson - Executive Director - Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful



I am personally thrilled with the results of all of our cleanup efforts! However, I am very frustrated with the people who continue to litter on our roads, waterways, parks, and public lands. It is infuriating to see litter on a roadway that volunteers have just spent hours of their own personal time cleaning up.

On Saturday, March 13, several volunteers from the Clements Volunteer Fire Department spent hours cleaning up Cowford Road as part of the Cowford Campground and Waterway Cleanup. If you have driven down that road lately, you know how bad the litter was there, especially near Brownsferry Road. After spending all of that time working so hard to clean that road, some people had the nerve to throw out trash from their car windows again on the side of the clean road.

Unfortunately, this happens all of the time and not just in that location. I was speaking with a young man from the Limestone



Daryl Sammet, Limestone County District 1 Commissioner, with his litter crew trailer, featuring KALB's litter hotline.

County District 2 Litter Patrol last week who was voicing the same frustration. He and his crew had picked up on a roadway and stopped for lunch. When they came back to complete the job an hour later, people had already thrown out trash where they had just cleaned!

This behavior has to stop! What would your mother do if you went into her living room and threw down all of your fast food trash or your drink cans and bottles right in the middle of her floor? Maybe some of your mothers would pick up after you, but I am doubting that. As a mother myself, I know what I would do! The same goes for when you are in your vehicle or when you are in a public area. Please hold on to your trash until you can

properly dispose of it in a trashcan. Do not throw out your trash onto the ground or onto roadsides in our city or county. Do you want visitors in your home to see your trash lying around on the living room floor? In the same way, we should not want our community looking trashy to those who are visiting our area (or to the rest of us who live here!). What does that say about us?

I know that I am mostly "preaching to the choir"



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KALBCares@gmail.com

www.KALBCares.com

here, but I am asking for your help. KALB can continue to host cleanup events and write articles bringing awareness to the problem, but we need your help as well by reporting acts of littering and illegal dumping.

The Department of Homeland Security has a saying about witnessing suspicious activity: "If you see something, say something." This applies perfectly to witnessing an act of littering as well! KALB has a litter hotline. If you see someone littering or illegally dumping, report it by calling 256-233-8000, so that we may turn it over to the proper authorities. We need the following information: time, location, vehicle tag number and description, and the act that you witnessed (threw a bag out of the passenger window, etc.). We also have an online form available to report littering and illegal dumping at KALBCares.com under the Litter Control tab.

If litterbugs realize that people are watching, maybe they will be less likely to continue this behavior. Let's work together to try to stop this ugly habit that affects us all. If you see something, say something!

KALB UPCOMING EVENTS

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

Saturday, April 10, 2021

8:00 am to noon

Athens Middle School North Parking Lot
100 US Hwy 31, Athens

Visit the event page on KALBCares.com
for information on items accepted

2021 Earth Day & Outdoor EXPO (Outdoors and socially distant!)

Saturday, April 24, 2021

11:00 am to 2:00 pm

Big Spring Memorial Park
350 Market Street East, Athens



Cooking with Anna

Are You Enjoying Your Season?

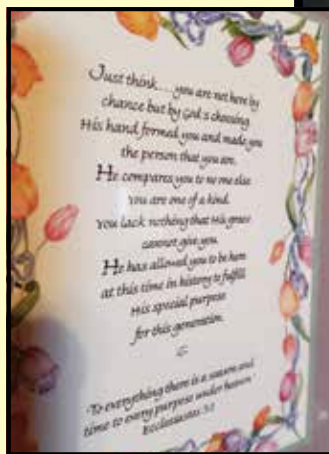
by Anna Hamilton

My husband and I are just returning from a mini vacation in Mentone, AL. Neither of us had ever explored this beautiful part of our state. On Sunday

afternoon, we began the drive and in less than 3 hours, we were in one of the most beautiful places I had ever seen. I felt as if we were in Heaven's back yard. A sense of peace swept over us as we sat on the balcony of the cabin we rented and gazed at the vast landscape below. You could see 3 states from our cabin.

Mentone is a very small town, and we found that most all stores and restaurants were operating on winter hours, which meant they were only open Friday-Sunday. Since we were arriving late Sunday afternoon, we knew our vacation would mainly consist of enjoying the beauty of God's creation. We explored Little River Canyon and DeSoto Falls the next day and were in awe of the power of nature. It was as if God had taken a paintbrush and created the perfect picture. It was so peaceful, and we truly got to enjoy our time just breathing, relaxing, and enjoying each other.

Wednesday morning as I began packing to come home, I took the time to read the small framed print above the light switch in our bedroom. "Just think... you are not here by chance but by God's choosing. His hand formed you and made you the person that you are. He compares you to no one else. You are one of a kind. You lack nothing that His grace cannot give you. He has allowed you to be here at this time in history to fulfill His special



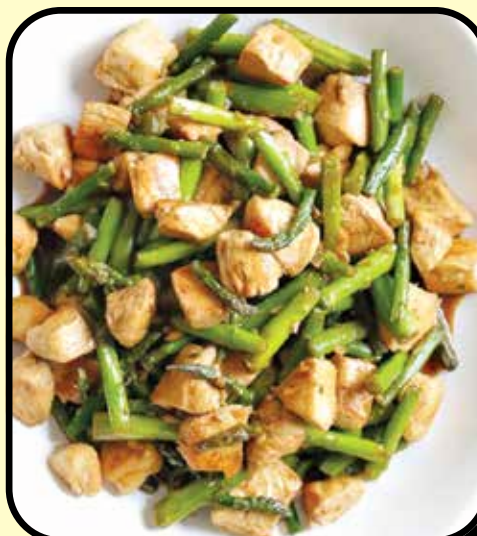
purpose for this generation." It was a quote from Roy Lessin, the founder of DaySpring Cards. After the few days of enjoying the beauty of God's creation, this quote left me feeling so empowered. I am in this season of my life to fulfill God's special purpose. He has chosen each of us to be right where we are. How you approach the situation or the season you are in will determine the outcome of your life. You can choose to face hardships while giving God the glory, or you can choose to let the hardships of your life overtake you. I am choosing to enjoy this season I am in, no matter the situation. God is always by my side, and I am right where He means for me to be. He has a plan for my life and if I continue to give Him the glory in all situations, I will have a happier life.

What season of life are you currently living in? Whether you are in winter facing the bitter cold or in the summer basking in the warm sun, just know that after the winter comes the spring with a hope of a new life. God has not and will not abandon you. Choose to see the beauty in your season. Choose to enjoy your season and learn from the lessons God is teaching you. We are a blessed people, no matter the season we are currently in.

Teriyaki Chicken and Asparagus

Ingredients:

- 3 Tbsps. soy sauce
- 1 Tbsp. rice wine vinegar
- 1/2 Tbsp. honey, add more if you like it sweeter
- 1/2 Tbsp. fresh grated ginger
- 1 tsp. cornstarch
- 1 1/2 pounds skinless chicken breast, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 Tbsp. canola, divided
- 12 oz asparagus, ends trimmed, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 4 cloves garlic, chopped



"To everything there is a season and time to every purpose under heaven." Ecclesiastes 3:1

To celebrate the upcoming spring, this week's recipe is a delicious chicken stir-fry that is guaranteed to be a hit, even with those picky kiddos. My family just enjoys the chicken and vegetables, but feel free to serve this over rice, quinoa, farro, or your favorite grain. This particular recipe features asparagus as the main veggie, but it is equally as yummy with broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, shredded cabbage, peppers, and onions. I really love recipes that can be adjusted to fit perfectly into your family's lifestyle and taste preferences.

Directions:

Whisk the soy sauce, vinegar, honey and ginger, and cornstarch in a small bowl; set aside.

Lightly season the chicken with salt and pepper. Heat a large non-

stick skillet over medium-high heat. When hot, add 1 teaspoon of the oil, then add the asparagus and cook until tender-crisp, about 6 to 7 minutes. Remove from skillet and set aside. Add the garlic and cook until golden, about 1 minute. Remove from skillet and set aside on a dish. Increase the heat to high, then add remaining oil and chicken, cook until browned and cooked through. Place everything back into the skillet, pour the sauce over, and cook while stirring for 30 to 60 seconds until the sauce thickens slightly.

Develop The Situation

by Steve Leland

In the book that I referenced previously, *The Mission, The Men, And Me* by Pete Blaber, he had another concept that struck me hard. He had a chapter about how the U.S. intelligence community totally ignored the possibility of infiltrating known terrorist havens, seemingly because of how hard it would be to do. Pete then tells us the story of an American fella that chose to join them and successfully, situation by situation, worked his way so deeply into the system that he actually had a face-to-face meeting with Osama bin Laden. Pete's point was that no plan would have worked; but by developing each situation as

it showed up, he just kept climbing the ladder higher into the organization.

I was reminded of a time some years ago with a company that I was in. We had a guy who had the job of picking up and delivering freight. Some of the deliveries actually required two men to accomplish. Nobody told him that he would need assistance; so

he simply developed each situation and successfully accomplished the task. Our opinions did not define his ability to do the job. In fact, had he known our opinion, he probably wouldn't have been able to do what he did.

A while back I was with a friend that was staring down a seemingly impossible situation. He was

very depressed because he absolutely had to take care of it, but was at a total loss about how to get it done. I asked him the old joke: How do you eat an elephant? Answer: One bite at a time. So we figured out the first bite, then the second bite. Within minutes we had developed the situation until the problem was solved.

Another vagrant thought

that has come to mind is a scene that I first saw in an old movie. I can't find the quote listed for when I first heard it used, (it has been used many times since) but it goes: "You can't get there from here."

Often that is how we approach a problem, but if we just take one bite at a time, developing the situation, we find that we can get there from here.

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Express Employment Professionals: Strengthening Athens One Job At A Time

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

continued from page 1

for years to be back in the Athens area. Together, having had decades of experience in corporate America, the time finally came when they both knew they wanted to do something else. Richard is a software engineer, and Kim developed training for AT&T in Atlanta. Kim and Richard have both experienced layoffs and understood the stress and fear of being without a job.

Richard and Kim set to work to find something that fit with their moral and spiritual values, their strengths, as well as experience in the market place. They wanted a franchise opportunity which was linked to a stable and established company that was unashamedly pro-America and pro-military. They found it in the form of Express Employment Professionals, which was started in 1983 and has more than 800 offices nationwide. The company is headquartered in Oklahoma City, and right on the front of their building are large brass letters that say, "God Bless America." Kim told me, "We were overwhelmed with the welcome we got. People lined up and applauded us as we entered the building, and they



The Decatur office crew kept things going, even during COVID

didn't just say it, they meant it." Express Employment Professionals is picky as to who they allow to represent their brand. "They get thousands of serious inquiries a year, and they select only about 80," said Kim.

A requirement for being allowed to purchase an Express Employment Professionals franchise is to give back to the community. Would-be franchise owners must select the charity or charities of their choice, and demonstrate that they are partnering with them to strengthen their city or town. Another thing that is encouraged is to call up other franchise owners so they can "talk

shop" and find out how things are going and what challenges have been faced and overcome. All in all, everything was a perfect fit, and they opened their doors for business with success as a result.

When COVID-19 hit, they were considered an "essential business," and the whole Decatur office decided to stay open while following the CDC guidelines. They had a brainstorming session as to how they could be compliant and still find creative ways to build the business. For example, they used only one pen for applicants, and sterilized it after each use. "We have an amazing staff – they are so dedicated, and see what they do as a calling. They truly care about our applicants and our clients," said Kim. One of their fellow franchisees came up with the idea of doing a "drive-through job fair," and this is how the relationship with Family Resource Center in Athens was born.

They had always wanted to open an office in Athens. "We held a Drive-Thru Jobs Fair in August of 2020 in the parking lot of the Family Resource Center parking lot on S. Jefferson Street. It felt like 110 degrees

outside, yet we had 35 people apply for jobs," Kim told me. That was when the partnership with Express and the FRC was solidified. They soon opened the Athens office inside FRC. "Working with FRC has been fabulous, and we are so honored to rent office space there, and thankful for the support they have given us," said Kim. She added, "Tina Cook, Director of the FRC, and Jaquata Thompson from the Career Center do so much for the Athens community, so partnering with them has been a great fit." Express team members are there all day on Tuesdays, Friday mornings and also by appointment. "Our goal is to be there full time within the next few months," said Kim.

In general, Kim is out in the field seeking out and vetting businesses that could use their services, and Richard trains associates at the office. "Richard is like a proud papa when they get hired," said Kim with a smile. One of their first success stories at the Decatur office was helping a single dad who was raising four children get a much-needed job that worked with the needs of his kids. Others have said, "You saw in me

what I didn't see in myself." Richard in particular enjoys the fact that most often if those seeking employment have a coach who believes in them and helps them to polish their skills, they end up being a successful employee. Even in the chaos of COVID, between both offices, Express Pros were able to continue to place applicants, and more than 200 people were hired permanently. One man at the Athens office had just gotten out of prison and needed a bike to get to his new job, and FRC helped with that.

The reason why Express Pros works so well is the time and expense they spend getting to know both the client (business owner) as well as the associate (person seeking employment). "We never charge applicants fees for finding them a job, or for their drug test," said Kim. Express Employment Professionals have placed applicants in jobs ranging from fast food outlets to highly specialized professional positions. If you are in need of employment and you are ready, willing and able to work, give them a call today. Likewise, if you are looking to hire and need help finding the right fit for your company, contact them. They would consider it an honor to have you as an associate or a client.

Express Employment Professionals

Athens location - Family Resource Center

**406 S Jefferson St,
Athens, AL 35611
in the Crutcher
Shopping Center**

256-822-1000

**Tuesdays and
by appointment**



Back To Basics – Drink Water

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



Drinking water is not just important, it is vital to having a healthy, functioning body. Sometimes, the difference in actually incorporating something in daily life is in not just being told to do so, but having a true knowledge about the reasons behind it.

Drinking more water each day is something EVERYONE can do with ease for important overall health and body function. Simply, keep a bottle of water or favorite cup with ice water close by all day no matter where life goes. Even doing things like setting phone timers or writing target times on the bottles can make sure a good drinking pace is maintained through the day. A great goal is to drink about a gallon a day.

I believe it is knowledge that will truly fuel the desire to make drinking water part of daily life in a real way. Reaching for water instead of coffee, tea, energy drinks, or sodas is a key to true hydration. Plain old water is actually what really provides the energy needed when temptation comes calling to grab those other drinks. Wa-

ter plays a vital role in fueling the muscles so they can perform at optimal level at all times, especially during exercise. If cramps have ever been an issue during a workout or while playing a sport, it was likely due to a lack of water intake that day. Avoiding painful muscle pulls and tears can even be traced back to good hydration.

Some of the less talked about but incred-

ibly beneficial aspects of good hydration are things such as a boost in metabolism and even having more youthful, smooth skin. The ability to stay focused and concentrate on the tasks of the day are also rooted in getting a sufficient amount of water, not to mention keeping dehydration headaches at bay. The current state of society the past year makes any boost in the immune system a mega-positive,

and water will do just that. Good hydration actually keeps all major organs functioning properly, which helps fight off all those very much unwanted germs.

When the appropriate amount of water is consumed for each body size and type, it maintains a better blood pressure. It also keeps digestion at a regular level preventing constipation and an overly acidic

stomach, which can lead to things like heartburn and stomach ulcers. Drinking plenty of water also regulates the body's fluid level which, if not maintained, could lead to kidney stones among other issues.

The body can go days without eating, but water is truly essential to life itself. Water consumption is the key to living your most healthy, fit life!



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Belles And Beaus On Jefferson: *Charming, Affordable Children's Wear*

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

continued from page 1

sing her love for children. She had gotten a psychology degree from Athens State University and had worked for DHR for several years. Trying to protect children in this day and age can take its toll, and Tevvy knew it was time for a change. "I wanted to still be around kids, and this was perfect," she said. Her grandmother, Camilla, and her mom, Whitney, backed her decision and have come alongside to support her, for which she is deeply thankful. "I could not do it without them," Tevvy told me. Camilla and Whitney told me that where Tevvy shines is in putting outfits together. "She can go to several shelves and find the perfect outfit," said Camilla. In that regard, Belles and Beaus is very much like a clothing shop of old where the staff takes joy in helping you find what you are looking for, and at a price you can afford.

When Tevvy purchased Belles and Beaus, the shop underwent a face-lift; freshened by paint and new flooring, along with different stock, B&B was ready to help Athens parents purchase gently used,

high quality children's clothing and accessories. "Often our clothing is less than half the original costs," Tevvy mentioned, and she particularly loves what she refers to as "smocked anything." Smocking is nearly a lost art, and one for which I have great personal appreciation and affection. My mom, who lived to be 100 years old, hand smocked the dresses she made for her three daughters, and they were beautiful! With spring springing and Easter just around the corner, now is the perfect time to come and see what they have done to the store and what they have in the store.

Whitney loves to do the seasonal decorations and for this spring, painted clouds which are hanging in the front window. Camilla happily came out of retirement (again) and helps out several days a week. Whitney is a structural engineer, and puts those abilities to use three times a year when she culls and organizes stock that has not moved. The clothing is then donated to the foster parent closet that is housed at the Children's Advocacy Center on Washington Street in Athens.

In addition to the brick-and-mortar store, Tevvy is also doing a goodly amount of business on Facebook. She posts new finds and will hold on to them if you se-



Tevvy McDole

cure them via PayPal. (There are no exceptions to that rule, due to no shows.) I asked her about some of both venues' best sellers, as well as her personal favorites. The shop's top sellers are Bailey Boys, Matilda Jane, and Bella Bliss. Tevvy's personal favorites are Petit Ami, Claire and Charlie, and Shrimp and Grits. They also have several bonnets, and she loves those that are produced by Beaufort Bonnet. She also carries bloomers. The high selling shoe lines are Livie and Luca, L'Amour, and SunSan, which are cute and sturdy little sandals.

In addition to clothing, Belles and Beaus carries all manner of baby gear. They have strollers, walkers, and car seats. While they are not able to have a baby shower gift registry per se, they do offer gift cards and Tevvy will

help you find the perfect gift!

I asked Tevvy why, when I have consignment choices for children's clothing, should I come to Belles and Beaus? "We are the only place in Athens that carries the high-end lines. People come from Tennessee, Florence, Hartselle, and Birmingham, from all over the South, really, and that's because of the quality of the brands and the prices, she said. "I really enjoy putting outfits together, and I am good at it," she added. There is one more thing that she especially loves about her store, and that

is having moms and kids come in; the kids can play, and sometimes parents just need a chance to talk. Parenting has never been easy, and in this past year where parents have had to do double and triple duty as caregivers and educators, Tevvy understands. She is the mother of an adorable little boy by the name of Macon, and she is grateful for all that her family has done for her. In many ways, Belles and Beaus is also about "paying it forward." Stop by today and let Belles and Beaus find the perfect, gently used items for your kiddos, and they'll be ready for spring in style!



Belles and Beaus

210 S Jefferson St
Athens, AL 35611

Phone: 256-444-0456

Email: bellesandbeausofathens@gmail.com

Hours: Tue-Fri 10-5,
Sat 10-2

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Belles and Beaus

Bloom Where You Are Planted

by Eric Betts

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



While Christmas season is considered the most wonderful time of the year, it may be argued that spring is the most beautiful time of the year. After a long and cold winter, new life and bright greenery appear. It is great to see the trees and the bushes and the branches bloom at this time of the year. One of the things that you will notice during the spring season is that trees and bushes bloom in many different places. They bloom in the countryside. They bloom in the mountains. They bloom on the sidewalks of the city streets. They bloom in the fields and in the forests. No matter where they are planted, they have the capacity to bloom.

The tree that I enjoy seeing bloom more than any other is the cherry blossom tree. I enjoy seeing them bloom at the National Mall and around Washington DC. Thousands travel from around the world every year to see and behold the beauty of the wonderful cherry blossom trees in our nation's capital. The flowers of the cherry blossom tree typically last only 2 weeks. So it is important to enjoy them while they last.

But the tree that amazes me the most is the almond tree. The flowers of an almond tree are stunning in appearance. While, the cherry blossom tree is amazingly gorgeous, there are many lessons that can be learned from

the almond tree. These lessons can be learned when observing the growth process of the almond tree. It begins with what appears to be deadness, then afterwards miniature buds, they further grow beautiful blossoms, and finally nutritious almonds.

Almonds go through many seasons and temperature variations, but they bloom where they are planted. They also bloom when the time comes for them to do so. Additionally, their time to flower is not the end of the process. Their time to bloom is merely preparatory to their service to mankind in the form of the actual almond.

According to tropicalfoods.com, "The almond is the product of an almond tree and almost all of the world's wholesale almonds come from California. Farmers grow almond trees throughout the

year and harvest them between the months of August to October."

Although almond trees grow beautiful blossoms and nutritious almonds, the process requires the many seasons. Such growth would not be possible without the winter months of coldness and harsh conditions. Notice what tropicalfoods.com has to say about the importance of the winter to the almond tree: "From November to February, the buds of the almond tree need to go through the cold weather, but it's a balance since they can be negatively impacted by a heavy frost. In late February and early March, the almond tree begins to produce blossoms that are ready for pollination." The buds need the cold weather, and the buds produce the blossoms.

In leadership, we often experience cold and harsh re-

alities. We later learn that those harsh conditions, including cold and unfriendly settings, though difficult and undesirable in the moment, were helpful on the road to our own maturity where we are able to excel in other places. Those circumstances seemed unbearable, and they may have not always seemed helpful, but we were able to grow from them. The bud that is prepared in winter will blossom at the right time.

Additionally, once the bud flowers in the spring, this is not the end of the journey, but only a stage to fruitfulness. I liken this blossoming process to the experience of that leader who has achieved his opportunity, passed that exam, graduated from that college, or promoted within that industry. It is a season of being noticed, congratulated, praised, and respected in one's field of expertise.

In this season of blooms and blossoms, it is important not to compare yourselves with others. Many say to themselves, "I should have bloomed by now, considering my age." Take confidence in knowing that everyone has their own time and place to bloom.

From early spring to summer, the almond tree begins to transform the blossoms into an almond. There is an additional lesson in this season of the almond tree. The blossoms don't last long. The blossoms must yield the almonds in order for the tree to be serviceable. The flower is your potential and sign of promise during the moments of your congratulations and praise, but this will soon wear away as do the blossoms of spring. However, this is not the end but the beginning to committing oneself and becoming serviceable in the arena where one is planted. This is the time to make the greatest contribution one can possibly make. The blossoms are the promise and potential, but these are not enough. There must also be an excellence in performance and in contribution after the flower has faded. This is the most important phase. Yes! Enjoy the blossom period of your journey, while it lasts. It will go away. However, when it goes away, I hope you will be found producing in your field of knowledge.

And finally, bloom wherever you are planted.





The View From The Bridge

As We Celebrate Women's History Month: Sharing "Her Story"

by Jackie Warner

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

March is Women's History Month and provides us all an opportunity to recognize, learn, and honor women's accomplishments and contributions.

Here's to Strong Women, May We Know Them, May We Be Them, May We Raise Them

Charlotte Ray has the distinction of being the first African American woman lawyer in the United States and the first woman admitted to the bar in the District of Columbia.

Civil rights hero **Fannie Lou Hamer** is remembered by those who joined her in the strug-

gle.

Vel Phillips, the first African American judge in Wisconsin and the first woman, and African American, in the nation elected to executive office in state government.

Claressa Shields, who was just 17 years old when she won the Olympic gold medal for women's boxing in 2012.

Shirley Chisholm is best known for her 1972 bid to win the Democratic presidential nomination; she was the first Black woman to make this attempt in a major political party. She was also the first Black woman to be elected into the U.S. House of Represent-

tatives in 1969.

In closing, I would like to give a blessed thank you to all those women who influenced my life and helped me to be the person I am today. Special thanks to my strong grandmothers who allowed me to bring some of their history into my life journey!

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Intentional*

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My Grandmother, Bertha (L) and Great Grandmother, Elsie

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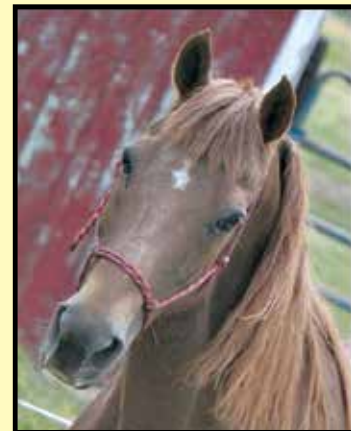
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Marching Onward; Letting Go Of Betrayal

by Deb Kitchenmaster



Before I talk to you about betrayal, I want to take a moment and thank each of you who responded to last month's article: *Horse Carries Betrayed Wounded Soul Safely Home*. I received a text from an *Athens Now* reader who had just finished reading April's HORSE WHISPERING telling me that this article was a MUST to copy and reflect on often. Questions that came from this article from another reader were: (1) What is the curtain between our spirit and soul? (2) What might 'being alive unto righteousness' look like? And (3) what does 'excellence of soul' look like in practical day-to-day living? Great questions! This blesses my writer's heart with joy!

Let's take a moment to talk about betrayal. Honestly, I never much thought about betrayal. That is until I became aware of betrayal these past four months. Betrayal can be like a wild roller coaster ride. How is that? Everything you thought you knew and could count on changes. Your world is turned upside down and everything feels uncertain. This is the reason 'language' is incredibly important. To be able to put into words, whether by writing (journal) or expressing with kind, caring people what you are going through. Recently, we have heard the word 'essential' in



describing different levels of employment. I want to tell you it is essential for you to be kind and to healthily care for yourself as you continue onward in the healing process from the wounds of betrayal.

Getting bucked off a horse, falling off a horse, the sensation of losing your balance from a sudden swift jolt are experiences you remember. So it is when you experience betrayal. One of the first things betrayal brings is disbelief. There is a struggle to wrap your mind around the betrayal and to try to make sense out of what just happened! Have you gone through a hall of mirrors at a county/state fair?

people, for the people, and by the people" and then another mirror says, "What people?" A word of caution: do not doubt your ability to perceive reality accurately! When mirrors are reflecting mixed messages, double standards, it is common to feel as if you are losing your mind or going crazy to some degree. You're not; you're simply desperately looking for some solid ground to stand on in the midst of quicksand.

Allow me to be a voice of encouragement if you will. Please be willing to let go of patterns of thought that don't serve you well. Yes, it can be



One moment you see this and then you see that. Each mirror holds an image but the images don't seem to relate to each other. One mirror says your vote counts; the other mirror says it doesn't. One mirror says, "We the

scary to leave behind something or someone that felt certain or familiar; however, it is the letting go that opens space for something new to come in. Remember, more often than not

a NEW THING can change the course of life in good and surprising ways.

Horses know betrayal also. The horse that has been sent to a horse slaughtering facility experiences betrayal. There are horses that people breed or buy just for a particular purpose (kill buyers or breeders), and they sadly experience betrayal also. We must consider another betrayal that comes to a horse. It's when the horse has been used until it has outlived its usefulness to the person, and they don't care about providing another home or providing another option for the horse. It's all about the money. Racehorses! Depending on their owners and caregivers, each horse has its own lived reality.

The healing process is not fast and cannot be rushed. I hope you will be more like a horse than a human in the way that less is more. In the midst of healing, going slowly gets us there faster in the end. It gives us the space to engage in the experiences that transform us from the inside out. Remember the outside of a horse is good for the inside of a person.

**Your NEIGHbor,
Deb Kitchenmaster**

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Dealing With Toxic People

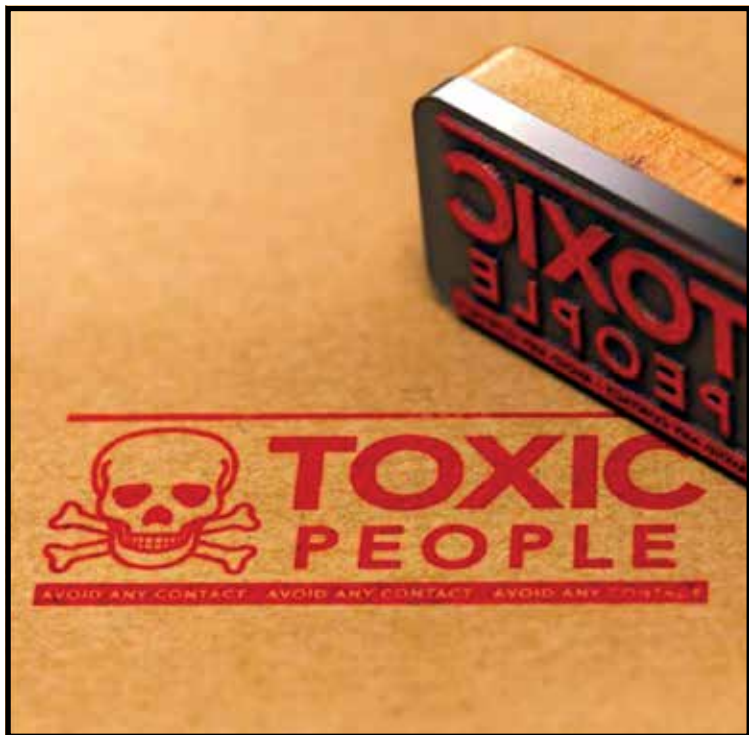
by Lisa Philippart,
Licensed Professional Counselor



“People inspire you or they drain you. Pick them wisely.”
- Hans F. Hansen

you! Bottom line: Emotional and verbal abuse are never okay. Learn to trust your gut. One reason people stay in these relationships is the lack of trust in themselves or their judgment. Are your default statements, “She didn’t really mean what she said, it was just the heat of the moment,” or “He didn’t realize how hurtful that was. Once I let him know, I’m sure he’ll come around.”? Sound familiar? Now is the moment to stop and consider why you are doing the excusing or rationalizing.

Have you ever heard of the sunk cost fallacy? A study by Daniel Kahneman and Amos Twersky shows that humans are famously loss-averse, and prefer to hold onto what they have in the short-term...even if giving up a little will get them more in the long run. We prefer the known to the unknown, even if the known makes us unhappy. This leads to an unconscious pattern called the sunk cost fallacy, which keeps us in places we ought not to be, including toxic relationships. Specifically, this is the habit of the mind that focuses on what you have invested in something (emotion, time, effort, or even money) and keeps you in place so as not to lose that investment. Of course, whatever the investment is, you can’t retrieve it under any circumstances, whether it’s the years you put into a relationship or money you put into a failing car; so there’s no real logic to this think-



ing. This fallacy has been used to justify all sorts of behaviors, including wars and failing marriages. If you catch yourself thinking about what you have sunk into a relationship with a toxic person, start thinking instead about where you might find yourself if you let go. The word “fallacy” says it all.

It may be time for you to recognize the traits that make you easy prey. Assessing what you bring to the relationship doesn’t mean taking responsibility or the blame for someone’s mistreatment of you. Is it your need to please or your fear of rocking the boat that keeps you tongue-tied when people verbally

assault you for their bad mood? Take some time to coolly process the interactions that make you unhappy, focusing on *why* you felt as you did, not what you felt, and see if you can identify a pattern. Sometimes those who struggle with self-esteem or self-confidence issues confuse the toxic person’s need to control and impress with strength and perseverance. It might be worth your time to read up on attachment styles to see how that might be affecting how you choose your friends and partners. There’s more to learn, so you will have to wait for my next article... Part Two of “Dealing With Toxic People.”

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.

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The Alternative Approach

Are You Getting Enough Vitamin D?

by Roy Williams

Vitamin D3 is nicknamed the “sunshine vitamin” because natural sunlight produces vitamin D3 in your skin as a response to UV rays. Ironically, it is nearly impossible to get adequate amounts of vitamin D3 from the sun! The best option to getting enough vitamin D3 is supplementation as it is difficult and can be harmful getting enough vitamin D3 from UV rays. So, don’t buy into “if you’re out in the sun you’re getting all the Vitamin D you need.” Spend your time out in the sun with mindfulness that overexposure will not make you healthier. You cannot get vitamin D3 from sitting in your car, in front of a window, or in a sunroom because the rays that generate vitamin D cannot penetrate glass.

What if I told you that a lot of people are vitamin D3 deficient? Almost half the population of the U.S.

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is deficient in this vitamin. The crazy part is we don’t really hear about vitamin D3 deficiency and how easy it is to actually get enough of this vitamin to improve all of our body’s internal processes. Supplementation is the safest way to get the right amount of vitamin D3 through high-quality vitamin supplements. Wouldn’t you like help with improving your bone density or relieving back pain, fatigue, hair loss, muscle cramps, frequent colds, and sleep dysfunction?

It is hard to get enough vitamin D3 through food that contains vitamin D3, especially ones containing fatty acids. Fish and liver oils, trout, tuna, salmon, egg yolks, and fatty fish diets have small amounts of vitamin D3 and essential fatty acids. This vitamin that used to be so difficult to get enough of is now readily available through vitamins and supplements. Concentrated forms of vitamins are able to deliver enough of the vitamin to provide the nutrients the body needs. Vitamin D helps with auto immune disorders, it boosts the immune system, it helps the body to produce cortisol, and it awakens the body



upon rising. It helps with osteoporosis and with chemo patients that have bone frailness. Studies show that 60% of hospital patients are vitamin D deficient. All of these bone deficiency disorders can be avoided and helped be reversed with proper vitamin D3 intake, and other vitamins that help you build stronger bones.

Even the regulation of hormones is facilitated by vitamin D, referred to as the master key for our hormones by some. Yet some of our pregnant women are not getting enough of it, with 76% of pregnant woman shown to have a known deficiency in vitamin D3. Women who become pregnant can easily supplement and regulate their body’s natural hormones and increase bone

density in themselves and the unborn child. Vitamin D deficiency can stop childhood diseases such as rickets and osteomalacia, where the bones are soft and malleable. There are many more reasons vitamin D is essential.

Vitamin D helps regulate insulin levels; it increases the use of glucose as energy other than fat. It supports healthy lung function by increasing oxygen intake. It improves muscle energy and increases athletic abilities because the cells and the muscles receive more oxygen. It increases calcium uptake that makes us better athletes because we have improved muscle and energy function. Through the use of vitamin D, we can reach calcium homeostasis. It increases the amount of vitamin in-

take during the Krebs cycle during the ATP process. We can support our weight loss through better sleep and insulin sensitivity by increasing vitamin D intake. Vitamin D is known to lower cortisol levels, which helps reduce anxiety and increase weight loss by leveling out hormones that cause weight gain. Vitamin D deficiency can cause excess belly fat. Vitamin D can help repress and reduce the storage of fat cells that accumulate in trouble areas.

You would have to drink a lot of glasses of vitamin D milk a day, and eat 3 or 4 servings of vitamin D rich foods to get the daily recommended value. There is an easier way. We have products at Herbs and More like D-5000 that has 5000 units of vitamin D3 and a unique blend that helps with vitamin D absorption, bio availability, and calcium absorption. We have straight vitamin D3 in various mgs and we have a unique product called Restore that has 800 units of vitamin D and helps with glandular functions and acts as an endocrine cleanse that has.

Bring this article in to Herbs & More in Athens or NHC Herb Shop in Killen and receive a 20% discount, or go to www.nhcherbs.com and scroll down to the microphone and listen to Today’s Health Update.

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Roy P. Williams*

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Tennessee Valley Spotlight



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Power Trip

by Mae Lewis

Recently, a dear friend confessed to me that her husband of 20 years had had an affair. This may not seem like particular news in itself – people have affairs all the time – except for two things: 1. This is the fifth affair he has had in the last ten years, and 2. He is a pastor.

Let me elaborate a bit. The women at the other end of the affairs are married women within the church -- some of them are married to board members. Now in this particular case, these board members are UNAWARE that their wives are intimately involved with the pastor. The men who directly have oversight over the pastor have managed to keep all of these scandals under wraps, and the women have been ordered to stay silent and not reveal the affairs to their husbands. I'm not sure what is worse -- the fact that these men are unaware, or the fact that it has been allowed to continue unchecked.

This past year has been rife with scandal in the church, men and women of God who have used their position of religious authority to abuse others and further their own interests. It is no wonder that people are leaving the church when they see men who do not speak truth trying to sell the truth.

Lest I sound judgmental, let me be clear: God's grace is abundant. God's grace covers EVERY sin, even those against his body, the church. Sexual sin is not a new thing. The human condition

is such that all men (and women) commit sexual sin, whether it is in thought or deed, and God's mercy trumps all. Even King David, who was involved in a murderous scandal, was still considered "a man after God's own heart," and King David's restoration from his failures is often cited as a reason to allow pastors to remain in their positions in spite of moral failure. But there is a key point that needs to be made here: King David was not a priest.

Scripture makes it abundantly clear that men in the priesthood must require purity in their lives. I am reminded of the sons of the High Priest Eli, Hophni and Phineas, who are mentioned in I Samuel 2. As priests, they behaved wickedly and selfishly abused the sacrifices of

the people, and committed adultery with the women who served at the entrance to the tent of meeting. The Bible says, "they had no regard for the Lord" (2:12). Verses 13-17 make it clear that the REAL offense was not the sexual sin, but the abuse of power that the sons evinced over the people. Eli knew of their behavior, and he did not stop them. The end result was that Eli and his sons and THIRTY THOUSAND men were killed, and the Ark of the Covenant (the sign of God's presence with Israel) was stolen.

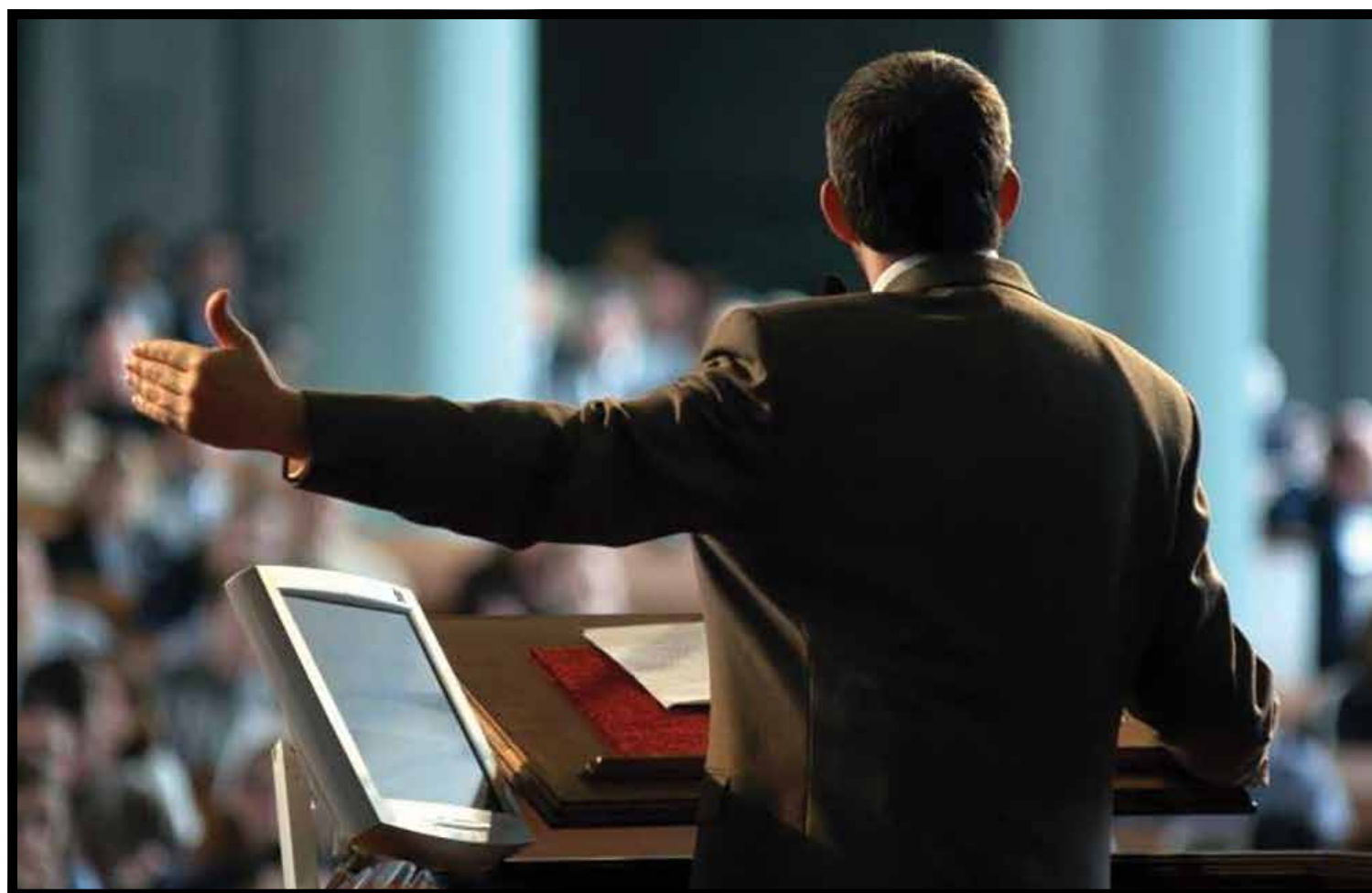
I submit to you, dear reader, that the church today has a massive problem with abuses of power, and the "sexual scandals" we are seeing are merely the surface evidence of that. However, the issue does not lie solely with the pas-

tors themselves, but with the men and women who are in positions of oversight over these "men of God." For every fallen pastor that you read about, there are ten Eli's who did not stop them sooner, and allowed their abuses to remain unchecked and un-governed.

We have created a church culture which supports and encourages this behavior. We want our pastors to be good looking, personable, wise, fashionable, "Instagrammable," and have a good-looking wife, but when their inner character begins to show, we make excuses so that the façade stays in place. The number of "fallen" pastors in recent years is staggering, and it is evidence of a larger problem. We need to begin having hard conversations about what it means

to FOLLOW GOD, and how to properly deal with moral failure, tempered with grace. Being disqualified from ministry does not disqualify one from God's grace.

The church needs a greater emphasis on accountability, transparency, and character of its pastors and leaders. If you are a pastor who is involved in a sexual sin about which you cannot be transparent, I urge you to remove yourself from ministry, and do something else. If you are an Eli, do not turn a blind eye. Be willing to ask the hard questions, and create organizational systems that demand transparency and accountability and the leading of the Holy Spirit. Your own life could very well be in the balance.



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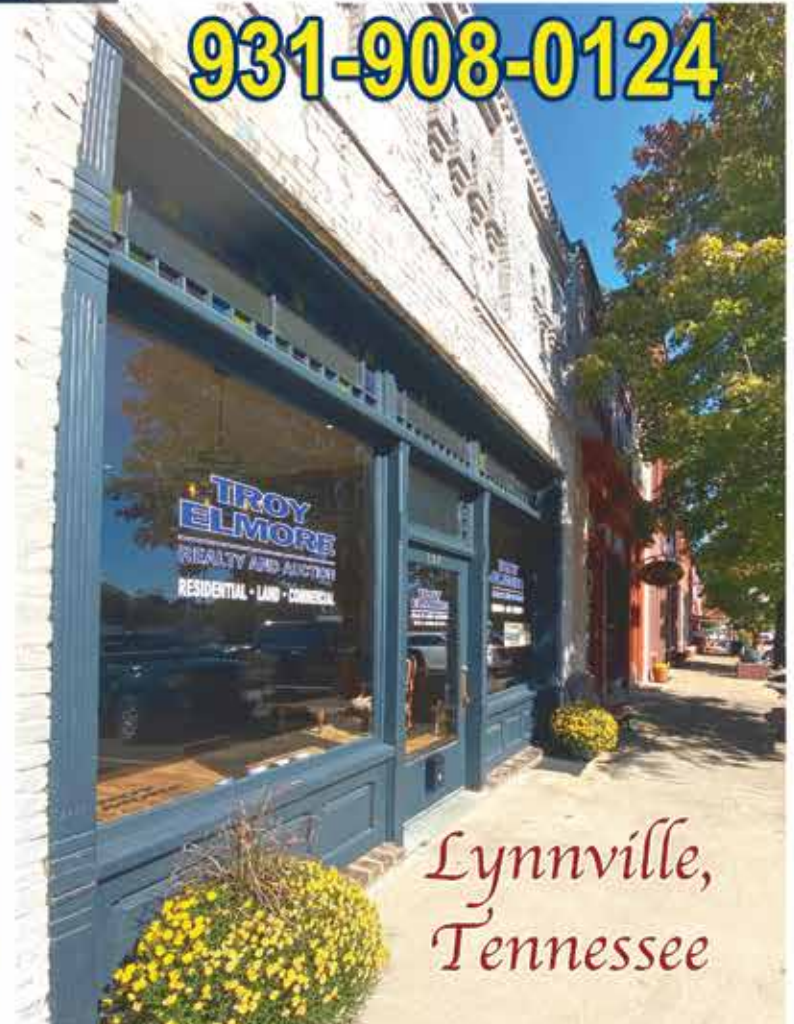
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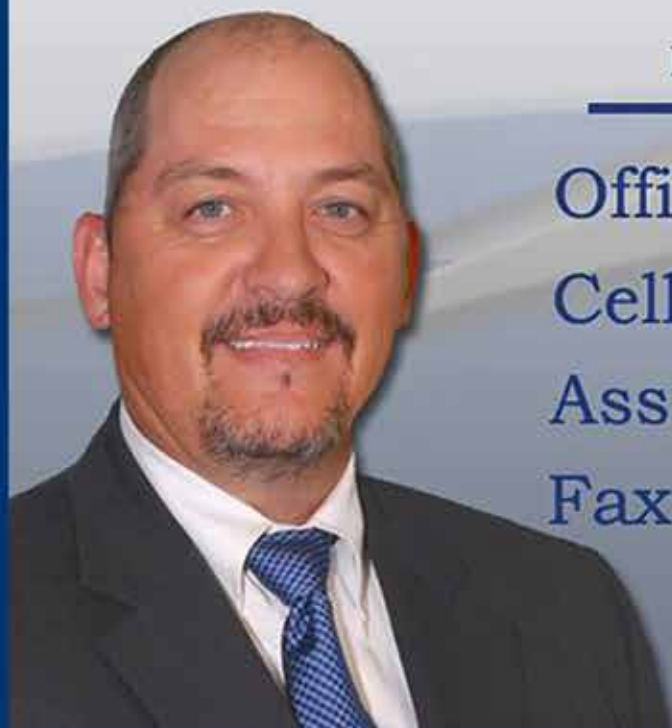
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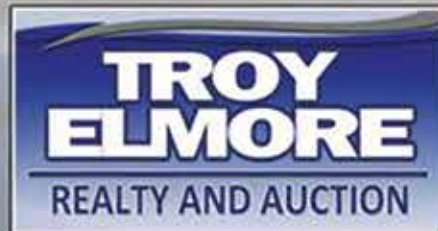
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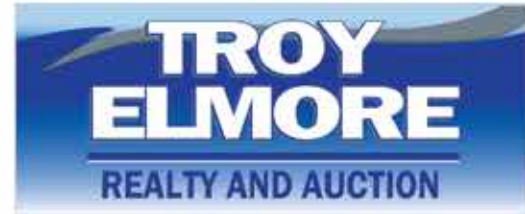


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~ Og Mandino*



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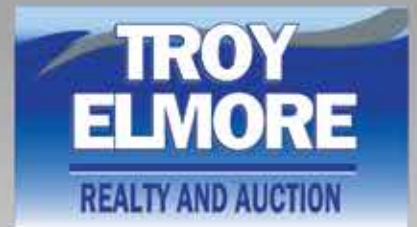


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