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## Special Feature

**Elect Matthew Williamson As Limestone County District Three County Commissioner...**

After the 2014 tornadoes that wreaked havoc in the western portion of Limestone County, Matthew...  
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## Lucas Beaty For District Attorney

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

On May 24, the people of Limestone County will be heading to the polls to vote in the primary election. Lucas Beaty is running for the position of district attorney. The purpose of this article is to tell his story fairly, and then let the voters make their choice.

Lucas told me that he is a Navy brat, and when he was 13 his family decided on Ardmore, AL as their final "station." He is

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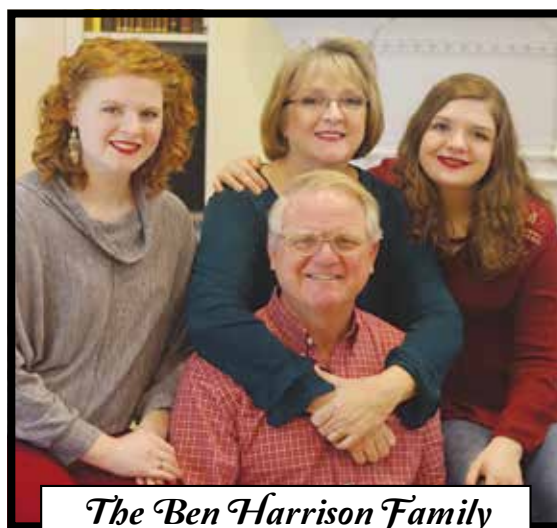
*The Lucas Beaty Family*

## Elect Ben Harrison On May 24 As The AL District 2 State Representative

By Libby McGaw

Ben Harrison is no stranger to North Alabama politics, and is well known for his conservative values and fiscal responsibility. He grew up on his family's farm just out-

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*The Ben Harrison Family*

## Cooking With Anna

**Love Is Not Easily Angered...**

Continuing our dive into learning to love ourselves, we are going to focus on anger. Have you ever been angry with yourself?...

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Welcome to the Modern Day Pawn & Gun Shop... Chances are you've driven by a few pawnshops before, either in your hometown or while on vacation ...  
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# Publisher's Point

## The Row Over Roe

Nearly 50 years ago, a law was passed that has robbed us of countless songs, films, hugs, books, jokes, medical breakthroughs, kisses, building designs, artwork, athletes, teachers, mothers, fathers, and, of course, children. I am obviously speaking of possibly one of the worst Supreme Court rulings and the ensuing laws ever designed: *Roe v. Wade*, the ruling that didn't just put the nose of the abortion-on-demand camel under the tent, it was more like it let a herd of camels move in and then they summarily ruined the tent. The stench has been indescribable as it pertains to the harm done to any society that feels that it's okay to kill its own innocent souls. At the least, it is unsustainable; at the most, it is an evil in a class of its own.

Prior to the passing of *Roe*, I was a native of one of the first states to pass an abortion-on-demand law. Prior to the passing of the Washington State law, I had been told by a "benefactor" that if I ever were to become pregnant, I could opt to be flown out of the country to have a "safe-and-legal abortion." This was offered to me while I was a teenager who was not yet old enough to drive, and it would have been done without the knowledge of my parents. This is one of countless examples how our moral fabric has nearly unraveled, having a wicked impact on rela-

tionships that doesn't even have anything directly to do with the barbarous act itself. I am grateful that I never had to face the possibility, and my heart goes out to those who did and do.

This week the all-time "leak" occurred when it became plain that the Supreme Court of the United States is taking serious aim at the constitutionality of *Roe v. Wade*, and it is a move that is long overdue. Let us remember that we are not the first culture to sacrifice our children. Israel, when they were backslidden, offered their children to Moloch. The Spartans would take their unwanted babies up into the hills to die of exposure; the thought being that if they lived it was only because the gods had a reason to supernaturally preserve their lives. Christians would watch the parents come back empty handed, sneak up into the hills, rescue the babies, and raise them as their own.

During WWII, non-Jews would do the same and hide and care for newborns who would have perished in the camps. No, this is not the first time that cultures have become so twisted, and returning the decision as to whether or not you have a federally protected right to kill your pre-born child to the individual states will not stop abortion. But at least the era of government-sanctioned slaughter

will come to an end.

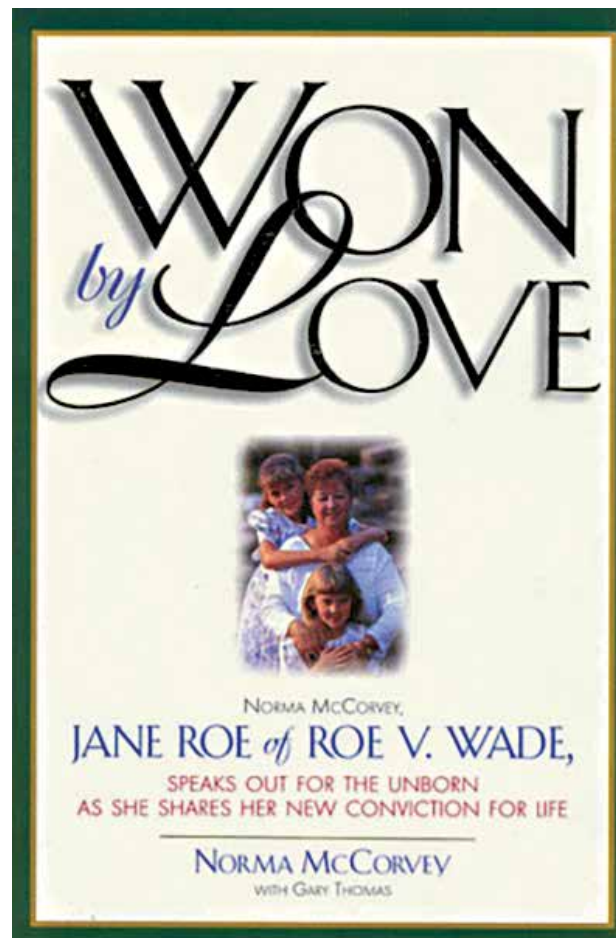
I talk often of how much Iraq changed my life, and one of the dearest things that happened to me was the highly improbable opportunity to become friends via internet with Norma McCorvey, the woman who was the *Roe* that was used and abused as the "poster child" of "The 'Row.'" Here is how that happened: she sent a copy of her autobiography entitled *Won By Love* to our MWR library located in Saddam Hussein's former hunting lodge. I read it, was deeply impacted, and sent a thank you to her publisher who forwarded my thanks to Norma. She emailed me, and we became the modern-day equivalent of "pen pals." All these years later I can still remember her email address and share it freely with you because she has since passed on. It was Godsgirl777@yahoo.com. For a while, she emailed me several times a week,

and let me know she was praying for me and us. She called me Ali Lou after she told me she had a nickname as a child that was Norma Lou. So, our emails would say in the subject bar: "To Ali Lou from Norma Lou," and vice versa.

The honor that I felt of being someone who could share belonging to the God of second chances with someone who had no problem understanding the need for extravagant grace is a treasure. And I would like to think that she is looking down, hoping that we will take that second chance and put *Roe* behind us forever, even though it is causing and shall cause a row of epic proportions.

*Ali Elizabeth Turner*

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## Military Spouse Appreciation Day

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



Nearly 40 years ago, when Ronald Reagan was president of the United States, a holiday was declared to honor the people who “hold down the homefront,” as my mom used to say about her years as the wife of a USN Air Corps pilot during WWII. At the time, most military spouses were women, and still were in 1984 when the official designation of the first Friday in May as Military Spouse Appreciation Day originally went into effect.

These days, it is often far less the case that a military spouse automatically be female, and I can say as someone who lived in a combat zone as a DOD contractor that the support I received from my husband at times saved my sanity.

Steve would send carefully selected care packages that felt like a perpetual Christmas morning. There would be books, spice tea, sometimes frou-frou girly stuff, super healthy foods like Cliff bars that I would devour, wonderful shampoos and conditioners, and more.



They would arrive unexpectedly and always just at the right time. What made it even better was that during the three years I was in Iraq, he was living on his truck to save money for us. That meant he had to both shop and get to a post office while managing a big rig, and I will always be grateful.

As someone who worked in Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR), I had to keep my own morale up if I was going to be able to elevate the morale of others, and those boxes were “just the ticket,” as my dad used to say.

What stood in stark contrast were the spouses that, shall we say as amicably as possible, were anything but supportive. Depending upon which camp I was working in an MWR center, it was

not uncommon to have to put a guy or gal back together after they had just gotten off the VOIP phone with their spouse. The worst was when a guy’s wife was depressed about being pregnant and was threatening to take her life as well as the life of their child, or a woman had gotten pregnant with someone else’s child. If the “less than supportive spouse” had known that their actions could cost people their lives, I would like to hope they would have changed course, but some people are just supremely selfish.

The purpose of this Soldier column is to say thank you to all those who have sacrificed so that their spouses could defend our nation. The things you have had to get through—rebellious kids, leaky roofs, broken cars, broken pipes, broken washers, broken dryers, broken hearts, lonely Christmas or Thanksgiving

holidays, celebrating Valentine’s Day with “the girls,” being outside of your language or culture base, being both mom and dad with very little break, continual concern for your spouse’s safety, being sick, having sick kids, and on and on; please know that you deserve a medal or several, as far as I am concerned.

I watched a video put out for the spouses by the Department of Defense where various soldiers of either gender (all two of them) from all the branches, expressed their gratitude for their spouse. What was said over and over was that they were sending greetings to their “best friend.” I know that was certainly the case for me when I was in the Great Sandbox, and I would like to encourage any and all who served, whether recently or long ago, to take the time today to say, “Thank you” to your military spouse. It will do you both a world of good.

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# *Elect Matthew Williamson As Limestone County District Three County Commissioner*

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

After the 2014 tornadoes that wreaked havoc in the western portion of Limestone County, Matthew Williamson and the crew from District 3, with whom he served, worked around the clock running chainsaws to clear trees, clean up roads, and check for anyone who might be trapped because of the twister. For their part, the storm had struck so close that they found it necessary to hole up under a bridge, wait it out, and then get to work. He still remembers how loud the storm was as it came through.

Now, you might not think of the guys who typically build and repair roads as having tree service be a part of their job description, but they will do whatever it takes to make sure we can get around the county -- storm or no storm.

"I grew up on a 1200-acre farm, and farmers are friends who help people out," Matthew told me. He is a fourth-generation farmer who still farms row crops. A native of Ripley, Matthew graduated from

Clements in 1997, where he played baseball, basketball, and golf.

In 2005, Matthew received his Associate of Applied Science in Aerospace Technology Structures and Technologies and worked as a DOD contractor for ten years on Redstone Arsenal. He taught soldiers how to launch Javelin and TOW missiles. But, as much as he loved being able to help defend our country and equip warfighters, he knew that it was time to change careers.

"All my life, I have loved heavy equipment, and being raised on a farm, we always had to grade roads and put in gravel," Matthew told me. During the ten years he worked for Limestone County on the road crews, he learned the importance of having the suitable materials and equipment to get the job done right the first time. It is undoubtedly frustrating for the workers and the taxpayers to have repairs made repeatedly in the same spot when a few adjustments in the mixture could make all the differ-

ence. Those are some of the things Matthew will address if he gets elected.

Matthew is married to Daphne, and their two sons, Cam and Chevy, attend Clements High. He told me something I had never thought of, and that is how easily a school bus can hit a pothole and end up in the ditch. "I want kids to be safe on the roads and to be able to get to and from school in one piece. I want them to have a decent place to go to school, and part of that is having good roads."

Another part of being a commissioner is making sure that first responders have safe roads to handle heavy trucks.

To run for Limestone County Commission District 3, Matthew had to retire from the road crew. So last February, he began to work for Grayson Carter & Son Contracting Inc., and while he was already experienced, Matthew has learned things about asphalt mixes and road repairs that he hopes to bring to District 3. All asphalt



is not "created equal." It takes a trained eye and someone who understands soil, rain, and asphalt to keep the roads "running." "I will try to get a better mix that seals up and make sure that the base of roads is repaired first and not just put a patch over it," he told me. With Matthew, the word "infrastructure" is not just trending; it is a requirement for a county to run well.

Matthew knows that both the people and their money deserve respect and has pledged to keep his district in a shape where transparency and accountability are the rules and not the exception. He also knows that students need vocational training and opportunities to learn with changing technology. When I asked him why he was running,

he replied, "For the love of the community." He added a qualifier when he said that it is "all about the work and the workers." "I am not afraid to go to Montgomery to fight for what we need to do the job, and I have the experience to show them what we need," he said. Matthew added, "I am a native; this is my home, and I want to make it even better." He respectfully asks for your vote in the May 24, 2022, Limestone County Republican Primary.

**Matthew  
Williamson**  
(256) 614-9495

Matthewwilliamson1@  
yahoo.com  
Facebook: Elect Matthew  
Williamson Limestone  
County District 3  
Commissioner



*The Matthew Williamson Family*

# Calendar of Events

## Silver Sneaker Flex™ Classes

### Every Tuesday and Thursday

Strength and Balance classes meet every Tuesday and Thursday at 9:00 a.m. beginning 12/7/21. Classes are open to all. No signup needed. Classes will meet in the Lighthouse Building behind Emmanuel Baptist Church at 1719 Hwy 72W. All equipment will be provided. Donations accepted. For information: jhunt9155@gmail.com or 256-614-3530.

## Digital Literacy Classes

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

## National Travel and Tourism Week Thru May 7

National Travel and Tourism Week was established in 1983 by President Reagan, National Travel and Tourism Week (NTTW) is the annual salute to travel in America. Join us this year as we celebrate Travel and Tourism's impact by spotlighting a different way travel matters each day to American jobs, economic growth and personal well-being with the Power of Travel.

## Coffee Call May 7

Veterans of all wars and their families are invited for breakfast and fellowship from 8-9:30AM at the Alabama Veterans Museum and Archive, 100 West Pryor Street in Athens. 256-771-7578.

## Play Outside Day May 7

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

## Senior Fun Day May 10

Join us at the Athens Activity Center, 912 W. Pryor Street from

9:00AM till 2:00PM for dancing, door prizes, refreshments, BINGO and a great time. Sponsored by the Foundation on Aging and the Optimist Club of Athens.

## Genealogy Classes 2nd & 4th Thursdays May 12 - July 28

Are you interested in learning your family history? Join us at The Library for a series of genealogy classes that will help you discover your family lineage. 11:30AM – 12:30PM. Call us to register! (256) 232-1233.

## Gettin' Dirty at the Library May 10th

The Limestone County Master Gardeners are offering a free presentation on "Culinary and Medicinal Uses for Herbs". From 11:00 am to 12:00 noon at the Athens-Limestone Public Library. We will have door prizes.

## Book Signing May 12

6pm. Connie Pearson will be at the library with her new book *100 Things To Do In Huntsville and North Alabama Before You Die*. Books will be available for purchase. Athens-Limestone County Public Library.

## Book Signing May 13

2-4pm. Patti Callahan will be discussing her latest novel *Surviving Savannah*. Books will also be available for purchase from Snail on the Wall Books. Athens-Limestone County Public Library.

## Bluegrass Gospel Singing Rooted in Grace May 22

Berea Baptist church will host Rooted in Grace on Sunday night, May 22 at 6PM. Local artists from Pulaski. 16779 Lucas Ferry Road, 35611. No cost. Love offering taken.

## 9th Annual Sporting Clay Tournament September 30

The Chamber is excited to announce the 9th Annual Sporting Clay Tournament will take place on September 30 at Old South Clays. This event is an excellent opportunity to network in a relaxed atmosphere with fellow Chamber members and potential business associates. Early Bird Team Registration is now available for \$550 until May 25th. Price will increase by \$100 thereafter.



## Special Feature

# Welcome to the Modern Day Pawn & Gun Shop

by Beth Reasonover Hart

Chances are you've driven by a few pawnshops before, either in your hometown or while on vacation. You will see them in various parts of any city. Whether your first introduction to a pawnshop is with us at Bradford's Pawn & Gun, watching the documentaries on the History Channel, or when you've purchased or pawned something yourself, pawn shops have been around for centuries!

The question -- "Just what is a pawnshop, and what can I find in there?" -- may have come to mind. To best answer your question, let's begin with the history of pawnshops. As mankind's oldest financial institution, pawn loans can be traced back at least 3,000 years to ancient China as well as early Greek and Roman civilizations. During the 14th century, King Edward III of England is said to have frequently visited pawnshops in Europe. Reportedly, Queen Isabella pawned her royal jewels to finance Christopher Columbus's voyage to the New World.

Pawnbrokers, often working independently, would offer short-term loans to the working class. This trend continued until the civilizations of Ancient Greece and Rome made this design more recognized. There, citizens would seek loans to begin their business or pay for work equipment. These new business owners would pay back their collateral and interest once their businesses took off.

Nowadays, pawnshops are used by people from all walks of life to secure quick and recourse-free financing. Consumers routinely rely on pawnbrokers to help meet daily financial needs not offered by banks. Pawn customers represent the working families of America, who from time to time experience an unanticipated need for short-term funds. Pawn loans help keep the electricity on, the rent paid, and cars running with full tanks of gas. Today's pawn stores are attractive, welcoming places to do business. Like us at Bradford's, most of them are family-owned and operated stores that offer

first-class customer service with easy and simple pawn agreements.

If you need cash quickly and have high-value items, you should consider a pawnshop. Unlike going to the bank and seeking a loan that is credit-based and might take hours to complete, pawnshops provide recourse-free loans that can be completed in minutes. That means, if you take out a collateral-based loan at a pawnshop and default (meaning you don't come back to reclaim your item), there is no credit consequence like a ding on your credit report!

What do I need to do to pawn an item? You must have a valid government issued ID. Next, you need collateral so we can lend you money. We accept a wide range of items including firearms, gold jewelry, electronics, and other merchandise at a payment cost agreed upon by both the parties. And, when you pay back the loan, your property is returned to you. If for whatever reason you choose not to redeem your

property, the item is sold at value price to retail customers.

Pawnshops are growing in popularity. And it's no secret anymore as many turn to pawnshops to retail old items or find a bargain on gently used merchandise like guns, jewelry, wedding rings, and tools. In the United States alone, there were over 9,000 pawnshops as of August 2021.

### Guns & Ammo

Have you noticed more and more talk of first-time gun ownership and constitutional carry in the news lately? It may be because of the rise in popularity in shooting sports across America. Or, it could be the rise in crime due to politics and beyond has created fear in people that they might have to protect themselves. Whether that fear is sub-

stantiated or not, hearing about increased crime on the news and radio the last two years has created the natural reaction for many to learn how to shoot.

What has stood out about the increase in first-time buyers has been the remarkable increase in gun ownership among women and young adults. More and more people are not just "panic buying" but they're actually learning how to shoot and enjoying the sport. Fear of violence and learning a new hobby are not mutually exclusive. You can buy for self-defense and learn to become a marksman too.

At Bradford's we have seen numerous customers who become first-time gun owners as they seek a means to defend their home. But then, that same customer discovers they actually enjoy

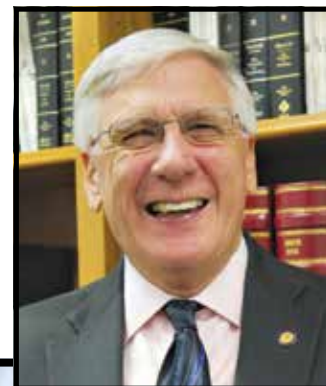
*continued on page 14*



# What Makes Ronnie Roll

## “Aging” Well And Alliances

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



Mayor Ronnie and I met under one of my favorite trees at the courthouse with representatives from several economic development organizations from Athens-Limestone County. County Commission Chair Colin Daly read an official document announcing the fact that the Chamber of Commerce, Athens Main Street, and the

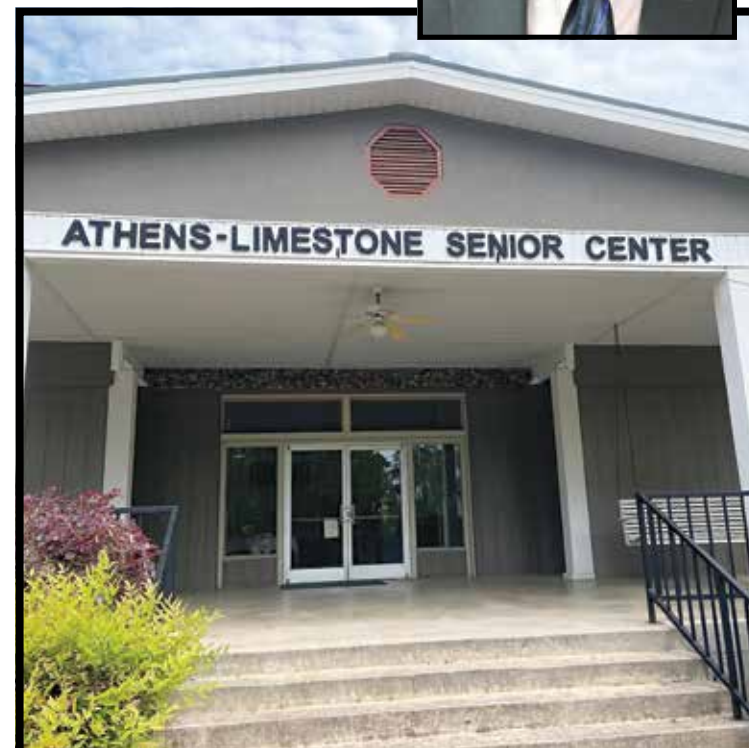
Limestone County Economic Development Association have all come together to form an alliance to coordinate their efforts under one banner. They will maintain their separate titles, functions, staff, and focus, but will celebrate all month long that “together we are stronger.” The official title of the new organization is the Economic Development Alliance.

Speaking of alliances, Athens City Hall and the Foundation on Aging have come together to clean up and dress up the Senior Center on Pryor, and there was a happy and grand reopening celebration on Monday, May 2. “So many people worked hard to get this place ready to welcome back seniors and the rest of the community to come relax, laugh, have fun, play cards or bingo,” said the mayor, and then he showed me a great

“find.” He told me, “The East Limestone High School Band was having a yard sale to raise money, and Sandra and I bought this pool table for the new Center,” he said. I then asked him, “Mr. Mayor, do you play pool?” He grinned and said, “Well, I used to...”

Mayor Ronnie mentioned that Jackie Jackson and Helen Carter headed up this project, and one attendee told me, “If it had not been for the mayor, there would be no Center.” By way of history, the building belongs to the city, and used to be the old Armory. As is the case with many Works Projects Administration buildings that were constructed during the Depression, you can always count on a gorgeous fireplace being somewhere in the building, and the stones are local. The Scout House has one, too, although no one knew it had been paneled over until they started to renovate it.

Mayor Ronnie took me



on a tour and showed me all that had been done to get the place ship shape. A new roof has been put on, and all the leaks have been fixed. There is new flooring and carpeting, and the whole facility has been painted. Fiber optic cables have been put in, and several of the rooms can be rented out for office space. One kitchen can also double as a place for a small reception, and has several brightly clothed tables available for seating. Miss Shirley Smith is the official greeter, and she told me, “I am glad to be here.”

Amy Golden, who runs the “One Stop Shop” for businesses out of City Hall is going to be working at the Center four days a week from 9-2. She told me, “We want to work with the people who built this community, and provide meaningful activity.” The hope is that Poke Sallet will be able to return and that this place will be booked solid for all kinds of things, not just senior activities.

It had been a joyful morning, and it was time to pray. So we did, and then Ronnie got to rollin’.

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★★★★ State Senate



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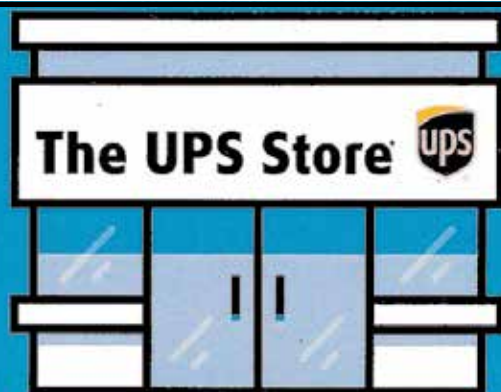
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From the Alabama Veterans' Museum

# Meet Seaman Billy Grey Bass

by Sandra Thompson, Director, Alabama Veterans' Museum

Billy G. Bass was born in Giles County, TN on Jan 16 1934; he grew up in Minor Hill. Billy says the Korean War was a major influence on his on his decision to join the military, specifically the U.S. Navy.

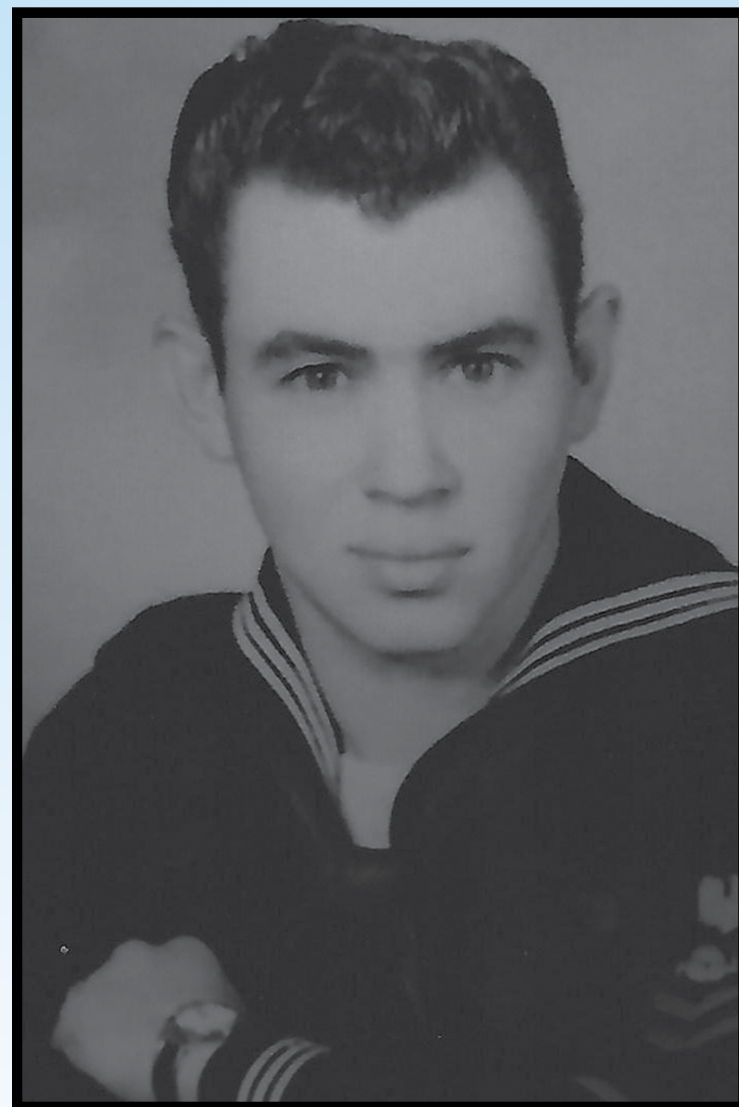
Billy initially thought he was going to be an electrician; however, within the first month aboard ship, he was assigned to the boiler room. Upon completion of his first assignment, he was offered the position of Ship's Lab Person, responsible for daily testing of total water for boilers as well as other water needs. In addition, the ships lab was responsible for the transfer of oil from the storage tanks to the service tanks each evening. "This was an enticing position in that when we docked and made all the dock hook ups, I had open gangway

relative to liberty. Even when we were in the Long Beach ship yards for over 90 days, the Chief, (who referred to me as "Little One") said, 'Little One, do not show up while we are in the ship yards, they will find something for you to do.' So it was "no show" for me! It also certainly did not go unnoticed that our assigned barracks in Long Beach, CA were right next door to the Wave barracks, not a bad situation to be in!" Luck would also have it that Bill's first cousin Julian Bass was also stationed there as well, and they shared a car together. Julian went on to have a career as an electrician and retired from Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant.

Billy spent his four years with the Navy dividing time in between Long Beach, CA and Yousuka, Japan; he also spent time

in Honolulu.

After deciding to get out in 1957, Billy went to work for Mansanto/Chemstrand at the company power plant, while also attending Athens College. By 1962, he had earned a math degree, with a minor in science. He was then given a position as an intern for the Industrial Engineering group. In 1966, he had the opportunity to join NASA, and was hired by scientist Dr Ernst Stuhlinger, one of the original of the Von Braun groups. Their field of study was space science. "I spent my total career in this organization assisting scientists in developing their documentation for research funding from NASA Headquarters. After about 5 years, I became the Chief to the Laboratory Technical Management group. I was then



appointed as the assistant to the Director who was Deputy Chief of the Microgravity Science a division dedicated to the International Space Station."

Billy married the lovely "Billie" Hobbs in 1957; they have a son, Jeff, and a daughter, Suzanne. They also have a granddaughter and great grandchildren! Billy and Billie are tremendous supporters of the Alabama Veterans Museum and believe that Athens/Limestone County makes veterans a priority. Visit the museum to read more about Billy and his life in the military and at NASA.



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## Slinkard On Success

# “I” Is for Impact

by D. A. Slinkard

*D.A. Slinkard would love your feedback. You can contact him at [da.slinkard@gmail.com](mailto:da.slinkard@gmail.com)*

We are to the 9th article, and we have come to the letter “I” and our word is “impact.” I have written in the past about having an impact on other people, and I can tell you many people have greatly impacted my life. Mike Allison, my pastor, is someone who comes to my mind when I think about an influential person who has made a huge impact on my life. Not only has he impacted my life, but he has impacted the lives of my wife and my two daughters. Who is someone in your life who has impacted you?

Not everyone is going to have a pastor, and I understand that. It may be a teacher, a coach, or even a neighbor, but we all have someone who has impacted our lives. Sometimes the impact is positive while other times the impact is negative, and unfortunately, we all have people in our lives who have impacted us negatively. I look back at my days in retail and I had two former bosses who impacted me the most.

One showed me how to be a leader and guide people while the other showed me how not to be a boss. Yes, you read that correctly -- one person was a great example of how I should be while the other was an even better example of what I should avoid doing. I can look back now and laugh but the reality is we can learn from everyone.

We also need to pay at-

tention and think about who we are impacting around us. It could be our children, our neighbors, our friends, people in our church, social clubs, etc., but we cannot take for granted the fact we are impacting people around us. The question then becomes -- “Are we a good impact or are we a bad impact?” A tough thing to think about is whether or not the people are better off having us in their life or are they worse off?

I would hate to think that I could possibly bring out the worst in someone but we need to see how we are impacting the lives of those around us. Too often we like to blame others for what ultimately are our own downfalls, and this is where we need to take the time and properly reflect upon who we are as individuals. I believe if we focus on being a positive impact on others, we can find a greater success personally in who we are as an individual. The more we try to grow and develop ourselves, the more likely we are to have a lasting positive impact on those around us.

It has always been my goal for someone to eventually think about D.A. Slinkard and say to themselves, “Because of D.A. Slinkard, I did not give up.” I want to be a positive impact in the lives of those around me. I want to be a positive impact on those people I have never truly spoken to. I want to be a positive impact in a world that is filled with so much negativity. We can find



success in life, but it takes work to do so. Building a better version of yourself will not be easy but it can be done if you will commit to it.

The only time you will find success before work is in the dictionary. Sadly though, we live in a society that would rather become the next viral sensation versus having some goals and aspirations and working hard to achieve results. What will you do with this article? Is this going to be words you read while passing the time or is this going to be the moment when you decide the impact you want to have on the lives of others?

If you desire to have an impact on others, I want to encourage you to do so in a positive manner and leave out the negativity. We live in a time in which people are searching for hope. We

live in a time in which people are searching for answers. We live in a time in which people do not know which way to go. You have the opportunity to greatly impact those around you,

but will you? Think about the person you want to be and the impact you want to make. Write down who it is and what you want to achieve and then take the steps to make an impact.

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Clean, Green And Beautiful

# *Athens-Limestone Recycling Center - What Happened?*

by Lynne Hart - Acting Co-Director - Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful

There have been many phone calls and personal inquiries made about the closing of the Athens-Limestone Recycling Center in Athens. We'd like to take this opportunity to shed some light on the circumstances that led to the need for closure.

Please know that the closure of our center does not affect curbside recycling for Athens City residents. All recycling collected at curbside by the Athens City Sanitation Department is transported to the Decatur Recycling Center. If you have questions about curbside recycling, please call the Athens City Sanitation Department at 256-233-8747.

Recycling in Athens began with a school project led

by a science club at Athens High School in 1977. Cardboard and aluminum cans were collected to sell as a fundraiser for club activities. The scope of the recycling project became too large for the school to handle, so the club partnered with the City of Athens and the materials were moved to city-owned property in 1979. In 1980, Athens-Limestone Clean Community, which is known today as Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful, assumed the responsibilities of the program. The organization formed a board of directors (the Athens-Limestone Recycling Board) which reported to the Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful Commission, and began to search for a plant manager.

The program was officially named the Athens-Limestone Recycling Center.

After several years of growth, the center outgrew its space and was moved to the current location on Lucas Ferry Rd. The property owners rented the section of property used by the center for a very reasonable monthly rent and provided a 15 year lease. Once the lease ended, rent became month-to-month with an understanding that the owners could require us to vacate the building with reasonable notice. In March of this year, the center was notified that we, in fact, needed to vacate the building. Efforts had been made over the last few years to find a new location, but we were unable to find a solution our nonprofit organi-



zation could afford. With no alternative, we had no choice but to begin the process of closure.

The staff and KALB Commission are disappointed and saddened by this turn of events; however, we do believe that others in the community who value recycling services are looking for solutions. This will, unfortunately, not solve our immediate problem and the center will close permanently. It is our hope that those interested parties will come up with a plan to reintroduce some form of recycling to the Limestone County community. It is a needed service that residents and businesses have come to depend upon.

The staff of Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful and

Athens-Limestone Recycling Center and the KALB Commission wish to thank the City of Athens, the Limestone County Commission, and our loyal patrons for supporting recycling for so many years. We could not have existed for so many years without financial assistance and support from the city and the county.

Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful will always support recycling through education and any other means of support that we can provide should a new program be put in place.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at 256-233-8000.



(256) 233-8000  
KALBCares@gmail.com  
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## Cooking with Anna

# Love Is Not Easily Angered

by Anna Hamilton

*Continuing our dive into learning to love ourselves, we are going to focus on anger. Have you ever been angry with yourself? The day isn't going as you planned. You trip over your shoes, you can't find your car keys, you spill coffee on your clean shirt, your dog has an accident and your socks find it on the floor...all this happens in one morning. That's enough to make any saint angry.*

*How do you handle yourself when everything seems to be happening at once? Do you take a deep breath and keep going or do you become angry? There have been many times that I have become so frustrated with myself that I start to completely shut down. The more upset I get, the more things seem to be fighting against me. Many times, this happens when I am running late. I haven't given myself enough time to get ready. My husband begins to back out of the room when he sees my frustration begin to bubble to the surface. He's not sure if the heat rollers I'm ripping out of my hair or the bracelet I can't get latched is going to come soaring his way. He patiently waits for me to come out of the bedroom and tells me how nice I look. He truly is a saint!*

*In that moment of frustration, I am so angry with myself. Why can't I get my things together? Why does everything seem so hard? Why can't I seem to keep everything together like other people? In my anger, I start tearing myself down. Everything I've learned about love goes out the window. I am not kind to myself. I start to compare myself to others and this feeling of failure begins to slowly creep in. None of these things come from a place of love or from God. They are definite stumbling blocks.*

*This week has been a true challenge in my learning to love myself. I made the very difficult decision to close our little booth at a local antique store. These past few months have not been profitable, and I knew it was the right decision, but in my mind I was battling the feeling of failure and defeat. I was so angry with myself that I had not been successful. Even though we had many months of great sales and I had done many custom pieces for clients, I still felt as if I had totally failed. What would other people think when they found out we were closing? I just know they must think that I am no good at what I do. That I am horrible at painting and creating furniture. They will all think that I am a complete failure. My inner dialogue to myself has been horrible. I am so angry that not only I am having to close but also that I have been so horrible to myself.*

*I am in the process of learning not to be angry and to recognize when I am starting to feel angry with myself. Never before did I think that I had a problem with being angry, but the more I am studying and learning how to love myself the way God intended, I realize that my anger towards myself is not acceptable and will cause so much damage. So, I will allow myself the same grace that I give to others. I will try to be kind and patient, even when I'm running late for church service on Sunday morning and the heat rollers are stuck in my hair.*

*"Fools give full vent to their rage, but the wise bring calm in the end." Proverbs 29:11*

*This week's recipe is a delicious twist on a classic condiment. Cinco de Mayo was this week, and I am sure many of you enjoyed delicious Mexican food with Pico de Gallo. This recipe offers a fresh and surprising twist on this classic dish. I love it over grilled chicken or salmon, but it is equally good on top of salads or with a few tortilla chips. Our family loves it and I know yours will too!*

## Radish Pico de Gallo

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup radishes, chopped
- ½ red onion, diced
- 2 spring onions, diced
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 Tbsp lime juice
- ¼ cup cilantro, chopped
- ½ jalapeno, diced fine (optional)

### Directions:

*In a bowl, mix all the ingredients well, taste and adjust seasoning if needed.*

*Store covered in the refrigerator until ready to enjoy, use within 1 week.*





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Special Feature (continued from page 7)

# Welcome to the Modern Day Pawn & Gun Shop

by Beth Reasonover Hart

shooting as a hobby and go on to teach the whole family firearm safety. We have enjoyed getting to know so many new customers as they discover the world of target shooting, hunting, or just becoming a new collector.

Bradford's is not just an old-fashioned pawnshop. We stock one of the largest selections of new and used firearms inventories in North Alabama. For over 33 years, we have set the standard for first-class customer service and product selection. In addition to finding the latest model firearms from brands such as Kimber, SigSauer, Springfield, Glock, you'll also find the rare classics from Smith & Wesson, Colt, Ruger, and many more discontinued

items from the past. Whether you're a lifelong collector or a new shooting enthusiast, our selection is certain to impress.

Our gunsmith, Marty Bates, is arguably the finest gunsmith in North Alabama. He has a total of 38 years in gunsmith work. His experience and knowledge of the industry has led customers to drive from all over the region for his craftsmanship. Marty specializes in repair and armorer work. He also performs custom Cerakote and customizations. Call Marty before taking a dysfunctional firearm to the range or field.

At Bradford's we are continually looking for ways to improve your experience in our store. We have recently given the exterior of our

building a facelift, and we have plans to expand our firearm displays to give you a more customer-friendly way to shop. We are also excited to learn that Old Black Bear Brewery will be our new neighbors in 2022. We invite your family to check us out in beautiful downtown Athens – located just south of the Square.

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## Cover Story

# *Lucas Beaty For District Attorney*

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

*continued from page 1*

one of four boys, went to Ardmore High, and had always thought that he would be a coach and a history teacher. Out of high school, he enlisted in the Army and served in Kuwait. He was a M1A1 Armor Crewman, better known as a “tank guy,” fulfilled his enlistment requirements, and then finished his undergrad degree in secondary education at Athens State University. He did his student teaching in Elkmont, but there was something about going to law school that just wouldn’t leave him alone. His middle-school-sweetheart-turned-wife Kasey bought him a book to study the Law School Admission Test, or LSAT. He

took the LSATs, was accepted to law school, and got his degree from the Mississippi College School of Law in 2010.

As a husband and father of two daughters, Lucas is committed to upholding conservative principles in order to protect his family as well as the people of Limestone County. He is a member of the Limestone County Bar Association and has tried juvenile cases, civil cases, criminal cases, and has handled adoptions, estate planning, and landlord/tenant issues. The State of Alabama appointed Lucas as Assistant Attorney General for the Limestone County Department of Human Resources in 2019. He has argued cases before the Alabama Supreme

Court, as well as the Alabama Courts of Civil and Criminal Appeals.

Lucas is a JAG (Judge Advocate General) and currently holds the rank of captain as he serves in the Alabama National Guard. That requires that Captain Beaty has to be totally familiar with the Uniform Code of Military Justice as well as the Alabama Code of Justice, and there are differences between the two systems. By the time he finishes his commitment to the National Guard, he hopes he will be a colonel.

In addition to wearing the two “hats” of being a military as well as civilian lawyer, Lucas brings a great deal of varied experience to the table. He has been a criminal defense attorney in some extraordinarily complex cases, has served as a prosecutor, is the city attorney for the city of Ardmore, and is in private practice. It is important to Lucas that Athens and Ardmore maintain the small town feel when it comes to looking at people like humans and not numbers. He also told me that there are cases that have caused him to lose a lot of sleep, particularly those involving children.

People who serve as district

attorneys typically have to face backlogs of cases and Lucas desires to shorten the time between bond and court, indictments, and then trials. He told me about cases that have gone back for years that have only recently been settled. He believes he could help streamline the process by implementing some of the structures that work in a JAG setting.

The late Jerry Barksdale was one of Lucas’s mentors, and drove home the point that there needed to be “watchers watching the watchers.” Simply put, it is especially imperative that there be a system of checks and balances to hold all practitioners of law, irrespective of their position, accountable for their actions. If Lucas is elected, he will “strictly interpret the law and preserve the rights of our citizens.” It goes without saying that he is “committed to fairness, integrity, and honesty.” As someone who has served in the military in the Middle East, Lucas understands the value of our freedoms and judicial system here in America. Lastly, Lucas vows to uphold our traditional conservative Christian values.

Here is what Lucas promises

to do if elected:

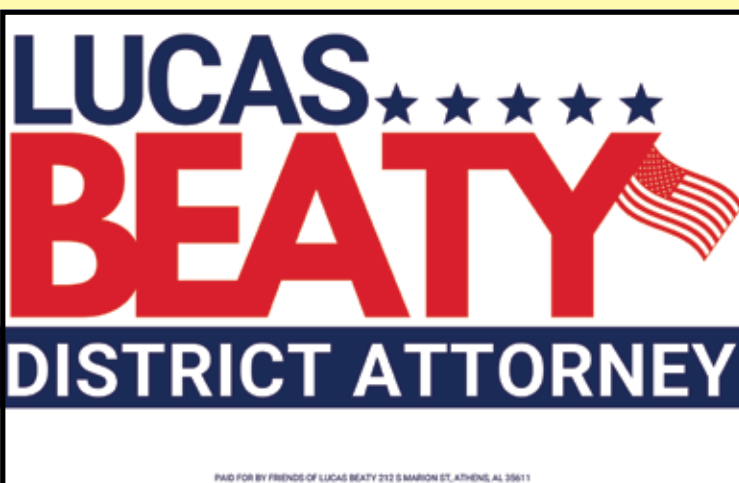
I will bring my life’s experiences, work ethic and integrity to the district attorney’s office in order to restore public confidence in our community’s leaders and justice system. The diversity of my practice over the last decade has prepared me for this opportunity, and I am confident that I can help ensure the proper administration of justice in a timely and decisive manner. Now is the time for new leadership that our community can trust and count on. Limestone County is a great place to call home and raise a family. Kasey and I have concluded that it’s time to serve. I will work hard to earn your support and vote as your next district attorney.

If these commitments are those for which you are seeking in a district attorney, then cast your vote for Lucas Beaty on May 24.

***Lucas Beaty  
for DA***

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# **Tennessee Valley Spotlight**

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*continued from page 1*

Ben's strong stand for the people of Alabama and his fiscal conservatism has already drawn some attention statewide. When the recent gas tax increase was proposed, he was one of the only elected officials in the state who went to Montgomery



Along with defending medical freedom, Ben is also passionate about protecting religious liberty and the right to bear arms. He is quick to say that most governmental issues can be solved by respecting individual liberty and encouraging a competitive free-market approach to spending. With that in mind, Ben is very supportive of a conservative approach to our economy. As a Donald Trump delegate, he is interested in building and maintaining what he calls a “business-friendly environment” that will keep taxes as low as possible, create jobs, and slow down inflation.

As well as education, I would like to improve our infrastructure. As an engineer and former county commissioner, I understand the challenges facing our community first

Ben talks a lot about having the value of courage, walking

in it, inspiring it, and having the amount needed to make a difference for all the people of North Alabama. If he is who you believe to be the best choice for the job, then vote for Ben Harrison on May 24.



# Mothers are the Real MVPs

by Eric Betts

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

Most successful leaders have stories about the impact of their mother, grandmother, or aunt and how it helped them achieve great accomplishments. It is remarkable to hear stories of how mothers have inspired those who have succeeded in the field of their expertise. It is also important for leaders to maintain a humble attitude and posture in order to continue on the path to greatness. Part of that humility is reminding oneself of the contribution of their mothers, and the humble beginnings of their upbringing. Such reminders will help leaders to remain grounded and well balanced. The most inspiring tribute to one's mother, in my humble opinion, is that of NBA superstar, investor, philanthropist, and businessman, Kevin Durant.

This tribute was part of his MVP speech in 2014. His acknowledgments included teammates, basketball management, childhood friends, other NBA players and coaches. Durant mentioned how he never imagined that he would become an NBA basketball player, but only a recreational league coach. He went on to state that if it were not for his mother, he would have never been inspired to succeed at the highest levels. Durant referred to how his mother led their family through hardship and seemingly impossible odds. Wanda Durant, Kevin's mother, was a

single mother to two boys in a rough neighborhood outside Washington DC. Due to financial struggles they had to move from house to house in order to survive. In one particular apartment, they had no beds or furniture, but sat and slept on the floor together as a small family. Simply having a roof over their heads was viewed by them as an achievement. Then Durant concluded his speech with words that brought tears to the eyes of many who were in the audience:

*When something good happens to you, I don't know about you guys, but I tend to look back to what brought me here. You wake me up in the middle of the night in the summer times, making me run up a hill, making me do pushups, screaming at me from the sidelines of my games at 8 or 9 years old. We wasn't supposed to be here. You made us believe. You kept us off the street. You put clothes on our backs, food on the table. When you didn't eat, you made sure we ate. You went to sleep hungry. You sacrificed for us. You the real MVP.*

There are a great many successful leaders who



Kevin Durant and his mom, Wanda

fortunately did not struggle through childhood in the way that Durant's family did. This should be considered a blessing because under ideal circumstances, all persons would start of life in a stabilized environment. However, this is not the case in too many situations. But how inspiring it is to rise from the bottom of the economic ladder and achieve the unimaginable due to the perseverance, sacrifice, nurturing, and resilience of a mother. Wanda Durant remained hopeful for her children, even when all appeared hopeless. She made Kevin believe in himself and inspired him to give his all to his craft. Kevin

Durant, in his humility, recognized in his highest moment, that all that had been achieved was due to his mother's determination to push him to the extreme limits of his abilities. It was these traits that made her son describe her as the "real MVP."

Kevin Durant's speech showed that giftedness alone is not enough to succeed; sometimes it takes someone else believing in you, challenging you, and pushing you to the pinnacle of greatness. In this case, and many others, it is the faith and commitment of mothers that makes all the difference. Today, Wanda Durant is able to sit on the side-

lines of NBA games and witness the fruit of her faith and determination. Once impoverished, today she is able to travel the world in support of her son. Today, we salute those mothers who did not give up on life when they had every excuse to do so. We praise and honor those mothers who sacrificed for our success no matter how large or small we may view our achievements. The higher we climb in life, may we understand, that the key to our future success depends on not forgetting from whence we came. If you are the product of a resilient and hopeful mother, please remember that she is the real MVP.

# *Doggone It, Don't Be Stealing My Cornbread*

by Jerry Barksdale

[www.jerrybarksdale.com](http://www.jerrybarksdale.com)

[fb.com/jerry.barksdale.7](https://fb.com/jerry.barksdale.7)



I've had a lot to worry about this year. Horn worms attacked my tomato plants, Japanese beetles ate my grapevines and groundhogs stole my okra. Messing with a Southerner's okra and tomatoes is worse than someone cuss'n his dog or telling him he can't date his cousin. Then there is global warming, paying my alimony on time, and resisting Russian mind control. It's been a stressful year.

Now I have another worry – getting busted for culture theft. It's a new offense hatched up by a pinhead college professor who can't park his bicycle straight and, to quote Jerry Clower, whose education exceeds his intelligence.

It's also called cultural misappropriation and occurs when someone of one culture adopts or uses elements of another culture. For example, a cornbread eating Southerner like myself eating a Mexican tortilla is considered cultural theft. It's claimed to be a violation of the collective intellectual property rights of the originating culture. White folks calling their football team "Redskins" is definitely culture theft. Another example is mascot Ocheola riding a horse at Florida State Seminoles football games or a non-Indian wearing a Mohawk haircut and white folks wearing dreadlocks and cornrow

hairdos. Non-aboriginal people piercing their body and wearing what I call "booger catchers" (nose rings) is definitely cultural theft. Tattoos of Chinese or Japanese characters is also misappropriation.

In 2011, Prince William and Kate were busted in Canada for wearing cowboy hats and western shirts. "Tasteless," said culture cops. Recently in Portland, Oregon, two white women were forced to shut down their burrito cart after traveling to Mexico and learning how to make a good burrito. They were accused of culture misappropriation. (Note to self: Portland is vying to become the wacko capital of the United States. Too much wacky- backy, I think).

In 2012, during the annual Victoria Secret Fashion Show where salivating men watched nearly naked women parade down the runway in skimpy underwear, a model wore an Indian headdress. She was accused of misappropriation by the culture cops and forced to apologize. I agree. It was inappropriate. Spike heels would have been ideal. Many men love to go shopping at Victoria Secret with their woman. Imagine this? "Darl'n, do you like this negligee?" she coos. "Shucks no! I'd prefer, an Indian war bonnet."

Ridiculous! I don't want my woman looking like an Indian Chief in those

situations. I'm biblical. I want her looking like Eve running around the Garden of Eden wearing a fig leaf.

In 2013, pop singer Katy Perry was busted by culture cops for wearing a geisha style outfit at the American Music Awards. "I didn't know I did wrong," she whimpered. Boohoo. Wimp. She's probably from Portland.

There are well recognized customs, traditions, habits and foods that identify us as Southerners, and I don't want outsiders stealing them. Already spineless, feckless, panty-waist politicians, who will soon be offering over their daughters in order to remain in office, are taking down our statues and destroying our Southern culture. We must remain vigilant and protect our culture.

If you see someone dressed in black with a \$75.00 haircut and speaking in complete sentences and using two-syllable words while eating fried catfish and hushpuppies, they are probably from a foreign country like New York engaged in stealing our culture. We don't talk that way.

If someone says "youse guys" while eating goat stew, poke sallet, fried okra, turnip greens, chitlins, scrambled hog brains, bologna on a cracker or moon pie and R.C. Cola, they are from New Jersey stealing our culture. That's our food! Someone wearing a

brand new John Deere cap with no grease on the bill, sucking their teeth after a meal or mining ear wax with a toothpick is an imposter stealing our culture. (Warning! Mining ear wax with a toothpick is dangerous and shouldn't be attempted by a non-Southerner). Saying "cotton pick'n right," "doggone it" or "shucks" is even more offensive. That's our lingo. Keep your mouth off it.

If they attempt to blow their nose with two fingers, they are misappropriating our culture. That is a highly technical maneuver perfected by Southerners over generations. It's ours. Leave it alone.

Sometimes it's difficult to identify an authentic Southerner from a pretender. Here are a few markers. If a man opens the door for a woman and says, "Morn'n, Ma'am," he's a genuine Southern redneck who hasn't been told his behavior is considered sexist. If he calls you "hon," he considers it a term of endearment. If a hound's tooth hat is in the rear window of his car and a "Roll Tide" plate is on the front, he's the real deal. If he says "yessum and no ma'am" to his elders, he is a Southerner, all right. If a woman attends church three times a week while packing a pistol in her purse, she is a Southern gal. If a woman gets diarrhea the night before the Iron Bowl, she's a born and bred Auburn fan

for sure. Southerners eat cornbread instead of "light" bread, and will ask a total stranger, "How you?" on the street, he's Southern. If a person stands and places hand over heart when the National Anthem is playing, he's definitely Southern. Wackos claim it's racist to ask, "Where you from?" Southerners think they are just being friendly.

If you are unsure about their origin, ask a trick question: "Will a Alice Chandler (Allis Chalmer) outpull a John Deere? A real Southerners know that a John Deer can do anything better.

The acid test to determine if a man is authentic Southern is call him a redneck. He will laugh and say, "Yeah buddy, I got it honestly by working all day in the field chopping and picking cotton. It's a mark of hard work." Southerners have a sense of humor. It's what sustained us during Reconstruction and the Great Depression. A non-Southerner will be offended and threaten to sue.

Call me redneck – it's a mark of honor – make fun of my pickup or tractor, but don't cuss my dog or tell me that my female cousin is ugly. And don't tell me that cornbread crumbled in sweet milk isn't good. That's where the humor ends. Doggone it, get your cotton-picking hands off my culture.

# Houston Goes To Vanderbilt

by Joel Allen



Hello, folks! It has been a rough couple of months. I have been MIA due to an infection in my body that Houston “tattled” on me about and got me six days in the hospital! LOL! God love him and I am thankful for him.

So, not to bore you all with the hospital details, this lead up to our visit to Vanderbilt in Nashville, Tennessee. On Wednesday, 11 April 2022, Houston and I hit the road to Nashville and arrived at a very nice hotel named The Extended Stay which was located within 3 miles of Vanderbilt Hospital.

Now I will let you all know that before I left Alabama, I did check the ADA Service Animal laws for Tennessee so as not to run into any problems with Houston. Tennessee and Alabama correspond with one another

on this, so there was nothing different I needed to know. So, a slight suggestion for all of us with service animals, be sure to check the laws and ordinances of any state or destination where you plan to go. Some states do tend to require public-access training, which I train mine for anyway.

Folks, let me tell y’all what Houston did to me at the hotel where we stayed. A thunderstorm began and that always seems to be the time our “babies” will need to go out (it never fails!). Anyway, I am having to use a knee scooter that I have dubbed “Lucifer” because it will throw anyone riding it down and just like a WWE wrestler, it will give you the people’s elbow and rock your world! So we are outside, and I put on my jacket to keep the rain off

and walk (I mean roll) Houston to the special area the hotel has for dogs. Everyone who has a dog knows that they will take their sweet time no matter what, except Houston. He pees really quickly when it is raining. Because I am on Lucifer, I let him off leash because he has great recall command, except when it comes to him getting wet...and this is how I found out. Houston looks back at me, and I am thinking, “You need to hurry up!” and even say so. Want to know what he did? LOL... he left me and went to the parking deck, out of the rain and waited for me! I called him a name or two, which I will not repeat here, but everyone who knows me gets the idea. He waited for me to get to him and leash him back up. We went back

upstairs to our room and crashed for the night, him hogging the bed and me telling him to move over.

The next day, we are due to arrive early for my orthopedic appointment. Vanderbilt is nice, folks! They have free valet parking, and the first thing I notice when I pull up is one of the valets looking at Houston with awe. I mean, come on, he is a Great Dane after all. Well, I vest Houston up and get Lucifer out of the vehicle and we go in. I cannot tell you how many times people part like the Red Sea when they see Houston, and they did this inside the hospital. Like always, Houston rocked it. He was quiet and respectful our entire time there. The only noises made were by the people who saw him and were scared of dogs or cooed at him

and wanted to touch him. Many would either go around or go another way entirely.

I have to ask, does anyone travel with their dog and if so, do they hold their poop until they return home? Houston did this to me. I knew he was holding it and could really tell as we were heading back down to Alabama because he began his “huh, huh, huh” whine in my ear. Me, not wanting an accident, found a huge lush piece of grassy land at an exit and stopped for him. He gets out and leaves his “peemail” but no poo and gets back into the vehicle! I was thinking, “Great! He is going to start gassing me out or let the bomb drop while I drive!” Nope, he did not have an accident, but when we arrived home, he shot out of the vehicle and did his business with me watching him and shaking my head. I hope everyone was entertained and learned something because I sure did. LOL! I needed to write this and laugh, folks! It has been a rough go for over a month. Prayers are requested for me and my family. Thank you all!

*“Remember to love your dogs because they love you. Maybe not the way you want them to, like chewing up your favorite shoes or what not, but that is just love chewing. Be thankful for the time you have with them always.”*

**Joel Allen**  
**256-651-2211**



# Are You A Good Listener?

by Lisa Philippart,  
*Licensed Professional Counselor*



***“Being heard is so close to being loved that for the average person, they are almost indistinguishable.”***

**- David Augsburger**

Being a good listener is about what you do less of, not more of. Truly good listeners don't necessarily do more of anything than the rest of us. Instead, they're exceptionally good at eliminating unhelpful tendencies and habits that get in the way of genuine listening and connection. If you want to be a better listener, try to identify and eliminate these bad habits:

Stop trying to “win” conversations. If you treat conversations like competitions, you're bound to lose no matter what. Ask yourself, “Is this conversation about being helpful and supportive or making myself feel good?” By briefly checking in with yourself before a conversation, you give yourself a jolt of self-awareness. And this self-awareness is often enough to shift you out of a competitive mindset and into a helpful one. Many people struggle to be good listeners because they are emotionally insecure. They approach conversations with an unconscious goal of winning and feeling justified and good about themselves. For better conversations, check your ego at the door. Instead of a competition

to be won, start viewing conversations as acts of service that aren't about you at all. And when you start approaching conversations this way, your ability to listen well will improve immensely.

Stop focusing on the problem; instead focus on the person. Just because someone has a problem doesn't mean they are a problem solver at heart. We spend all day identifying problems, then using our minds to come up with creative solutions to them. The trouble is that in certain situations, problem-solving can backfire. Much of the time, when people want to talk, they don't really want someone to solve their problems. They just want to feel understood. The best conversations are about connection, not information! A good listener resists the urge to solve others' problems or give advice at all...they simply listen and offer support. Focus your attention on the person sitting next to you...how he feels or what the world must look like through his eyes right now. When you do, you subtly communicate that whatever they are going through, they're okay. You are giving them a far more valuable gift—the gift of validation.

Stop invalidating other people's feelings. A sure-fire way to derail a conversation and build a reputation as a terrible listener is to get judgmental about other people's



feelings. Whether or not you think someone's feelings make sense, the experience of that feeling is always perfectly valid. Your job as a good listener is not to pass judgment on how rational someone's fears or frustrations or any other feelings are; your job is to validate these feelings. Your job is to help the person struggling to know that whatever they are feeling is legitimate, no matter how painful or how irrational. If you want to be a good listener, never treat feelings as problems. Try acknowledging how hard it must be to feel that way. As a good listener, your position is to be empathetic, not rational.

Stop ignoring your own feelings. If you are oblivious to how you're feeling, it's only a matter of time before you say some-

thing stupid. We all like to think that our words and actions are motivated by reason and objective logic, but this is rarely the case. More often than not, what we do and what we say is motivated by how we feel (or want to feel.) Giving someone advice about their anxiety is often motivated by our own discomfort with that person's anxiety. We say things to make ourselves feel better. Truly great listeners are selfless in conversation. And the only way to resist the pull of

your own emotions and stay focused on the other person is self-awareness. Good listeners are compassionate with themselves just as much as they are with others.

(Hat tip to Nick Wignall.)

*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

# What To Expect

by Roy Williams

Yes, things are changing right before our eyes. Technology has given us the ability to do more, go faster, find more information, and make changes that just a few decades ago were unimaginable.

The pharmaceutical industry is no different, with one exception. Instead of using technology to find cures and prevent disease, they have chosen to use it to treat the symptoms of disease and never cure disease.

It really is easy to understand when you realize that the money is not in prevention or finding cures. In all reality, doing either of those would stop them from being able to charge the outrageous prices for everything they are involved with. We, as the American public, must begin to understand that they make their money from sickness.

To make sure their stockholders continue to make money and that their overall profit margins continue to grow, not only can they never cure or prevent, they must make sure that "true cures and actual preventative measures" are never taught or used.

So, what can we expect from this powerful industry? You don't have to look back very far to figure out the answer to that question. It wasn't so long ago that the pharmaceutical industry was not allowed to advertise prescription drugs. In order to receive a prescription, your doctor would have to do an examination on you to determine what wasn't right with your physical or mental health. At that point, he or she could make a suggestion of a drug to use, and if you agreed, the prescription was written and you could take to the pharmacist to be filled.

Over time, the pharmaceutical industry was able to put pressure on our legislators to change the laws so that the pharmaceutical companies could advertise their drugs and encourage you to go to your doctor and ask for a prescription. Using the power of television, radio, and other means of advertising, they began to use commercials to persuade us to do just that.

Since that legislation has been passed, pharmaceutical sales have soared, making them some of the most lucrative businesses



on earth. They have become so powerful that they are actually influencing the FDA, CDC, and governments around the world. The FDA, for instance, should no longer be considered a government agency, but instead, just a part of the pharmaceutical industry. The name Food and Drug Administration implies that they are controlled by the federal government. In reality, not only are they controlled by the pharmaceutical industry, the only people qualified to work for them actually have to come from that same industry. If one must have worked for the pharmaceutical industry or have a huge investment in the industry to work for them, doesn't that create a conflict of interest?

If someone running for president of the United States was born in another country or was receiving a large income from another country, wouldn't it be a conflict of interest for them to be making decisions for this country? If your doctor has large investments

in two or three prescription drug manufacturers, wouldn't it be a conflict of interest for them to prescribe those drugs?

Very few people know this. Medical doctors are not allowed to sell you drugs directly from the manufacturer, with the exception of oncologists. Cancer is the largest income producer for the pharmaceutical industry because doctors are allowed to make a profit off the drugs they prescribe. Isn't that a conflict of interest?

Maybe now, you are beginning to understand why no cures for any disease have been developed in over 65 years. Remember, the treatment is in "treating the symptoms" not curing disease. Maybe, you are beginning to understand why the cost of prescription drugs have gone up higher and faster than any other product sold in the world. Maybe, you are beginning to understand. "What we can expect?" -- Without some major changes, more of

the same.

It is time that we, the American people, begin to take responsibility for our own health, instead of being dependent on the organizations that make money from sickness. It is time to realize that for the human body to maintain good health, we are dependent on 16 vitamins, 74 minerals and trace elements, 12 amino acids, 3 essential fatty acids, and a lot of protein. Unfortunately, the American diet is missing over 75% of those nutrients.

Knowing that your body is dependent on those nutrients for health, healing, energy, concentration, quality of life, and longevity, doesn't it make sense to learn the best way to supplement your diet? To learn more, go by Herbs & More in Athens, NHC Herbs Shop in Killen, call 256-757-5660 or go to [nhcherbs.com](http://nhcherbs.com).

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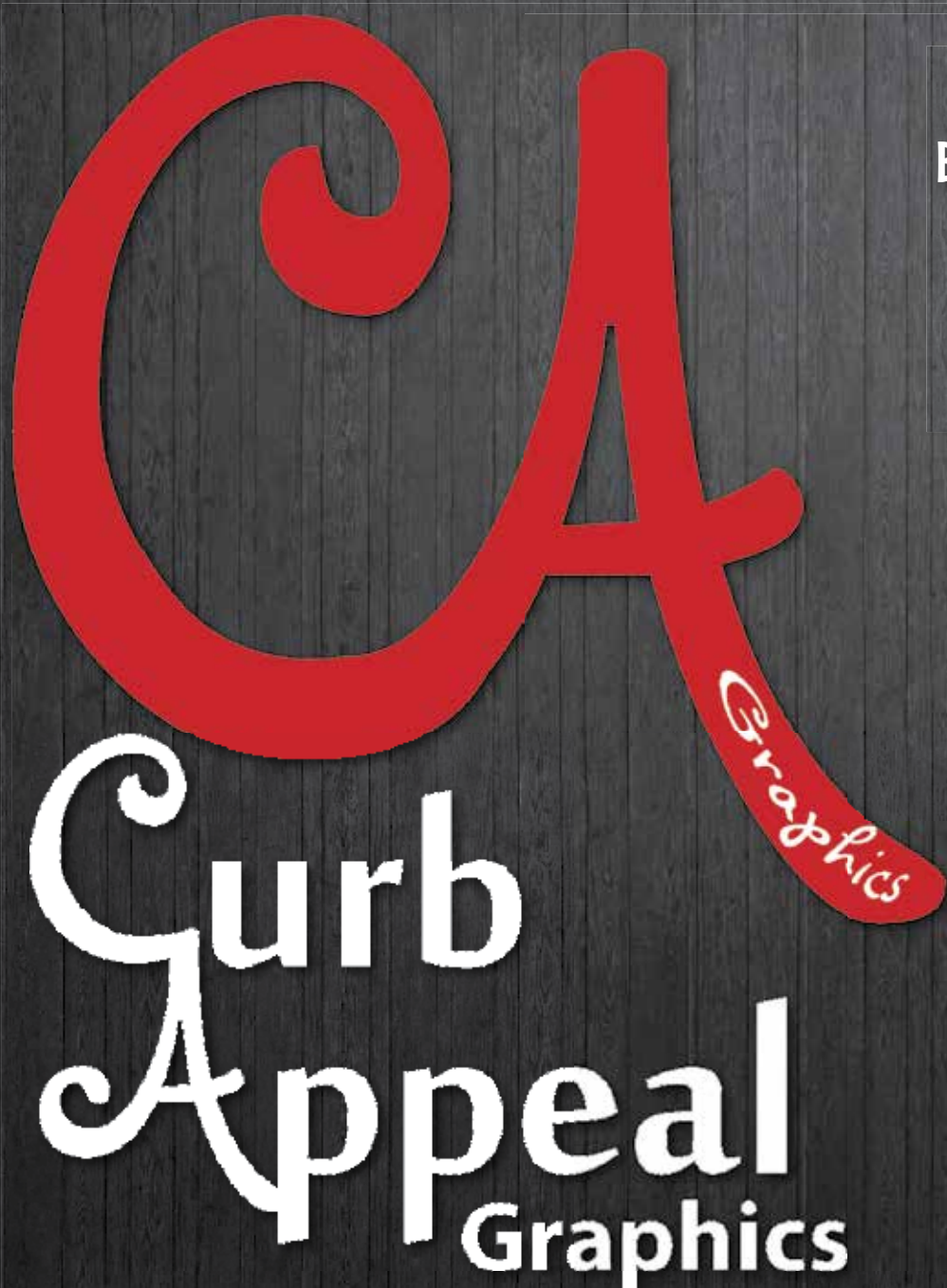
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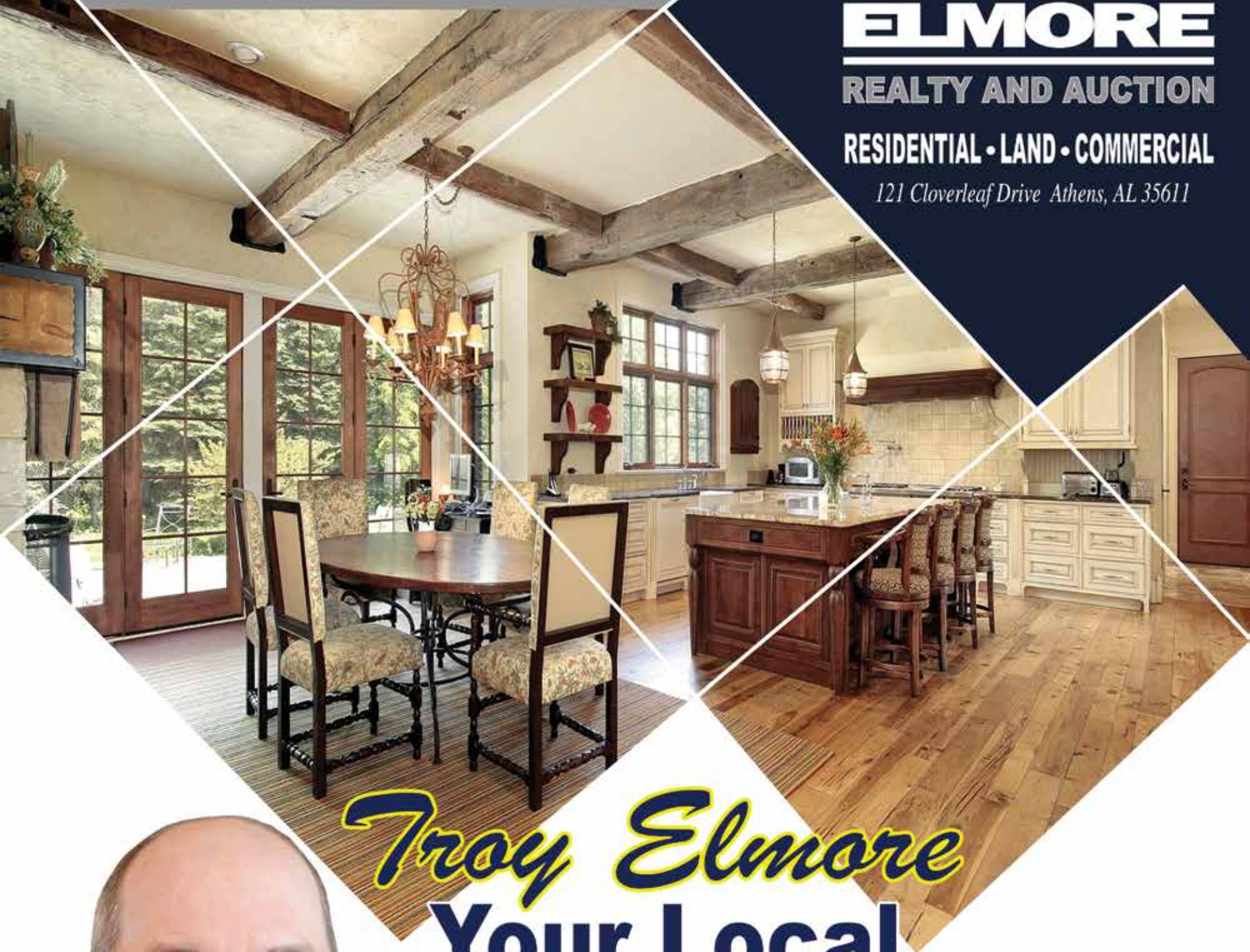
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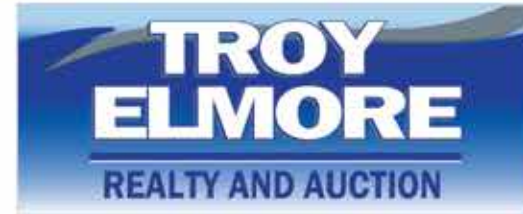


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There is no try."  
~YODA



ANSWER KEY:

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