

October 01 - October 14, 2021

Athens Now

information & inspiration

AthensNowal.com



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The 2021 Storytelling Festival Is On...line!

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

This is the 15th year that a hard-working group of Athenians hopefully will be able to make it possible for kids and adults to experience the nearly lost art of storytelling. And, for the second year in a row, the event is going to be largely online, with a few very limited live appearances.

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Old Mill Iron And TN Valley Powder Coatings: Where Your Project Problems Are "Ironed Out" And "Covered"

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

Since 2009, Old Mill Iron has been providing the people of North Alabama with expertly crafted ornamental iron work

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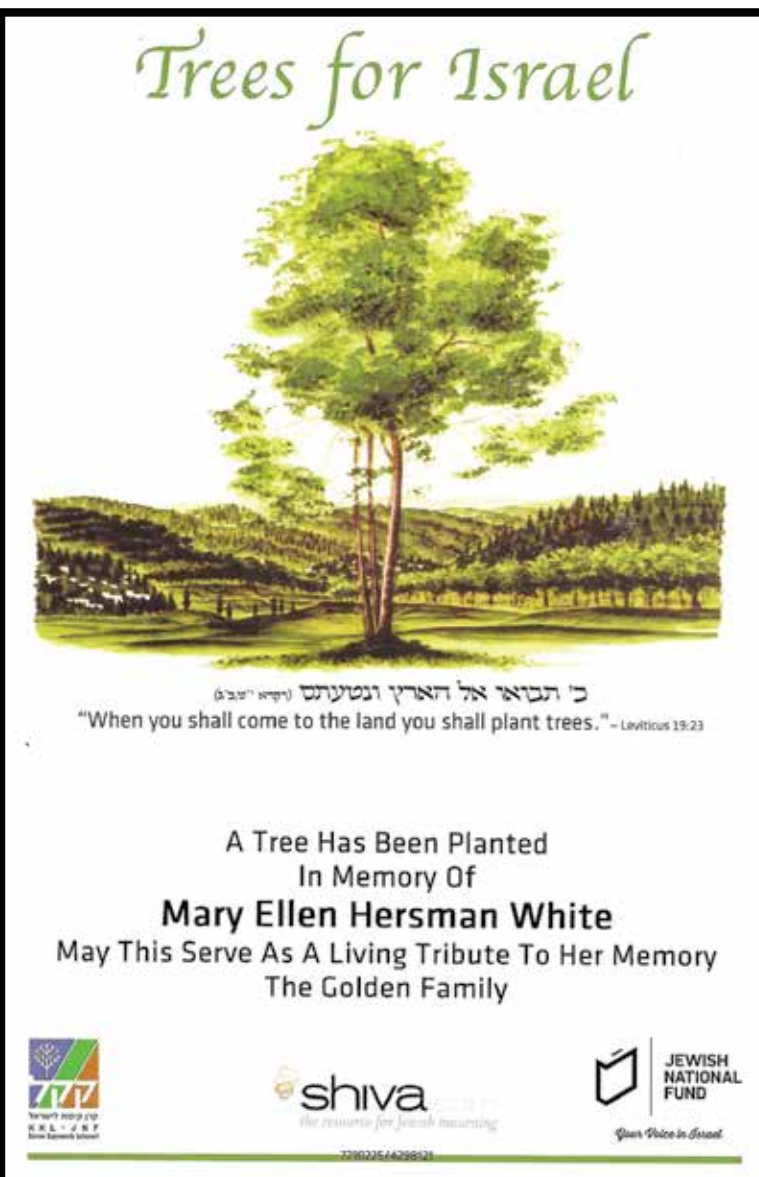
Publisher's Point

A Tree Of Life, And A Wonderful Gift

It's been a hard year for me and many I know. I lost my mom three days after Christmas, December 28, 2020. Now, mind you, the woman was 100 years old, and blessedly, she did not die of COVID. I did get to see her for her 100th birthday on August 26, 2020, but I was not allowed to touch her. Nonetheless, COVID influenced my mother's passing, because due to the quarantine policies in Seattle and in her facility, not one of us was allowed to be with her when she breathed her last. She was well attended by people who genuinely cared for her, and I am grateful. And, I must admit, finally becoming an orphan was strange.

People were wonderful to my family and me in those first few days when we were in shock. People prayed, and the things they shared had the unmistakable veracity of having originated in heaven. They sent flowers, cards, and fruit, and I felt so strongly supported by people from around the globe.

Then one day, Amy Golden, who works in Customer Relations for the City of Athens told me that she wanted to give me a very special gift as a memorial to my mom, Mary Ellen Hersman White. She had contacted the National Jewish Fund, which has planted more than 260 million



trees in Israel since 1901. The foresters have also developed ways to teach other nations how to manage growing in arid soil.

When I was in Israel in 2014, I was pleasantly surprised by how green it was. I now know that in part this is because the National Jewish Fund has planted trees in more than 250,000 acres in a country roughly the size of the state of New Jersey. There is also a gar-

den outside of Yad Vashem that has trees planted for Gentiles who helped to rescue and protect Jews during the Holocaust, people like Oskar Schindler, Corrie Ten Boom, and Raoul Wallenberg.

Now my mother never did that, but she did teach me about how unsettling it was to be a teenager traveling in Berlin in 1937 and seeing Hitler Youth salute Hitler. Simply stated, she and my

father taught us to honor and respect Israel. She also was the descendant of German Jews who made it to the U.S. in the 1600s. So now, because of Amy Golden and her family, I have a reason to go back to Israel, as if I need one. I would want to see the things I didn't see before, and I would want to see my mom's tree.

I received some beautiful commemorative artwork and a kind letter from the organization, and some wording that I want to share with you. First there was a scripture written in Hebrew and English, taken from Leviticus 19:23 which said, "When you shall come to the land you shall plant trees."

And then:

A tree has been planted in memory of Mary Ellen Hersman White- May this serve as a living tribute to her memory. The Golden Family

My soul is being restored, and my cup of blessing is running over. Thank you, dear Amy for such a thoughtful gift. My family and I will always be grateful.

Ali Elizabeth Turner

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No Fun Allowed In The Land Of The Taliban

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



When I was in Iraq, I was paid about \$17 an hour as a Morale, Welfare and Recreation worker to bring a touch of home to our soldiers, members of the Coalition, and Iraqis that were training on base. That involved passing out ping-pong paddles and often playing the game, showing movies, playing all manner of board games, making coffee and popcorn, checking out PlayStation and X Box equipment to soldiers, teaching guitar, singing, learning how to be a swing dance partner, and hosting events that ranged from 5 and 10 K races to picnics, BBQs, and desserts with chocolate cheesecake while watching old Dick Van Dyke shows. Mostly it involved just talking and listening, along with lots and lots of laughing. I was paid to be a mom, auntie, sister or friend, and I loved my job.

By contrast, the Taliban foot soldiers of the recently abandoned Afghanistan are in hot water for "having too much fun." An audio recording was recently circulated to the soldiers by Defense Minister Mawlawi Mohammad Yaqoob, and he dressed them down for doing things while off duty like going to the zoo, going out on the lake in swan-shaped pedal boats, (heaven forbid!) and going to amusement parks. And it looks like Yaqoob, at the end,

of the day was worried about their image. Here's some of what was said in the audio: "Stick to the tasks you have been assigned," as well as, "You are damaging our status, which has been created with the blood of our martyrs." I am not wanting to give this man an attaboy, but one thing he did say to them was in fact spot on, and that was putting the kibosh to the soldiers taking selfies, especially with Taliban officers. In Iraq that stuff was not allowed unless it was heavily vetted because one could inadvertently give away locations, communications capabilities, or identify available weapon systems if selfies ended up on what was then the brand-new phe-

nomena of social media. Yaqoob also got on them for their appearance, which he felt too closely identified them with the collapsed, corrupt previous regime. But one of the things that rankled him the most was the way Taliban soldiers were zipping around in our left-behind vehicles. And that one made me downright nostalgic. You see, I was on a base for 16 months that had been Uday Hussein's stomping ground, and one of the things Uday left behind before we got him was a collection of about 1200 Renaults and Mercedes-Benz automobiles of all types. (Apparently one can't have too many.) And, for those of you who are history buffs, now

you know why France and Germany howled so loudly about the war in Iraq. This was one of many proofs that they did not honor the sanctions which our allies agreed to after Desert Storm. Busted!

Out of the 1200, there was a dark blue, five-speed Mercedes-Benz coupe that I got to drive *once*. Now, there was a stretch of road between our camp and the next nearest one that was straight as an arrow, and there were times we treated it like Le Mans if we were in danger and needed to get to stronger shelter speedily. However, on this one afternoon, I chose to act like the Taliban for the first and last time in my life. I was barely tall enough to see

out the front window and took that bad boy down the straightaway as fast as it could go. Of course, by the time I got to the next camp, I was driving demurely and safely, as was my obligation. But I'll tell you, while I have no idea if Uday ever actually drove this particular Benz or not, it was pretty weird wondering if our hands had gripped the steering wheel and flown down that stretch of road.

I think it's safe to say that my MWR job in Iraq will probably never be replicated in Afghanistan under the Taliban. After all, Yaqoob admonished, "If we continue to act like this, God forbid, we will lose our Islamic system." A girl can hope, can't she?



John Roberts For US Congress: *A Fearless Fighter For The Future Of The American Dream*

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

John Roberts hails from Hartselle, AL where he was an excellent student, part of a state champion high school baseball team, and a scrappy offensive lineman on his high school football team. What he brought to his team was the ability to see a way through the opposing line and the willingness to protect his own. That strategy in football is a way of life for John, and is something he'll take to Washington, D.C., if elected. Now, don't let his youth fool you. He has an undergrad degree in political science as well as a master's in public administration from the University of Alabama. He has spent his career in business development with cities in North Alabama, and recently served as the Business Retention and Expansion Director at the Huntsville-Madison Chamber of Commerce. The result is that the economic development team with which he worked has made it possible for several businesses and industries with thousands of jobs available to become a part of the economy of North Alabama.

I asked John if people had given him grief about being "only 29." He said, "Oh, no. They have told me they find it refreshing, and are intrigued by the fact that I am not a career politician. They are tired of people being more concerned with the next election rather than the next generation." He believes in term limits, and if he is elected, he won't spend the rest of his life in DC. He also brings

the experience of having served in Washington as an intern on Capitol Hill, and has worked with Huntsville Mayor, Tommy Battle. John is involved in the Blackburn Institute, which is located in Tuscaloosa, and whose focus is developing leaders who can impact and improve the State of Alabama. John is also on the board of the North Alabama American Red Cross, and is on the executive team of Free 2 Teach. Free 2 Teach garners resources to teachers of Madison County.

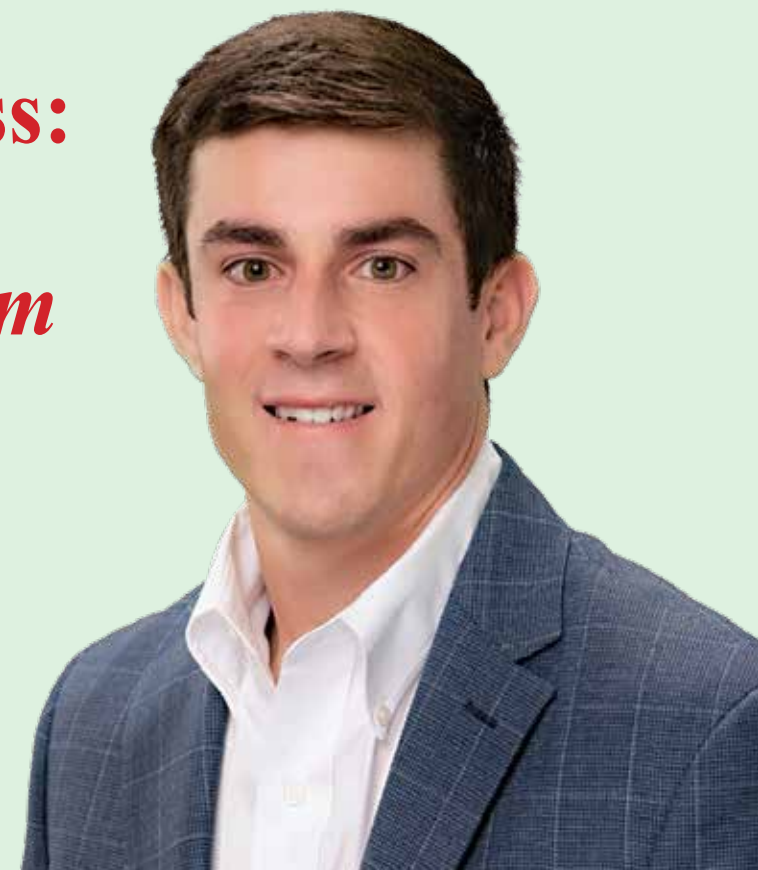
One of the things about which John is the proudest is the co-founding of the North Alabama Home Building Academy, designed to teach every aspect of the construction industry much in the way masters in a given trade would teach apprentices in days gone by. The Academy is an eight-week school that so far has had 170 graduates since its inception in January 2020. John knows that one of the most important things for economic development that he can do is provide opportunities for alternative careers.

I know that we are all concerned with out-of-control spending on the part of the government, but when you look into the face of a member of the generation that is going to have to pay for it, it is sobering. John will be

quick to tell you that the elderly politicians who believe that tax-and-spend is the way to build the economy won't be around to see the results of their disastrous fiscal policies. That is one of the reasons he will work hard for balanced budgets. He is also passionate about growing a new generation of

leadership, one that understands the Constitution and how America works.

Other issues that are near to John's heart are protecting the preborn and making sure we step up to support those born into difficult situations. This stems from his family having fostered dozens of kids. He knows that the current southern border policies are a nightmare, and that all involved in protecting us there need the resources and technology to be able to



do so. John is a hunter and a gun owner, and the 2nd Amendment will never be redefined on his watch. He understands the need for repairing and strengthening our relationship with Israel, as well as the rest of our allies. He knows that being able to protect ourselves as a nation is important to the safety of our country, and that the defense industry rooted in North Alabama must remain strong. John backs our veterans, law enforcement officers, and educators. He is

careful to point out that education should be just that -- education -- and not indoctrination. The entrepreneur, the farmer, the seeker of the American Dream, those are the ones for whom he shall fight. And, John is fully aware that none of those responsibilities can be met if voting and election integrity is not fully restored. To all of the above-mentioned categories and concerns John says, "*The American Dream is made possible by the equality of opportunity, not equality of outcome. I will be a fearless fighter for the future of your American Dream.*" If this is what you're looking for in a US Congressman, then elect John Roberts and send him to the House.



Calendar of Events

ATHENS LIMESTONE PUBLIC LIBRARY EVENTS

• **DEEP Conversation about Managing your Diabetes with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.** Thursdays 12:00 – 1:30, September 23 – October 28. If you have any questions or to register, please contact Karen Softley (256) 324-2851.

• **Wednesday, October 6th 2021 “Bring Your Own Lunch-N-Learn” 11:30 AM 2021 Draughton Seminar in State & Local History “Come Now, and Let Us Reason Together” – Cooperative Extension Clubs Empowerment of African-American Farm Women and Girls, 1928-1965 with Dr. Shari L. Williams of Auburn University.**

Play Outside Day October 2

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

21st Annual Wacky Quacky Ducky Derby October 2

With KALB adjacent to Big Spring Memorial Park (127 East Street in Athens) from 4:00PM-6:00PM. Buy your lucky duck or a whole Quack Pack at the Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful office in the old Gulf Station or online at KALBcares.org for your chances at prizes like Walt Disney World Tickets, cash and other great prizes.

Old South Cooking Showdown October 2

27246 Wooley Springs Road in Athens. Starting at 10:00AM with Cooks Meeting with awards at 5:00PM. Competition Steak A (\$150.00); Steak A&B (\$300.00); Dessert (\$25.00) and Grilled Cheese (\$25.00). Cornhold Tournament \$50.00 per team. For more information or to sign up: steakcookoffs.com/event-4052760 or Shaun Gonzales 256-990-1659.

Bluegrass Gospel Singing at Berea Baptist Church October 3

With The Morrison Sisters. Berea Baptist, 16779 Lucas Ferry Rd, 35611. 6 PM. A love offering will be received.

Athens Cemetery Stroll October 3

Athens City Cemetery with Hobbs Camp of the Sons of Confederate Veterans and Athens-Limestone County Tourism Association from 2PM-4PM. Stroll among the headstones in the pastoral Athens City Cemetery as the spirits return to share tales of history, family and lore of some of Limestone County's most renowned figures -- as well as a few visiting spirits who have come to recount their lives for you. Free, donations welcome. More info at : VisitAthensAL.com/cemetery-stroll

2021 ABS Fore the Students Golf Tournament October 7

At Canebrake Golf Club, 23015 Founders Circle in Athens. 7:00AM-12:00PM benefiting programs at Athens Bible School.

Limestone County Powwow October 9 & 10

At the Limestone Rodeo Arena, 18118 AL-99 on the right just past the Elm Street/AL-99 (Buck Island Road) intersection. From 9:00AM-5:00PM Saturday and 10:00AM-5:00PM Sunday. Grand entry at noon each day. Drumming, Dancing, music and more for the whole family. Adults: \$8.00; Kids 6-12 & Seniors: \$5.00; Kids 5&under: Free. All Dancers and Drums welcome. Bring a chair. Primitive camping allowed, no open fires. For more information: Shontel McBride 256-690-2362; Vendor Contact: Buffalo Yellowbird 256-620-0402

Athens-Limestone Community Blood Drive October 12

At the Athens-Limestone Visitors Center, 100 North Beaty Street in Athens. 12:00PM-4:00PM. Covid-19 Antibody Testing will happen for each pint donate. Learn about your eligibility after vaccination here. Limited space available. Register for your time slot at RedCrossBlood.org and use Zip Code 35611 and select Athens-Limestone Visitors Center to schedule a slot.

Yard Sale Athens-Limestone Rescue Squad Oct. 15-16

From 7am - ? 1401 Freeman Ave., Athens AL



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.

Steve's Corner

Occupy Till I Come

by Steve Leland

This statement was made by a nobleman in a parable that Yeshua taught his listeners.

The nobleman, prior to leaving on a trip, gave each of his ten servants a pound (which to my total shock was worth less than \$20 in today's currency) instructing them to occupy until he returned.

I have always seen "occupy" as it is used today, "to fill up time or space, reside in some type of abode, or hold an office." So, I just pictured them hanging out, flipping their coins and thinking about what they could do to make some more. It seemed like the guy who hid his was doing a good job of protecting his lord's money.

But that wasn't the meaning of the Greek word that was translated "occupy." It meant to be occupied,

to be in business with that money, and work on producing an increase. So, the one who was protecting his coin was directly disobeying his master.


As I was mulling that over, I was struck with the thought we are to be occupying until our Lord Yeshua returns. We are His servants. Do we have the right to just be hanging out, entertaining ourselves until he returns? Or should we be about our Lord's business? Whatever small ability we have, are we investing it for His Kingdom? Or is the best that we will be able to tell Him at the final accounting is that we played it safe, lived a good life, and stayed out of trouble?

If you are anything like me, that last statement would be hard to make with a straight face.

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What Makes Ronnie Roll

Spending Or Investing?

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



It had been a wonderful weekend, and the mayor had been one of several community leaders who spoke at the Love For The City event held on the Limestone County Courthouse steps. The weather was perfect, as was the day. Mayor Ronnie showed me a clip from a WHNT broadcast on leadership that was conducted by Steve Johnson. The program is entitled *Perspectives on Leadership*, and can still be viewed on WHNT online.

Mayor Ronnie brought in Holly Hollman, who has been busy producing short videos that are targeted toward 4th graders. The series is called, *It's My Job*, and so far, Athens Police Chief Floyd Johnson, Mayor Ronnie, and Athens City Councilman Frank Travis have been filmed, and more are to come.

The Mayor's Youth Commission is getting ready to get started, and they are still taking applications. "We have been blessed with a number of applicants and are making selections of team leaders," said the mayor. He had also been reading from the chapter in *Believing Is Seeing* entitled, "Investing or Spending?"

From page 155, there was a series of questions that had been put forth that served both to inspire gratitude as well as speak into the lives of others.

Just as I have encouraged you to think back on those who have invested in you, can you look around and see

those in whom you might invest?

Who connected with me? With whom can I connect?

Who touched my life in a positive way? Who can I touch in a positive way?

Who challenged and inspired me? Who can I challenge and inspire?

Who planted words of affirmation and encouragement in me? In whom can I plant words of affirmation and encouragement?

Who saw something special in me? In whom can I see something special?

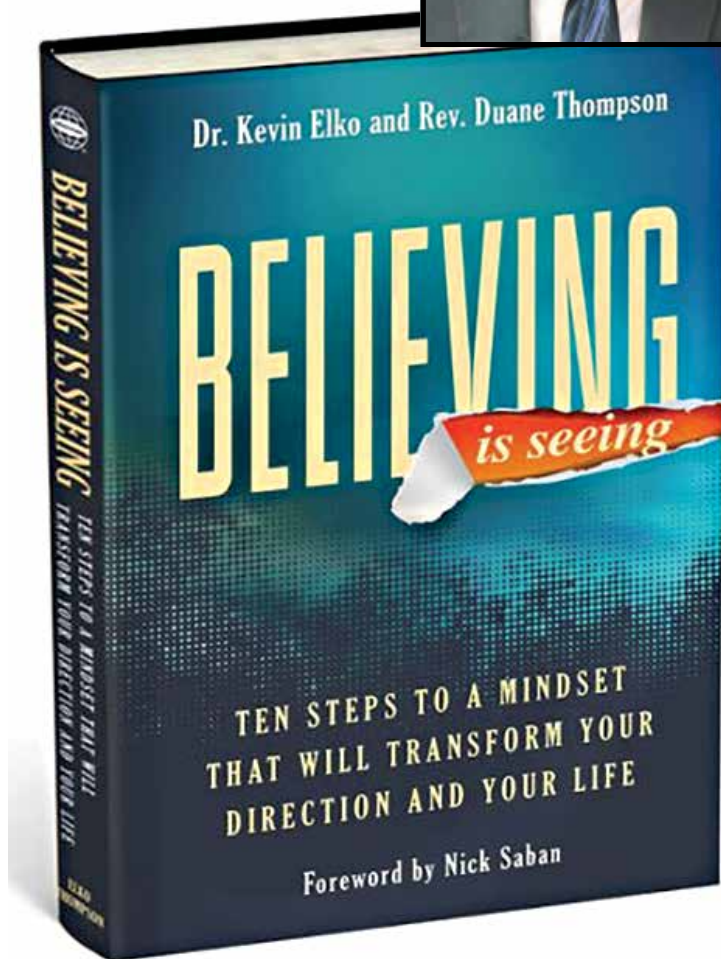
Who believed in me? In whom can I believe? Who helped raise me to a new level? Who can I help to raise to a new level?

Look for that person, and after you've done

it once, do it again. See how many people's lives you can touch. Go out of your way. Get out of your comfort zone. They are worth it, just like you were once worth it to someone else. Continue the pattern. Help shape others' lives the way others shaped yours. Invest in others the way others have invested in you.

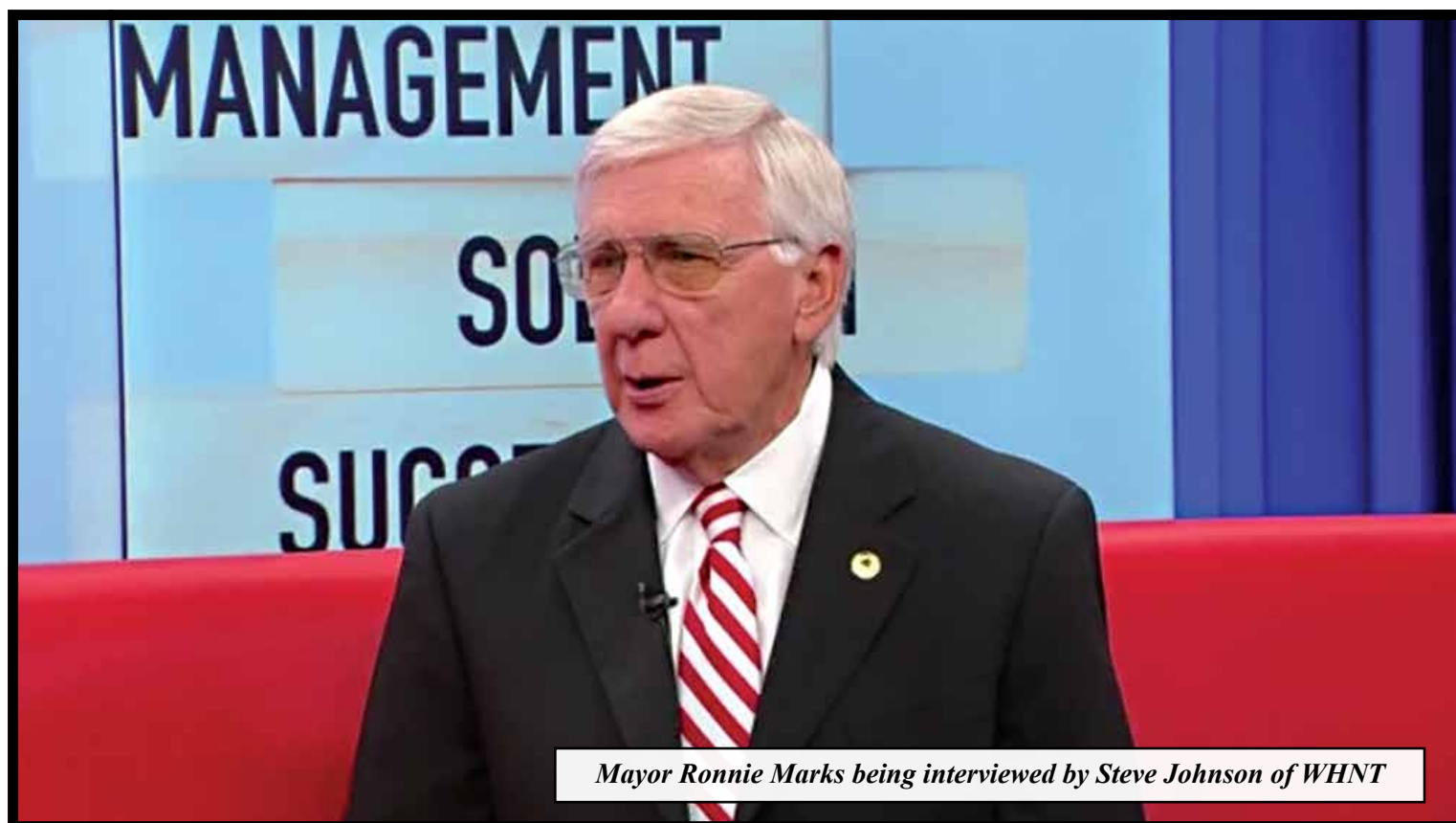
The mayor talked about what we are facing in terms of growth, something we talk about often. "We are looking at three hotels, five restaurants, and about ten million dollars in sewers," he said. He added, "Growth is tough right now." It wasn't a complaint, just a statement of fact that there are a bunch of challenges that go with growing a town well.

Mayor Ronnie then added, "All you can do is



get up, look in the mirror and say, 'Let's go get 'em.' Let's go and make our family, church, and

city better." It was time to pray, and so we did. And then it was time for Ronnie to roll.



Mayor Ronnie Marks being interviewed by Steve Johnson of WHNT

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Sandy Thompson @ 256 771-7578 or sndy6732@gmail.com

Register by Wednesday, Nov 3, 2021



Tourism

Hey Y'all, It's Fall! Athens-Limestone Fall Festivals Await

by Cayce Lee

Social Media Specialist, Athens-Limestone County Tourism Association

There is something about that little temperature change that brings a burst of cooler temperatures between the last week of September and the first week of October kick starting fall in Athens-Limestone. The fall spices start appearing on the menus of local eateries, the bright lights fill the stadiums, a giddiness rolls across the populous as two of the biggest festivals in the community nears. That bolt of energy and eagerness to collect candy takes over the end of October. All of these aspects are traditions in Athens-Limestone Alabama – and as always you can find the details about them and other events of October 2021 at VisitAthensAL.com.

Bring On The Pickin'

The Tennessee Valley Old Time Fiddlers

Convention kicks off September 30 – a little oddity for the event that is usually the “first full weekend of October” – but it doesn't hurt to celebrate early with a concert. The competitions will be the traditional first two days of October on the 1st and 2nd.

Attendees of the Fiddlers Convention will be supporting many of the scholarships the school offers plus small business vendors in the arts and crafts section. They can see the awarding of a plaque to Athens-Limestone's own Delmore Brothers, enjoy a variety of food, support local organizations in their fundraisers like KALB's Wacky Quacky Ducky Derby and others, see some big names out of Nashville, and of course, watch a lot of great performers competing for state titles.

So join Athens-Limestone County Tourism Association, Alabama Governor Kay Ivey, Mayor Ronnie Marks and City Council of the City of Athens, and Chairman Collin Daly and the Limestone County Commission in celebrating the Week of The Old Time Fiddlers Convention as part of the Month of Country Music and its role in our communities and nation.

The Spirits Come Alive...

The Hobbs Camp's Sons of Confederate Veterans and Athens-Limestone Tourism are proud to continue this immersive storytelling-history-heritage event that features individuals from Athens-Limestone's history portrayed by their descendants and some well-known names of North Ala-

bama on October 3, the Sunday after the Tennessee Valley Old Time Fiddlers Convention.

Celebrate Our Native American Heritage...

The organizers of the Limestone County Powwow are returning to the Limestone County Sheriff's Arena on October 9-10 with drumming, dancing, music, and more for the whole family. Enjoy Grand Entry each day at noon and explore the sounds, sights, and rhythms with vendors, displays, and more.

Fall Festivals Fill The Weekends...

Athens Fall Saturday Market will be under the Green Street Pavilion on October 16. Stop by the Athens-Limestone Rescue Squad Yard Sale and support these local heroes by shopping the tables and racks and continue your retail therapy by dropping into the Treasure Chest just across the street. Check out the chrome and rev up your weekend with the Ardmore Car Show at John Barnes Park on the 16th as well, or head to the FunFest with Lighthouse Apostolic Church for food and fun. Dads, dust off that suit and take your daughter to the Athens High School Father-Daughter Dance the evening of the 16th. Don't miss the Pride of

Athens Marching Festival on the 23rd or the 6th Annual Fall Festival in Ardmore. And Studio H Dance Company takes over John Barnes Park with a Fall Festival Pageant, Fall Festival, and a Trunk or Treat on the 30th.

Get Out And Go FORE It...

October 7 brings the Athens Bible School Fore the Student Golf Tournament fundraiser. Can't tee up for that event? – step up for the CASA Swing Fore Children Golf Tournament on the 21st.

An Evening To Pause...

The Alabama Chapter of the TEARS Foundation will be on the Marion Street side of the Limestone County Courthouse for the Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day Candlelight Memorial on October 15. Candles will be lit and the names of babies lost to miscarriage, still birth, and infant and child loss will be spoken during this event.

Tall Tales And Laughs Resound...

The second large festival that marks the arrival of fall in Athens-Limestone, the Athens Storytelling Festival will be from held October 18-23.



The annual Athens Cemetery Stroll takes over the tombstones of Athens City Cemetery the Sunday, Oct. 3 with tales, history, heritage, and lore.



Slinkard On Success

Seeing Sin For What It Is

by D. A. Slinkard

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

This article has been much tougher for me to write because it is going to be about an unpopular subject going on in our country. It seems to me, many people like seeing people receive their just reward. If someone treats someone else badly, it seems to never fail that the person who did the mistreating is going to have something bad occur in their life. Some people refer to this as karma and feel warm and gushy inside when the offender ends up getting what was coming to them. Go to YouTube and you can find thousands of videos on “Instant Karma,” where the individual gets “what was coming to them.” Bad things happen and people say, “There’s karma for you!”

Now, with all that said – let’s go ahead and take the time to see the turmoil going on in our country. We have become a nation stricken by COVID-19. We have issues going on at the border. We have hurricane destruction, wildfire issues, and it seems our country is at a breaking point as we are a nation divided. What if these bad things happening to us is because, as a nation, we have turned our back on God? Maybe these bad things are happening to us because in the past 50 years, the United States of America has seen over 50,000,000 innocent lives be murdered in the mother’s womb. I told you this is not going to be a popular topic. The safest place for a baby should be in the mother’s womb.

What if the issues plaguing



our society are because we are getting our just reward from God Almighty? This is definitely not the popular topic being preached upon in church houses today, but the Bible tells us in Galatians 6:7, “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” If you look at what is going on in the world around us, I do believe we are reaping what we have sown as a nation. In Numbers 32:23, “But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out.”

Our sin has found us out, and now we are paying the cost for the wrongs we have done. A person does not have to look very hard to see as a society how we sin against God. The 10 Commandments have become the 10 suggestions, and we have become a nation that

has compromised on the Word of God. Instead of “Thus saith the Lord...,” we choose to do as we please. We want to feed our own impulses; we want to add to our own desires without giving thought to why we are here on this earth. We are here and were created for God Almighty. In Revelation 4:11, “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created” – For thy pleasure they are and were created.

As a creation of God, we fall short, and as a nation, we have forgotten why and how we were founded. One Nation under God. We have taken God out of the equation. We have fully immersed ourselves in the abominations against God. I am reminded of Jeremiah 6:15, “Were they ashamed

when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore, they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD.”

You look at the turmoil going on in our nation and it is evident we are receiving our just due. What will it take for things to change? Simple – get back to serving the Lord so we can find favor in His eyes. We need a revival to take place. We need Christians to stand up across our nation and say, “Here am I Lord, send me.” Before a revival can take place in our country, in our state, in our community, we first must have the revival take place in our own lives. The most crucial decision anyone will ever make will be

placing their trust in Jesus Christ. We have one shot at life, one opportunity to live this life, and we must make the decision to either serve God of the Bible or be fully prepared to face the consequences of our sin against God.

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Clean, Green And Beautiful

Shredding, Drug Takeback, Electronics Recycling, Used Household Item Donation Event in Athens – October 16

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

The Better Business Bureau of North Alabama will be partnering with the Athens-Limestone Recycling Center, Athens Police Department, and America's Thrift Store to provide a shredding, drug takeback, electronics recycling, and used household item donation event on Saturday, October 16. The event will be held from 9 a.m. to noon at Athens State University. Please enter the Athens State University parking lot from Hobbs Street.

This event will offer both residents and small businesses an opportunity to protect personal information and the environment. There are no fees (*other than television recycling, which is \$10 per television) for using the services offered. Simply stay in your car, as this is a non-contact event, and volunteers will assist you by removing your items and placing them where they will be properly taken care of.

The following services will be available:

- **Document Shredding** – All residents and small businesses will have the opportunity to bring up to **5 boxes or bags of documents** for onsite shredding by a commercial shredding company. All shredded paper will then be recycled.
- **Electronic Recycling** – Residents may bring any type of electronic that has a cord or battery for recycling thanks to the Athens Limestone-Recycling Center. Items that can be recycled include desk top computers, laptops, tablets, gaming consoles, computer towers, cords, cell phones, TVs (*\$10 fee per television, all other electronics recycled for free), and other household electronics.
- **Drug Takeback** – Athens Police Department will collect over-the-counter and prescription pills, patches, controlled substances, and veterinary medications. No

needles or liquid medication will be accepted at this event.

- **Donations of Used Household Items and Clothing** – America's Thrift Store will be collecting these donations to benefit Make-A-Wish Alabama. There will be donation receipts available for tax purposes.

For more information, please call the Better Business Bureau at 256-355-5170.

Sponsors also include Family Security Credit Union and RemainSafe. BBB Shred Day partners include Cook's Pest Control, Quest Prevention Services, RSVP, Dixie Pulp and Paper Recycling, Athens Police Department, Athens-Limestone Recycling Center, Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful, The News Courier, American's Thrift Store.

We hope that you will take advantage of this important service event, while protecting your identity and the environment!



Recycling Updates and Notes:

City Curbside Recycling will begin again on Monday, October 4! This is a service that the City of Athens Sanitation Department offers. If you would like more information or would like a blue curbside recycling cart, please call the City of Athens Streets and Sanitation Department at 256-233-8747.

The Athens-Limestone Recycling Center will be putting Community Collection Centers back in place beginning Friday, October 1! These recycling collection centers are for residential use and will be placed in the following locations:

- East Limestone High School
- Cedar Hill Elementary
- West Limestone High School

- Owens Elementary Property
- Elkmont High School
- Johnson Elementary
- Clements High School
- Ardmore High School
- Piney Chapel

PLEASE NOTE: The Athens-Limestone Recycling Center accepts electronics for recycling each Monday through Friday during regular business hours. The shred day event gives residents an opportunity to recycle these items that they may not have a chance to otherwise. Please do not dump items at the recycling center when closed. This is considered illegal dumping.

If you have questions regarding recycling at the Athens-Limestone Recycling Center or Collection Centers, please call 256-233-8746.





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Cooking with Anna

“Unrush” Yourself

by Anna Hamilton

Everyone is in a rush. According to the Oxford Dictionary, the word “rush” means to move with urgent

haste or to dash toward someone or something in an attempt to attack or capture. I feel like this is how the majority of us live our lives. We feel as if we are constantly behind the eight-ball, constantly trying to play catch up, constantly trying to keep up with the pressures we allow society to place on our shoulders.

So, what is the opposite of rush? I checked the dictionary for antonyms of the word rush and it gave me some real doozies. Words like dawdle, dillydally, loiter, creep, and lag. Personally, I don’t like any of these words. They all carry such a negative connotation. So, I decided to make my own word -- “unrush.” You have my permission to adapt it into your everyday language.

Unrush means to relax, to realize that God is in control, and to trust that God will keep you in the palm of his hand. God has never been in a hurry; you are the one in a hurry. God’s timeline for your life is not a thirty-minute sitcom, it is a full-length movie marathon. Trying to rush your life will cause you to be stressed, unhappy, disappointed, and anxious. Allowing God to be in control of the timeline of your life gives you the freedom to be happy.

Letting God be in control of your timeline doesn’t mean that you just sit back on your hands and don’t attempt to achieve any goals in life. As Christians, we should have a strong work ethic. How we present ourselves in the workplace should always represent our love for Christ. The Bible has numerous passages on being a good worker. “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that

you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.” Colossians 3:23-24

Being a diligent and hard worker will bring blessings from the Lord. When we commit our lives to the Lord, he promises to always take care of us. We may not understand some of the things that happen in our lives, but in time, we realize that every twist and turn on the road of life is being used to bring us closer to God. As humans, we can become fearful of what is coming next in our lives, but the Lord assures us he is in control. The phrase “Do not be afraid” can be found 365 times in the Bible. “The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; so not be discouraged.” Deuteronomy 31:8 “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” Philippians 4:6

So, unrush yourself! Allow yourself to enjoy your life and see the beauty in every twist and turn. Living your life with full trust in God paints a beautiful picture for the world to see. By living your life with complete trust, it shows people who do not know Christ that there can be a better way. Your life becomes a living, breathing testimony of the promises of God. You may never know who you are leading to Christ by simply living your life with full trust in God.

This week’s recipe is a stick-to-your-ribs, fall classic. It will leave you feeling warm and cozy without feeling heavy. It is a go-to for my busy family, and I’m sure it will become a staple on your family’s menu as well. I hope you enjoy it as much as I do!

“He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.” Ecclesiastes 3:11

Fall Chicken Cutlets

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ lb. chicken breast cutlets
- 1 ½ cups almond flour
- ½ cup freshly grated parmesan cheese
- 1 ½ tsp. garlic salt
- 1 Tbsp. paprika
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Canola oil
- Lemon wedges

Directions:

Season chicken with salt and pepper and lightly coat with ¼ cup almond flour. Combine remaining almond flour, cheese, garlic salt, and paprika in a shallow dish. Lightly beat eggs in another shallow dish. Dip chicken cutlets into egg mixture, and then coat both sides with the flour mixture. Add oil to a skillet, about ¼ inch deep. Heat over medium-high heat until hot. Add

half of cutlets and cook approximately 3 minutes or until golden on bottom. Turn cutlets and cook for an additional 3 minutes longer until crisp and golden. Remove from skillet and keep warm. Add additional oil to skillet if needed and cook remaining cutlets. Serve warm with lemon wedges for garnish. This pairs great with a green salad or with roasted veggies and mashed cauliflower.



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The 2021 Storytelling Festival Is On...line!

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

continued from page 1

Adapting to challenging situations is something to which we have become accustomed in this past year, and the ‘Tellers were so desirous of continuing the tradition of coming to Athens each October that last year they did the festival online through Facebook. COVID just wasn’t going to stop them. And while I am deeply appreciative of their commitment to our town and our kids, I know that there is nothing like having them under the big red and white tent. For my part, the best thing is watching the students manage to both sit still enough to listen and simultaneously squeal with laughter. They don’t know that they are being taught life lessons that, if applied, can make a huge difference in their lives. But, for reasons beyond the festival committee’s control, the tent was available, but there

was no crew to set it up and take it down. There was a tent available in Atlanta, but they wanted \$20,000 dollars, which was way out of the budget. So, rest assured a tent and crew have been procured for NEXT year, and for 2021, it will be much like last year.

Here is what we know for sure: The grand old man himself, Donald Davis will be on hand for a very small event that will involve local student tellers. At 6 p.m., Wednesday night October 20, Mr. Davis will be teaching them the art of storytelling at the Tourism office, and will also be selecting two student winners to tell the next night. Donald is also going to tell stories on Thursday night, October 21 at a fundraising dinner to be held at Emmanuel Baptist Church. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. The event is being sponsored by Dream Key Realty, and is going to be called, “Dinner With Donald.” The cost of



tickets for a single person is \$75, and \$40 of that is tax deductible, and the cost of two tickets is \$125, \$55 of which is deductible. The meal will be catered by Sweetest Things, and is bound to be tasty. Your dinner ticket will also give you unlimited access to the online event, and the online event will be available after the festival is over for all ticket holders to view for a limited time. Donald found that last year telling stories with no one in the room was just not something that he wanted to repeat, and I have heard the same complaint from people who have “spoken” at online business conferences. Without people in the room, and being able to gauge the re-

sponses, it just feels dead and strange. We are so glad he will be able to be here in the flesh!

Carmen Agra Deedy will be on hand for a special livestream performance that is going to function as this year’s School Days. The audio-visual details are being worked out, and participating schools will treat this much like an assembly, with Carmen telling from a screen and kids out in the audience. Besides being an amazing storyteller, Carmen is an award-winning children’s author.

Bil Lepp will be returning to the online event, and is slated to start his second year with his own show on the History Channel. It is entitled Man Vs History, and Bil digs deep to find out the truth about many of the legends about America that have been passed down for centuries, such as whether or not Ben Franklin discovered electricity in a storm with a kite and a key. For us, he’ll just be tellin’ tales.

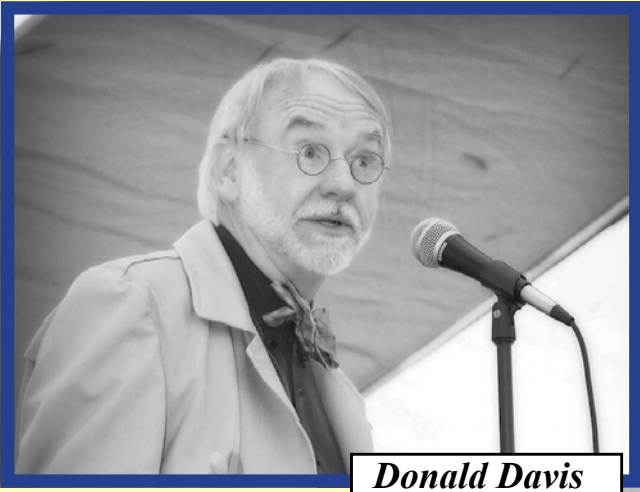
Madison County, AL, native Josh Goforth will be back to perform musically as

well as a teller. Simon Brooks, who hails from the UK will be a part.

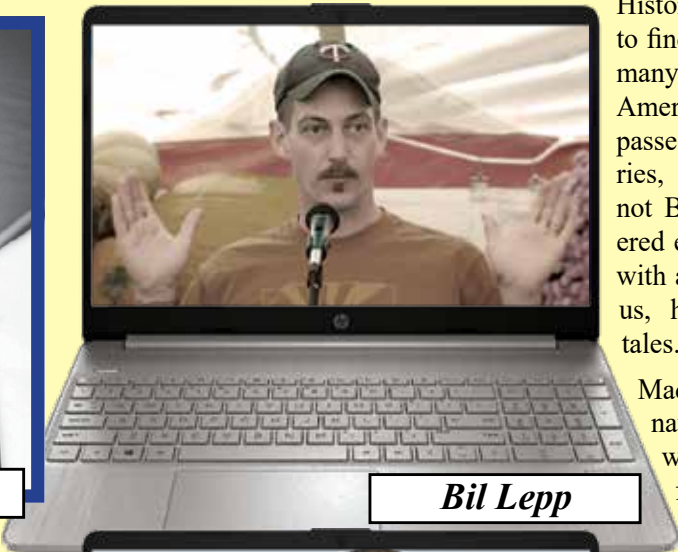
Most recently, Bobby Norfolk has indicated that he is going to be available for the online event. Bobby is an Emmy Award winning teller and TV personality, and I had the great pleasure of sitting “criss-cross apple sauce” on the library floor at Johnson Elementary School watching him tell stories old and new to mesmerized kids. Bobby especially has a remarkable repertoire of sound effects.

Tickets are going to be available on the Athens Storytelling Facebook site, at the festival website www.athensstorytellingfestival.com, or tickets can also be purchased at the Tourism Office located at 100 N Beaty St, Athens, AL 35611.

It is very important that you keep checking the festival site as well as Facebook so that you can get the latest information and updates. Yes, it is yet another year where we have been thrown some curves, but Storytelling is still on...line! Next year will be even better, and what a family reunion we shall have!



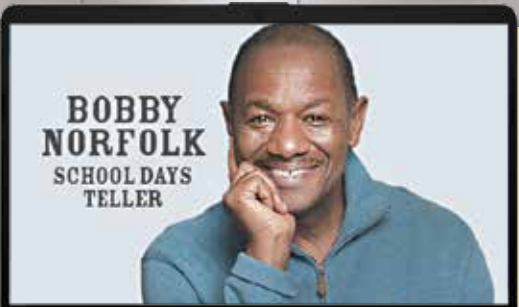
Donald Davis



Bil Lepp



Carmen Agra Deedy



Bobby Norfolk



Josh Goforth

Sometimes We Just Need A Good Kick

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



Time to get personal!

It is easy to all of a sudden be in a rut and just not be able to find your way out. It happens to all of us. Maybe it is just a lack of motivation, maybe something has discouraged you, or maybe you have just become complacent and therefore frustrated. As humans we crave growth, and to grow we have to be uncomfortable. This is true for any portion of your life, not just health and fitness. If you are not living your ideal life, it is probably because your expectations are greater than your effort. Do not let these feelings lead to decreasing your goal, instead increase your effort! This is a simple concept, but far from easy; so let's break it down.

First you have to realize you will never be fully ready for anything, you just have to make up your mind and start. Fear will get you nowhere; fear is a liar. Write down your goal and your "why." This will help you identify your "how" which will then allow you lay out the daily steps you must take to reach your goal. Most of all, you have to want it. That is the reason your "why" has to be strong; no one can want it for you, just like no one can do it for you. Your why has to be fueled with pas-

sion for what you are doing; passion will be what takes over and carries you through when your mind and body want to give up. I am talking passion so strong that it wakes you up in the morning!

This level of goal seeking and passion makes for some tough times -- the pressure comes either from within you or from those around you. The obstacles inevitably come, and chances are it will be more than one or

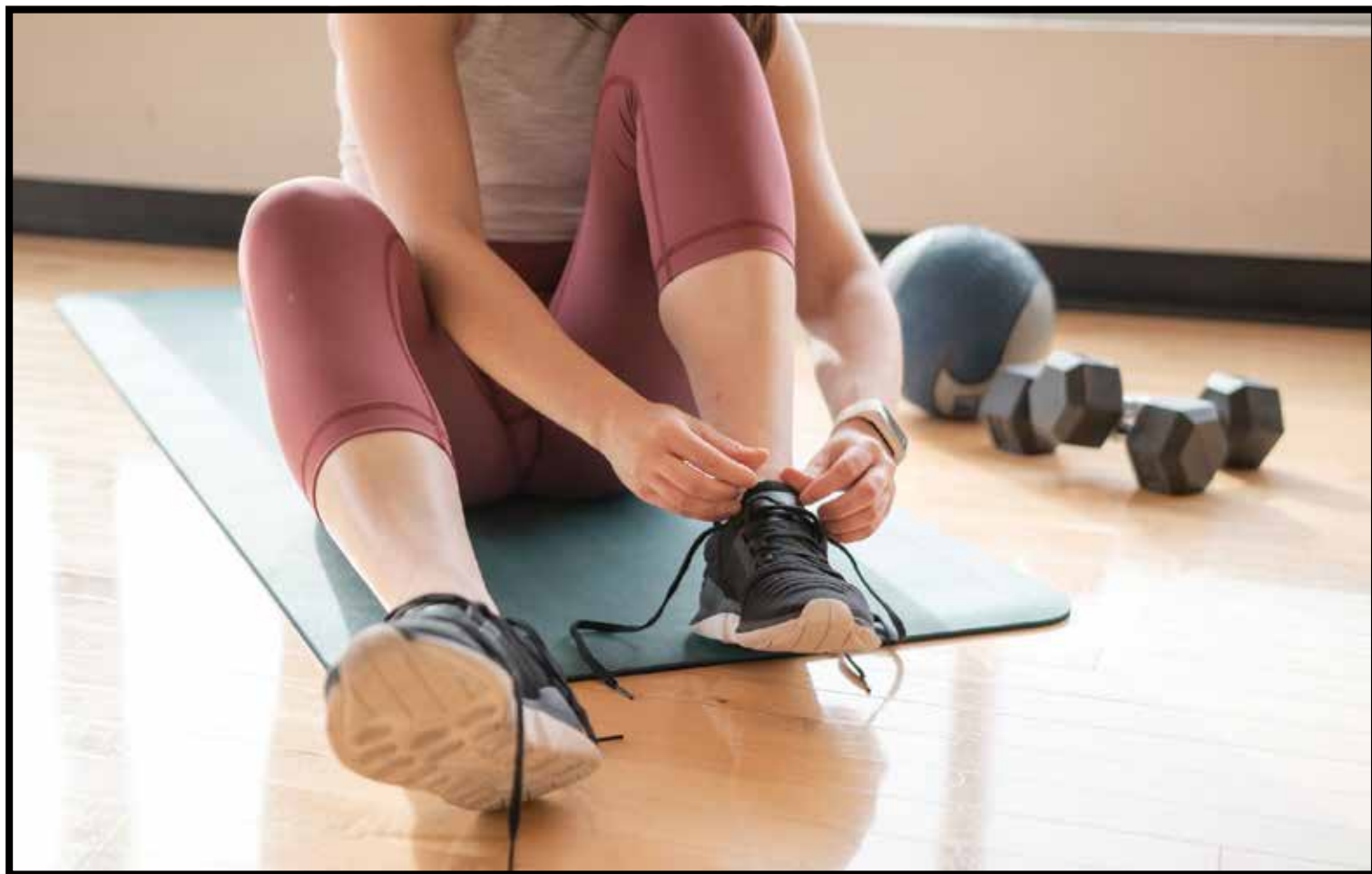
two. But you have to remember, if the path does not contain obstacles, then it probably does not lead anywhere worth going! Just as no pressure on a lump of coal leaves the coal just the same average lump, definitely not a diamond; by the same principle, no pressure on you equals no success! Harness the pressure and achieve that diamond status.

The key is your focus and ability to grind each day, in each 24-hour span given to

you. Using those small activities you laid out in the beginning consistently will eventually add up to big accomplishments. The bigger the goal, the harder the grind. You cannot cheat the grind; it knows how much you have invested and will not give you anything you have not worked to achieve. You will get tired, but remember, champions keep going even when they have nothing left in the tank; they dig deep and do not stop un-

til they reach their destination!

"Your attitude has to be such that you want the goal as bad as you want to breathe," as Eric Thomas says. You have to be willing at any moment to sacrifice what you are for what you will become, to know that your dream is worth more to you than even sleep! You are responsible for the grind not the results; when the grind is on point, the results will take care of themselves.



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Old Mill Iron And TN Valley Powder Coatings: *Where Your Project Problems Are “Ironed Out” And “Covered”*

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

continued from page 1

which can be seen all around the region. During the height of the disruption caused by COVID, they were the ones who provided the ornamental iron fencing that facilitated outdoor dining and pick-up on the north side of the Limestone County Courthouse in Athens.

The history of Old Mill Iron dates back to the Golden Age of Industrialism in Huntsville, AL. Old Mill’s owner and founder Glennis Whitmuss’ grandparents were from rival mills, Lincoln and Dallas. “My grandparents and parents were ‘mill kids,’” Glennis told me, and she grew up hearing fascinating stories about that bygone era. (Interestingly, Old Mill Iron started off years later in the old Lincoln Mill located on Meridian Ave in Huntsville, and currently Old Mill is involved in the restoration project of Lincoln Mill, where it all began.) The company then moved to Madison, and eventually they found themselves experiencing a turn of events and a level of devastating betrayal which nearly brought Old Mill Iron to their knees. Church family



stepped up, people that no one knew were welders helped to finish projects, and Old Mill Iron was saved. Glennis and her husband Jeff built a fabrication center in the back of their property, and they have now outgrown it.

They wanted to find a new location in Limestone County, and Old Mill Iron is pleased to announce that they have moved to 25423 Elkton Road in Elkmont. The new headquarters are in the old feed store next to the BP station, in front of Donna’s Barn, and Donna’s Barn is being transformed into the headquarters of TN Valley Powder Coatings, Old Mill’s powder coating service which they started in 2017. When I spoke with Glennis, she mentioned that they have had to streamline their operations because it is more challenging to get materials. They now have to fabricate everything, and prices have soared. “There are shortages that we cannot control,”

she said, and her sentiments echo those of many local business owners who can’t turn their projects as quickly as they used to. That being said, Old Mill Iron is famous for their customer service and their friendly, knowledgeable sales staff. They also have remained busy throughout the pandemic. One of the things Glennis has been thankful for in all their adventures has been her husband and business partner, Jeff. Jeff is a seasoned fabricator and engineer, and Glennis’s background is in business development. “We work well together, and have been blessed to build Old Mill Iron into what it is today,” said Glennis.

What is Old Mill Iron able to provide for you? -- residential ornamental work, fencing and gates. They do handrails, stair rails, driveway gates, and gate repairs. They also do commercial structural steel and fabrication. TN Valley Powder Coatings can powder



coat fencing, outdoor furniture, and some farm equipment parts. Old Mill Iron has CAD software, and they have in-house experts with decades of experience on staff. They are also factory representatives for Liftmaster, a gate operation system.

One of their biggest projects is the Mid-City Amphitheatre currently under construction in Huntsville. The Amphitheatre is going to be a venue for concerts, high school graduations, and more. It will hold 8,000 and is due to open in the spring of 2022.

Old Mill Iron is nationally certified as a woman-owned business through the Women’s Business Enterprise National Council. In order to get this certification, there are several requirements, including being 51% woman-owned. They are also members of the Athens Home Builders’ Association,

support Limestone County Churches Involved (LCCI), and want to be even more involved in strengthening our community as they settle in to their new location.

Old Mill Iron has demonstrated care for both their employees as well as their customers during COVID, and has emerged even stronger. The “growing pains” of the past year and a half have caused some long work weeks, and both Old Mill Iron and TN Valley Powder Coatings are hiring. When things are settled, they are planning on having a grand opening celebration, and the entire community will be invited. Until then, stop by for a no obligation inquiry, and let them “iron out” your project challenges. Remember, everything Old Mill Iron and TN Valley Powder Coatings make are quality products, and that’s because they are quality people.





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Learning As A Lifestyle

Leading Through Times Of Anxiety And Change

by Eric Betts

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

The environment we live in today is full of apprehension and fear due to the pandemic that began in the United States in 2020. The times we are living in have brought about much change. The workplace environment has changed and will continue to change. Leaders are expected to adapt to the changing environment as well as helping others within their workplace to change as well.

Many times, leaders failed to enact change within their group organization or company because change makes those within their orbit uncomfortable and insecure. Others fail to enact change because those within their cir-

cle have great emotional connections with the way things used to be. Often those within the group are fearful of future changes because they are unsure if they will have a place, or they do not know whether their place will be diminished in an environment of change. This is important to recognize.

Negative attitudes, frustrations, and fears within the group may very well force a leader to hold back from enacting change. When there is a spirit of fear within the group, this is worsened when the leader is fearful of those negative emotions that will come when change is enacted. However, failure to enact such

changes is detrimental to the organization and its personnel in the long run. When a leader is more fearful of rocking the boat than they are of becoming ineffective or relevant, the leadership will not ultimately succeed.

Family System's author, Edward Friedman, asserts that a leader's job is to be "the strength in the system." It is unrealistic to suggest that leaders never become fearful about the future, but successful leaders do not allow their own inner fears to interfere with the overall goals and changes needed to fulfill those goals. Successful leaders are also in the business of building and developing the organization by building and developing the people. The organization's personnel must confront their fears, their anxiet-

ies, and their uncertainties if they are going to grow and help build the organization. Removing the agony of uncertainty and the pain of change never helps the personnel. It hurts the growth of those who have yet to reach their full potential in the organization. The organization's personnel may have anxiety about the changes that are coming, and the leadership may have anxiety about the negative reactions, but a successful leader has the nerve to hold firm.

Friedman suggested the following:

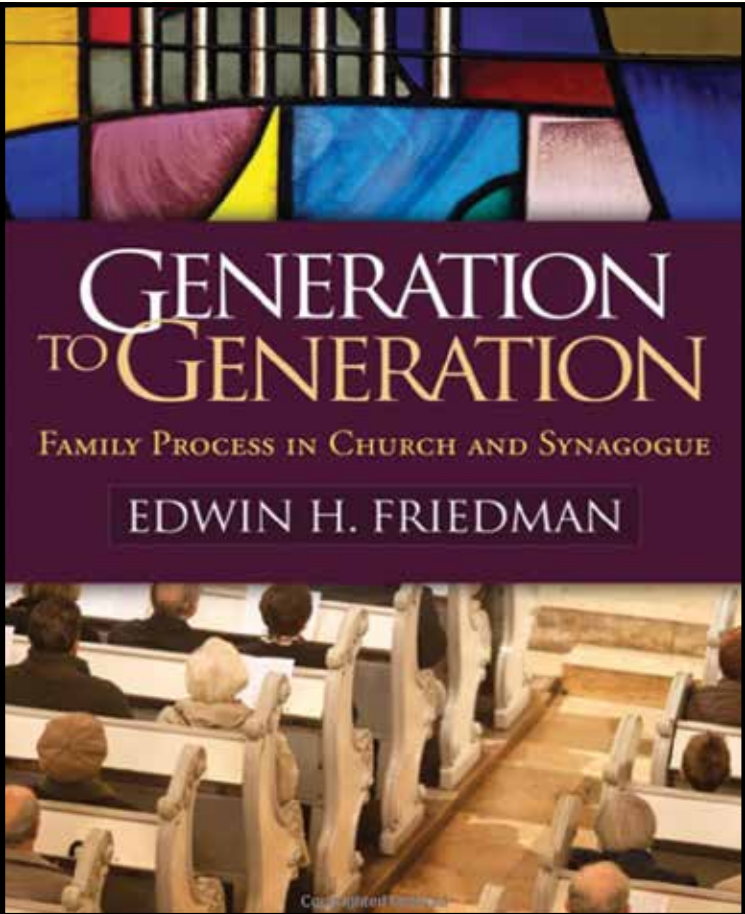
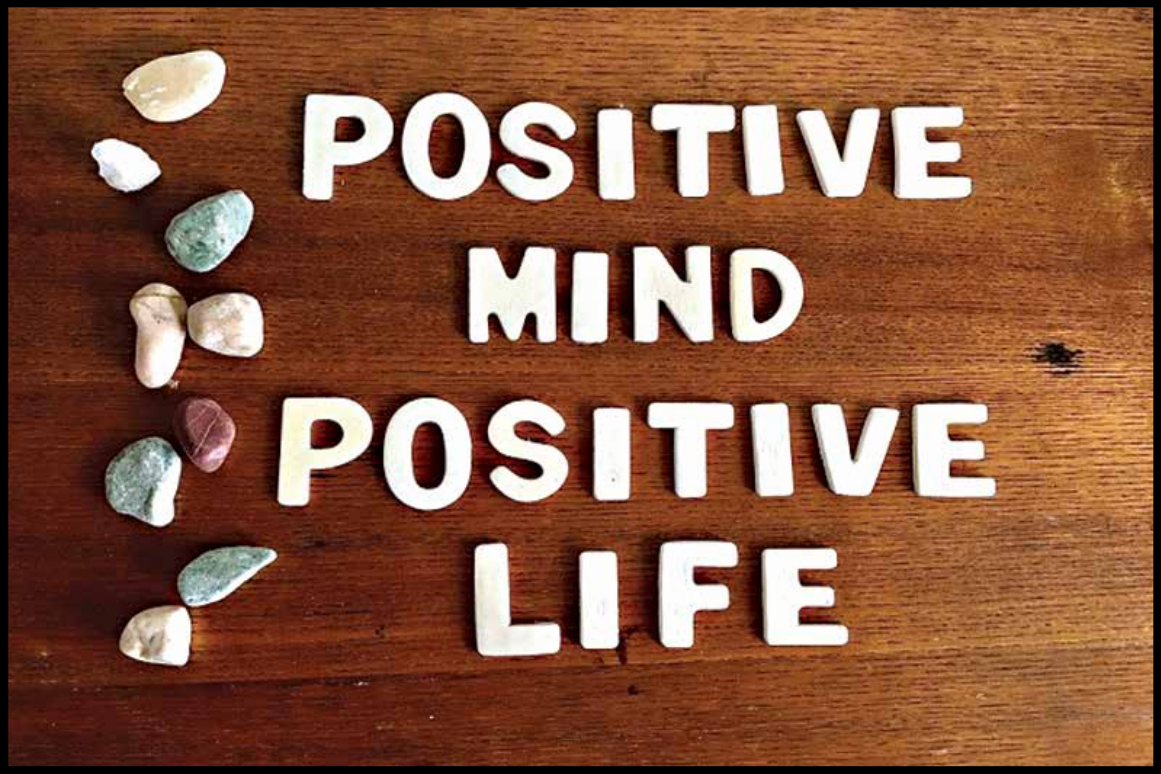
Developing greater clarity about what is happening in a system will always be more productive in the long run than just having empathy for the hurting people in the system and trying to rescue them. People grow through challenge

and not by simply being made to feel better about their plight.

The following attitudes must be maintained when anxiety fills the ecosystem:

1. Remain true to your core convictions
2. Remain true to your vision
3. Remain true to your plan
4. Remain decisive despite negative emotions
5. Remain connected and present (relatable)
6. Remain persistent in the face of sabotage

May you remain firm in the direction of change in times of anxiety and uncertainty. The rewards and success that will come will far outweigh the difficulties of the present.





Jerry's Journal

Julia - Christmas Queen of Athens

by Jerry Barksdale

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

Motorists speeding down I-65 and seeing the "Welcome to Athens" sign pay it no attention. Just another wide place in the road. If they knew what happened here they would slam on their brakes, tour the town, and take selfies where world history was made.

I'm not talking about visiting Founders Hall where the first all-female college in America – maybe the world – was established in 1821; nor the Courthouse Square where General John Turchin's Yankee soldiers sacked and pillaged the town in 1862; nor the former site of an opera house, law school and Nipponia Fairground, the latter said to be the "most costly and commodious in the South" before the Yankees burned it; nor Fort Henderson where 900 Yankee troops were tricked into surrendering to the "Wizard of the Saddle," General Nathan Bedford Forrest. And I'm not referring to touring the historical homes of two former Alabama Governors and two U.S. Senators. Nor, the gravesite of former Alabama Chief Justice Thomas N. McClellan, whose successor, after a long train trip from Montgomery to attend his funeral, allegedly became slightly inebriated and, while delivering the eulogy, fell into the grave. Certainly I'm not suggesting they drive and photograph a por-

tion of North Marion, the shortest one way street in America.

And no, I'm not talking about taking selfies in front of 407 E. Washington Street where a local author, while under the influence of pork 'n beans, floating in Louisiana hot sauce and cheap wine penned Cornbread Chronicles. None of that.

There is a French term that describes Athens – *Savoir faire*. It means polished, cultured, refined. We are, to paraphrase former Gov. George Wallace, just as cultured as any four-eyed, briefcase toting, Harvard professor who can't park his bicycle straight. More so, I'd say.

Our greatest cultural achievement occurred in 1987 when Julia, a pig, was crowned Christmas Queen of Athens. And for two years in a row! Why? Well, Julia was a beautiful pig. Like Scarlett O'Hara in *Gone with the Wind*, she had magnolia white skin – "that skin so prized by Southern women," beady black eyes, perky ears, a lovely snout and a good looking tail, a curly one that resembled an Arby's French fry. Only cultured and refined Southerners elect a hog Christmas Queen. While others talked about diversity and inclusion Athenians were bringing it about.

And how did a lowly porker who spent her youth rooting for acorns and wallowing in mud holes rise from obscurity

to become Athens Christmas Queen? In America anything can happen. In Athens it probably will. She was homeless, wandering the streets near Pilgrims Poultry plant, rooting for acorns, when Athens Vet, Dr. Bruce Young gave her a luxurious home in the servant quarters behind his grandparent's stately old mansion at 310 North Jefferson Street. He named her Julia, after a pretty young lady he knew.

In 1987, I was honored to meet Julia after Dr. Young placed his grandparent's mansion on the market. I was interested in purchasing it for use as a combination residence and law office. While inspecting the outside, I opened the door of the servant quarters. "OINK – OINK!" A large Chestershire hog lunged at me. I slammed the door and ran. It was Julia. I was so rattled I forgot to ask for her autograph. Her fame spread across the globe. Athens resident Kay McFarlen was living in Madrid, Spain the winter of 1988 and well remembers the Christmas parade. She was entertaining Spanish friends in her home, playing cards and watching tv when CNN International flashed the news that Julia was Christmas Queen. Julia was riding in the Grand Marshall's convertible as it slowly made its way through throngs of cheering Athenians, Dr. Young seated at her side. Julia oinked her approval.

Kaye's Spanish friends were impressed. "Say, isn't that your home town?" Kaye puffed out her chest, burning with Southern pride. "Why, yes, it is."

When Julia became pregnant, it was announced to Athenians on a large billboard. Associated Press and CNN International flashed the happy news around the world. And for a moment the world forgot about war and was happy. Athens was famous. Our Citizens were proud.

But no-good lurked in the shadows. City Officials grew jealous and fearful she might run for office – even Mayor. And be elected! They conspired against her. They said it was a violation of ordinance for a pig to live in the city, even though pet dogs, rabbits, cats, ducks, birds, turtles, snakes, guinea pigs and lizards lived in town. Blatant discrimination! Where was the ACLU? The people rose up and wore t-shirts proclaiming "LET JULIA STAY." Democracy in action. Our Founding Fathers would have been proud.

News of Julia's success and Dr. Young's good works reached Supreme Headquarters in hell. Ol' Satan connived to destroy them. Some folks believe that Ol' Satan always tempts men with booze, wacky-backy, dancing, rock 'n roll and good looking women wearing tight skirts and high heels. Send a man good

whiskey and a good-looking woman and he'll snare 'im every time, it's said. That use to be true. But Ol' Satan has grown more subtle. His weapon against Dr. Young was a color copier. How subtle is that? "Hmmm, I wonder if it will copy a twenty-dollar bill?" Dr. Young asked himself. It did. Ol' Satan egged him on. Dr. Young copied more – a whole stack, in fact. Some folks said if he hadn't started putting Julia's face on twenties he wouldn't have been caught. Dr. Young went to prison – all because he wanted to honor Julia. A real Southern Gentleman.

Julia was our most famous and beloved personality for a time. Her five minutes of fame extended over two years and brought smiles to many faces and worldwide attention to our town.

Our Athens motto is "Classic. Southern. Character." Julia embodied all three. The fate of Julia and her piglets is unknown. I'm sure she is wallowing in a celestial mud hole in hog heaven. Julia's portrait, shot by Athens Ace Photographer, Roger Bedingfield, wearing her Christmas Queen Crown and enjoying "Swine dining" and eating her favorite food – corn on the cob - in her favorite restaurant, can be seen at Luvici's Restaurant on Jefferson Street. Go by, eat a delicious meal, and take a selfie with Julia.

Three Reasons To Adopt A Pet Right Now

courtesy Brandpoint content

(BPT) - If you've always wanted an animal companion, or even if you already have a dog or cat but have room for more, now is the perfect time to adopt a pet. While there are plenty of good reasons to adopt a furry friend - from the joy they bring to the love and care you can provide them - there are even more urgent reasons to consider doing so now.

1. Shelters are in crisis

Many pet shelters are currently overcrowded due to the overwhelming number of pets in need. But contrary to some recent headlines, this increase is not due to higher numbers of relinquishment of pets adopted during the past year. Fortunately, most people who adopted animals during the pandemic are keeping their pets, but intake levels have still grown exponentially with shelters seeing near record level increase in adoptable pets in the past several weeks and months.

According to Petfinder, a searchable pet adoption resource and network of more than 11,000 shelters and rescue organizations, several factors have resulted in this influx of adoptable pets, including:

*** Spaying and neutering efforts decreased.** Due to the pandemic, many programs to spay and neuter animals came to a halt, leading to an influx of kittens and puppies in need of adoption.

*** Natural disasters.** A surge of increased need is also due to recent natural

disasters such as fires, hurricanes and flooding. Animals who lost their homes and have been displaced need immediate care from shelters that are already overcrowded.

*** Staff and volunteer shortage.** The pandemic led to a dramatic decrease in available staff and volunteers. Shelters rely heavily on community volunteers, so staff turnover has made it harder to keep up with the increased intake.

*** Shutdowns.** Many shelters, especially smaller ones, have temporarily or permanently closed since the pandemic began due to the lack of funding and resources. This has also led to overcrowding at locations that have remained open.

2. Shelter overcrowding affects both humans and animals

For animals, an overcrowded shelter may mean a longer stay in an already stressful environment. The constant stimulation of nearby animals, along with extended confinement and less human contact due to staffing challenges at many shelters can take an emotional and developmental toll on pets waiting to find their forever families. Kittens and puppies in particular are less likely to get the socialization they need with humans to keep them happy, healthy and ready for adoption.

"Despite shelter staff doing all they can to create a welcoming environment for pets, longer stays at shelters can be detrimental to an animal's mental health,"

said Jessica Arnold, Manager of Petfinder Shelter Partner Engagement at Purina. "The shelter environment can be stressful for pets, and not all of them handle it well. So, the sooner they are adopted and taken out of that environment, the sooner they will acclimate to a new forever home."

Overcrowding at shelters can have an emotional and psychological impact on employees too. Shelter staff can experience burnout due to the stress of caring for animals during a crisis, which ultimately leads to an already high turnover rate (almost 100%) - and new staff may have an even harder time adjusting to the stress and urgent needs of

pets in their care.

3. It's never been easier to find your perfect pet match

As the leading authority on pet nutrition, welfare and adoption, Purina and Petfinder encourage anyone interested in adopting to visit Petfinder.com or use the Petfinder app to connect with the largest network of shelters with adoptable pets. Recent Petfinder technology enhancements now make it even easier for shelters to upload pictures and bios of pets up for adoption, so people can find their ideal match online quickly and seamlessly.

If you're unsure of what pet is perfect for you and



your lifestyle, you can take a 60-second quiz on Petfinder.com to help find your furry match.

In addition to adopting a pet, fostering or volunteering at a local shelter or pet rescue are also great ways to help pets and the people who are caring for them as they wait for loving homes. Adopting or fostering a pet impacts the pet you are bringing into your family and makes room for another lovable animal at the shelter. And volunteering not only supports shelter staff, it means more loving interactions, enrichment and attention for pets when they need it most.



Trauma Bonding

by Lisa Philippart,
Licensed Professional Counselor



“Trauma is perhaps the most avoided, ignored, belittled, denied, misunderstood, and untreated cause of human suffering.”

- Peter Levine

In recognition of October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month, I will be discussing the topic of traumatic bonds. In my next two articles, we'll learn to recognize the signs of trauma bonding, and then discover how to break those traumatic bonds.

Leaving an abusive relationship usually isn't as simple as walking out the door. In addition to the concerns about finding a place to live, supporting yourself, or being prevented from seeing your children or loved ones, you might feel tied to your partner, unable to break away. This emotional attachment, known as a trauma bond, develops out of a repeated cycle of abuse, devaluation, and positive reinforcement. The trauma of abuse might create powerful feelings, some of which you may struggle to make sense of, especially when abuse alternates with kindness and intimacy. It's only natural to develop a bond with someone who treats you with affection and assurances of love. So, when the abuse begins, it may take you by

surprise. Afterward your partner might apologize, promise to change, or insist that they were just “upset.” These attempts to manipulate often succeed, since you remember the early days of the relationship and believe they can be that person again. (Trauma bonding can also happen between a child and an abusive caregiver or other adult.)

Trauma bonds can look a little different depending on the type of relationship, but they tend to have two main characteristics. First, trauma bonds depend on intermittent reinforcement—a cycle of abuse. It's generally easier to leave a relationship or situation that is entirely bad, one where the abusive person never offers any compassion or concern for your wellbeing. If you don't believe someone will ever change, you probably won't stick around. But, in abusive relationships, your partner does periodically treat you well. They might bring you gifts, take you out, use gentle words, or urge you to relax. These gestures can be confusing and disarming, especially if thought of as signs that they might change. As you slowly regain a sense of trust, you might ignore memories of their past behaviors until the cycle begins again. The second main characteristic of trauma bonding is the power imbalance. In this dynamic, you might



feel as if they control you to the point where you no longer know how to resist or break free. You might feel incomplete or lost without them and eventually return, simply because the abusive cycle is familiar, and you don't know how to live without it yet.

Other characteristics of traumatic bonds include feeling unhappy and not even liking your partner any longer but feeling unable to end things. When you do try to leave, you feel physically and emotionally distressed. In fact, when you say you want to leave, the abusive partner promises to change but makes no effort to actually do so. Another trauma bond characteristic is fixating on the “good” days, using them as proof that your partner truly cares. You find yourself making excuses and defending their behavior when

others express concern. Unfortunately, you continue to trust the offending person, hoping to change them. Often the abuser will encourage you to keep their behavior a secret, so you choose to protect them and yourself from “embarrassment.”

Trauma bonds can linger, even when the abuse happened long ago. You might even struggle to stop thinking about someone who hurt you and feel the urge to reach out or try again. Here's a test that might help you to understand whether you are struggling with a

trauma bond: Ask yourself whether you'd encourage a loved one to leave a similar relationship. Answer yourself honestly. If you answer yes, but still feel powerless to leave your relationship, that's a good indicator of trauma bonding.

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

Treat Your Symptoms Or Help Your Body Heal

by Roy Williams

We must make many decisions in our lives, but I believe that one of the most important decisions we face today is how we are going to maintain an affordable and effective healthcare system. The cost of our modern-day healthcare system is no longer effective or affordable. If healthcare cost continues to rise at the present rate, it will not be long until your healthcare will cost more than your house and car payments combined.

As a result of rising healthcare cost, the government is trying to push us into socialized medicine. At this time, they are pushing one of the most dangerous plans in the history of this great nation. **Free vaccines for everyone.** Free vaccines are just one step away from a total takeover of the entire medical system.

Socialized medicine is unsustainable and has never been effective or affordable in any nation where it was implemented. In every case, the cost goes up and the quality of service goes down. Do you hear about thousands of people fleeing into Cuba or Venezuela or even Canada to get the healthcare they need? Of course not. Are they curing disease in any of those nations? No.

With that said I must also ask, is America curing disease? I challenge you to give me just one example of any disease that they can say, "If you get this disease, we can cure it." The American healthcare system is already controlled by big business. Our entire medical establishment is controlled by the pharmaceutical cartel. Even the FDA, the WHO, the CDC, and the medical education systems are controlled by big pharma.

No, they aren't in the business of finding cures. They are in the business of treating the symptoms of disease. Why, because that is where they make their money. The entire system is set up to ease pain, stop nausea, slow the progress of disease, without actually reversing the disease process.

Talk to anyone who has reached the age of retirement and ask them how they like being retired. So many tell me that all they do is spend time going in and out of doctors' offices, filling prescriptions, taking drugs, getting another procedure, or seeing another specialist. The entire system is designed to make you dependent on them.

Unfortunately, our so-called healthcare system (**should be called sick care system**) has been taken over by rules



and regulations that make it impossible to ever prevent or truly reverse disease -- and almost all the disease we are experiencing today can be prevented and reversed. It is also important that you understand why that is. It is simply a fact that there is no money in cures.

What they don't want you to realize is that almost all the disease they are treating can be prevented and reversed through proper nutritional support. One example is heart disease, the number one killer in the industrialized world. Dr. Rath proved, using the most sophisticated and expensive medical equipment in the world, that over 95% of all heart disease can be prevented and reversed using vitamins, min-

erals, and other support factors. It was so effective that after just two years of taking the suggested supplements, all blockages were cleared from his patient's cardiovascular systems.

In many countries, Type 2 diabetes is now recognized as a 90-day disorder. In those nations they temporarily put the patients on drugs, teach them how to eat to bring their blood sugar levels down, and encourage more exercise. Amazingly, it works. That same disorder in America is now recognized as a lifelong disorder that requires medication for lowering blood sugar and other medications to reduce cardiovascular disease, all of which cause many negative side effects.

People are beginning to realize that our system of sick care often does more harm than good. People are getting aggravated at the time wasted and the cost of treatments. Yes, people are also waking up to the fact that deficiency disorders can be reversed by addressing the deficiencies through proper nutrition and better lifestyle choices.

To learn more about supporting your health through proper nutrition, go by Herbs & More in Athens, NHC Herb Shop in Killen or go to our website at www.nhcherbs.com. You can also learn more by listening to *Today's Health Update* on WKAC in Athens after Sick Call and WBTG in Sheffield from 12:30 to 1:00. And remember you can listen to *Today's Health Update* anytime by going to www.nhcherbs.com, scroll down to the microphone and pick out the title you would like to hear.

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Roy P. Williams

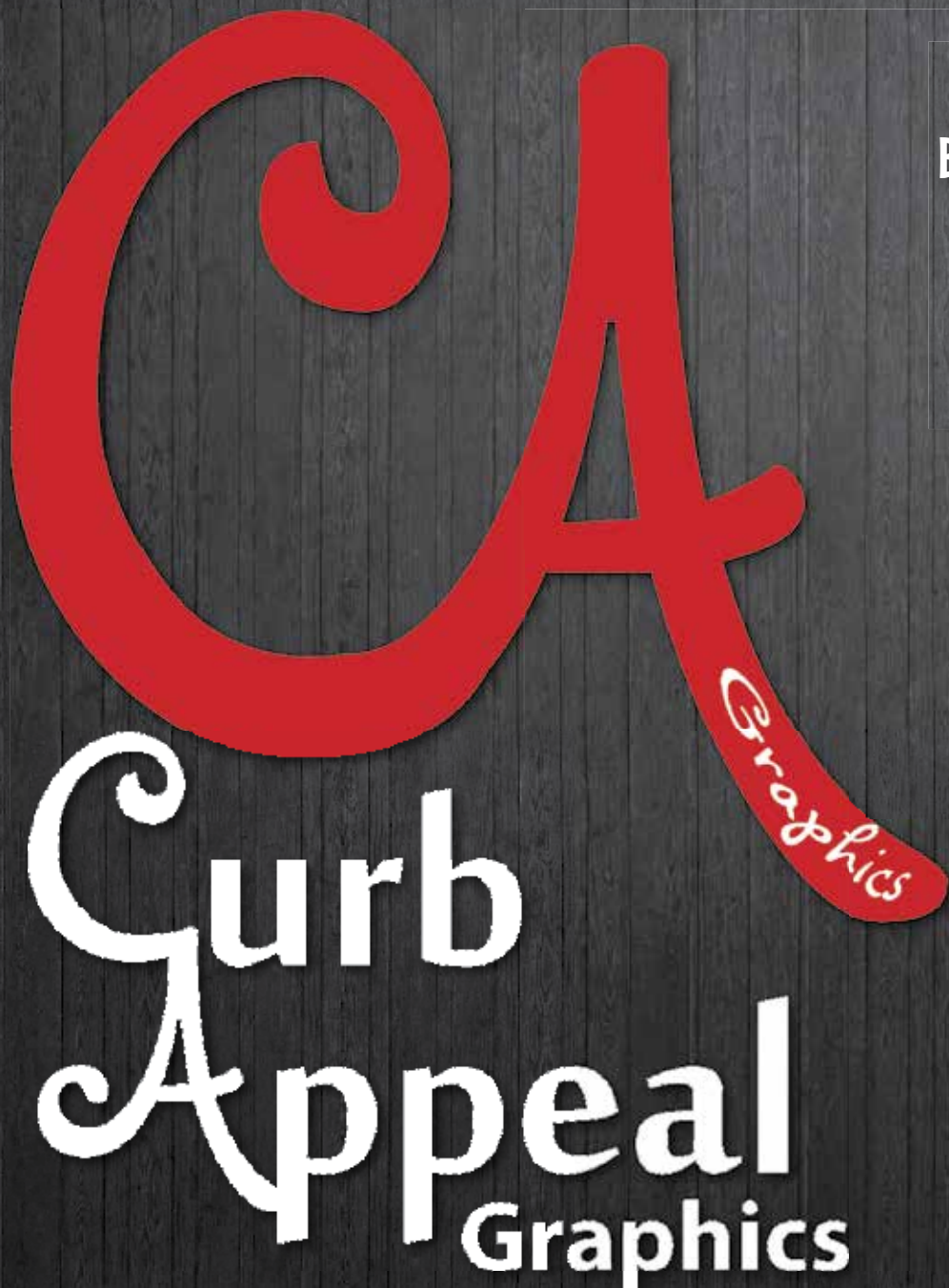
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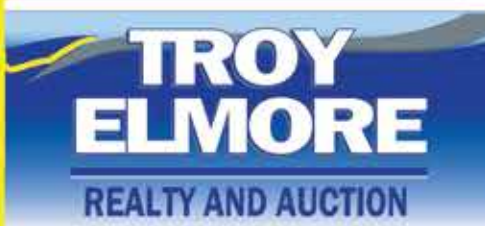
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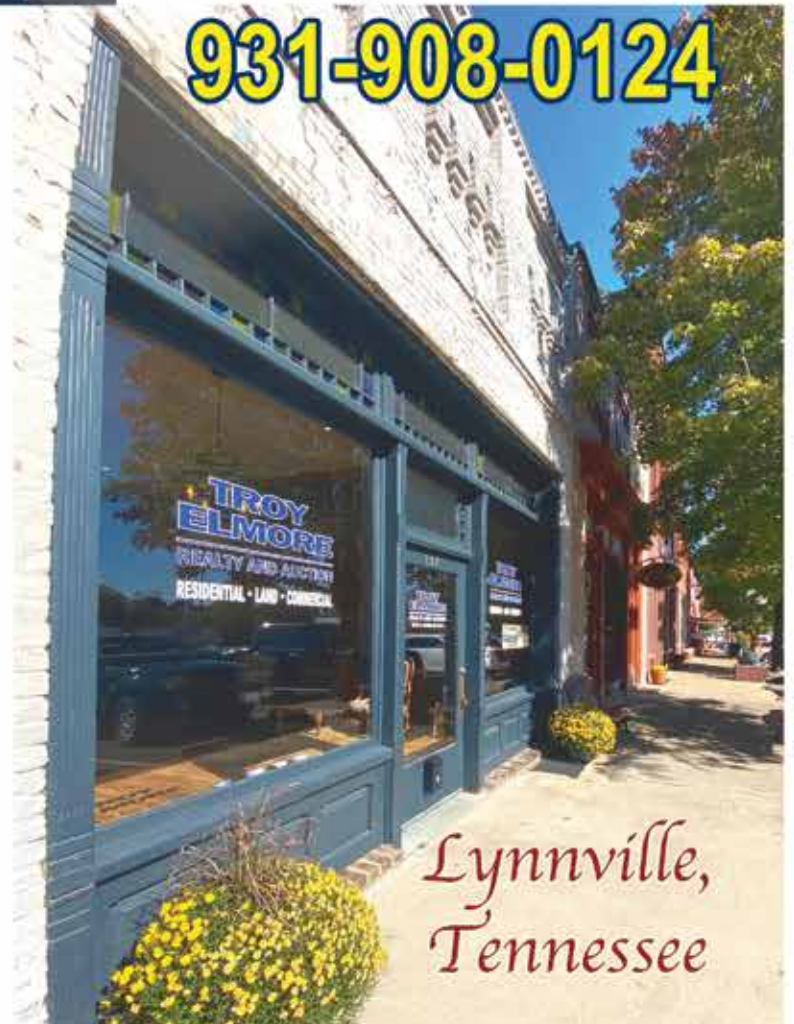
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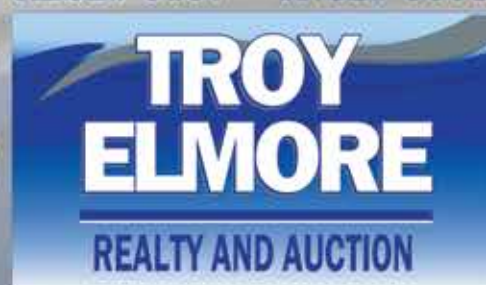
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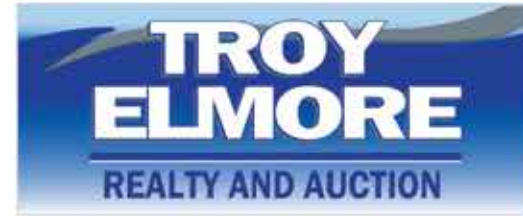
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Intelligence
without
ambition
is a bird
without wings.

~ Salvador Dali



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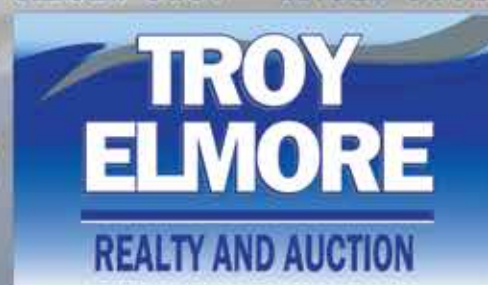
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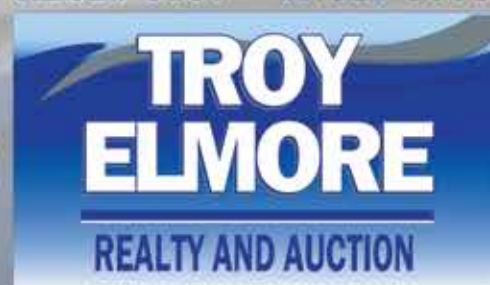
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