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Special Feature



Carissa's Corner

The Excitement
Ahead...
Fresh air, sunshine,
flowers, Bible
lesson, and tutus -elements that make
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Clean, Green And Beautiful



Deck The Doors...
The AthensLimestone
Beautification Board
has been busy
thinking up new
and exciting things
for Athens and
Limestone County...
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116 N. JEFFERSON ST ATHENS, AL 35611

Save The Date: Riff Raff Rustic Outpost Early Black Friday Event 22-23 November

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

Nearly nine years ago, Athens native and veteran entrepreneur Joel Hamm started Riff Raff, a furniture store that was first located on Market Street in what is now Toodlebugs, and then moved to its present location on the corner of Washington and Clinton in the old Greyhound bus station. The "story that makes me smile" is the fact that what launched Joel's furniture career was a "pain point."

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Publisher's Point

Bonhoeffer The Beautiful



On November 22, a beautiful film about a beautiful man will premier all across America. It is simply entitled, Bonhoeffer, and as of this writing more than 50 theatres across the country are sold out in anticipation of its release. This is the work of Angel Studios, with actors no one has ever heard of once again giving seminal performances that may very well be ignored or even vilified by those who hand out little gold statues once a year to themselves and/or each other. No matter; what Dietrich Bonhoeffer did and more importantly, who he was is safe within the shelter of his own writings, and those of others. Such classics as The Cost Of Discipleship, which was published in 1937, and Ethics, which was published posthumously in 1949, are readily available in the form of books -- those old-fashioned testaments to peoples' thoughts and the beliefs that drive them. And, I am grateful in this season of gratitude that we have the freedom to both read, see, and tell the stories of those that the Book of Hebrews describes as being essentially too good for this world.

Because of the fact that I was

born a short eight years after the end of World War II, as a child I certainly recognized his name, but knew nothing about him. I just knew that somehow he was a hero, and then I read Eric Metaxas's biography about Dietrich. Rarely have I read something so finely crafted, and I had the great privilege of meeting Eric once at a National Religious Broadcasters' conference held in Florida, and had a few seconds to tell him so.

While the Angel Studios offering is not an adaptation of Eric's work per se, it certainly seems to have the same fine flavor of excellence, and I can hardly wait to see it. The overarching theme is courage and being true to one's convictions, something we need desperately in our culture, irrespective of political persuasion. While several things stand out to me about Bonhoeffer's life, there are three that bear being underscored. The first is when he came to America during the 1930s while Hitler was coming to power. Dietrich was a fine theologian as well as a musician, and made music in Harlem. He also preached in black churches, something that was uncommon in that day. The second is that he returned to Germany to care for the flock,



and he did not take the opportunity to ride out the storm of the SS in the safety of America. The third is the account of his death. On April 9, 1945, literally a few days before the Allies could save him, he was executed. Not just hanged, but garroted, and on top of that, this modest Lutheran died naked. However, there is a most inspiring account of how Dietrich preparing to see the smile of his Savior was captured by the camp doctor who was forced to view the execution and then pronounce him dead. It inspires me to this day, and is as follows:

"I saw Pastor Bonhoeffer, before taking off his prison garb, kneeling on the floor praying fervently to his God. I was most deeply moved by the way this lovable man prayed, so devout and so certain that God heard his prayer. At the place of execution, he again said a short prayer and then climbed the steps to the gallows, brave and composed. His death ensued after a few seconds. In the almost fifty years that I worked as a doctor, I have hardly ever seen a man die so entirely submissive to the will of God."

May that be said of us, in life and in death, and this Thanksgiving may we feast upon the grace that can make it so.

ali Elizabeth Jurner

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All Things Soldier

All Things Disabled American Veterans Chapter #51

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

On Tuesday night, November 12th, I was invited to attend a meeting of our local Disabled American Veterans Chapter, located at 25396 Airport Rd just off of AL Hwy 127. Its official, chartered name is the James L Daniels DAV Chapter #51. The occasion was the annual celebration of what is known as the Missing Man Table (or sometimes Fallen Comrade Table), which is held each year in remembrance of those who were killed in action or the many who are still missing. The ceremony is usually held on POW/ MIA Day which is September 20; however, it can also be held any time in November which is Veterans' Month, in conjunction with Veterans Day, or can be commemorated at Memorial Day.

The positioning of the table, tablecloth, place setting, salt shaker, wedge of lemon, overturned glass, rose in a vase, yellow ribbon, and more all have symbolic significance, and Mayor Marks had been asked to conduct the ceremony.

After the ceremony we were treated to supper, and then I learned from various members about this particular DAV chapter -- what they do, who and how they help, and some of their desires. The DAV has many purposes, and are described as follows:

"DAV is a nonprofit charity that provides a lifetime of support for veterans of all generations and their families, helping more than I million veterans in positive, life-changing ways

each year. Annually, the organization provides more than 600,000 rides to veterans attending medical appointments and assists veterans with well over 200,000 benefit claims. In 2019, DAV helped veterans receive more than \$21 billion in earned benefits. DAV's services are offered at no cost to all generations of veterans, their families and survivors.

DAV is also a leader in connecting veterans with meaningful employment, hosting job fairs, and providing resources to ensure they have the opportunity to participate in the American Dream their sacrifices have made possible.

With nearly 1,300 chapters and more than I million members across the country, DAV empowers



our nation's heroes and their families by helping to provide the resources they need and ensuring our nation keeps the promises made to them."

Sometimes help comes in the form of paying rent or a utility bill. Chapter 51 has adopted Limestone Manor and Limestone Lodge and looks out for veterans living in both facilities.

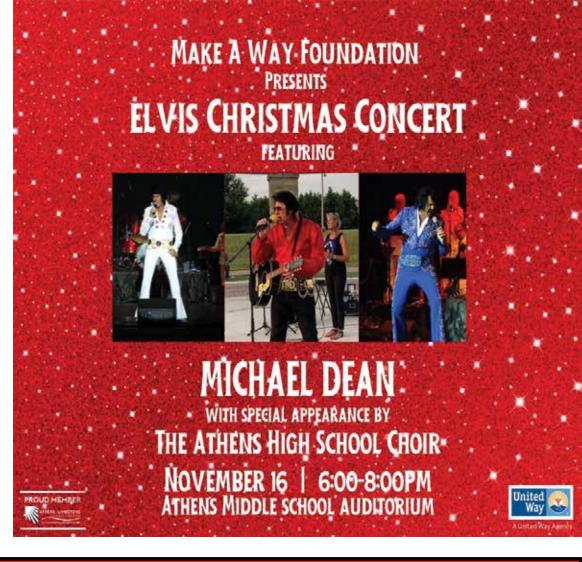
This year, DAV #51 is going to be involved with Elkmont's Tinsel Trail to raise awareness about the chapter. They also have various fund-raisers including the forget-me-not drives.

It's important to know that you don't have to be a disabled vet to join, but you do need to have had a vet in your family, and they don't need to be disabled. The chapter is looking to add non-vets to the DAV Auxiliary arm of the organization in order to increase their ability to serve. Speaking of organizations, the DAV also works with, the other local service organizations, the American Red Cross, and Service to Armed Forces. The meetings are held once a month on the second Tuesday at 6 p.m., and becoming involved may just be the perfect gift for you or your family this holiday season. Remember that it is always more blessed to give than to receive, and we thank the DAV for all that they are doing in this community.









Liquidation Sale 20% off Hardware - Electrical - Plumbing - Paint - Giftware - Tools November 15th - 22nd



Discount Dans - Athens 16800 Hwy 72 Athens Al 35611 256-216-5666 M-F 8-5

Calendar of Events

Silver Sneakers Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday

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

2024 Athens-Limestone Tinsel Trail November 18 - December 31

Big Spring Memorial Park in Athens. This is a month-long OUTDOOR event, and we take every precaution to protect Big Spring Memorial Park, its users, and its animal inhabitants. Athens Police Department will increase patrols in the park the duration of the event. Thank you to Athens City and Limestone County for arranging for temporary power poles this year!

Murder in the 1980's Murder Mystery November 23

Presented by Crewe O'Ye Crooked Goat. Like Totally FREAK ME OUT!!! Come join the Crewe as we take a step back into the radical 80's for a thrilling evening of suspense, laughter, and delicious food. Get ready to interact with others, become a CHARACTER OF and ATTEMPT TO solve a mysterious murder while enjoying the night at the Carnegie Visual Arts Center in Decatur, AL, USA. You will be totally immersed in the action. Ages 18+. 5-9pm. \$55.

2024 Athens-Limestone County Christmas Parade December 5

2024 Theme: Christmas Carnival of Lights. Line up: 3:00 p.m. –4:30 p.m. Parade Time: Promptly at 6 p.m. Entry Fee: \$50.00 (Must be paid by November 19th or you will not be able to participate. No exceptions) IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THE 2024 PARADE: In order to increase safety measures, the following new rules have been implemented: • 4:30PM will be the CUT OFF time for all drop offs, float line up, walking groups, band arrivals, and single vehicle entries. Latecomers will be turned away. No exceptions. • You are NOT ALLOWED to throw any items from floats (candy, toys, goody bags, food, coupons, souvenirs, etc.). Athens PD will

Elvis Christmas Concert November 16

Make A Way Foundation presents Elvis Christmas Concert. Featuring Michael Dean with special appearance by the Athens High School Choir. 6-8pm.

Athens Middle School Auditorium.







be monitoring this, and you will be denied entry to subsequent parades if this rule is ignored • NO HORSES will be allowed in the parade aside from carriages/or miniatures on floats • The amount of float entries will be limited this year. This is a first come first serve basis. No additional floats will be accepted, and registration will be CUT OFF once max number of floats are registered. To enter, email brooke@alcchamber.org

Servsafe Manager Training December 9

Get ready to boost your food safety knowledge at our Servsafe Manager Training event! Join us for an interactive in-person session where you'll learn everything you need to know to become a certified food safety manager. From proper food handling to preventing foodborne illnesses, this training will equip you with the skills to ensure a safe dining experience for your customers. Don't miss out on this opportunity to elevate your expertise in the foodservice industry! LaunchBox, South Marion Street, Athens. 8am-5pm.

2024 Historic Decatur Christmas Tour December 14

Welcome to the 2025 Historic Decatur Christmas Tour! Get ready to experience the magic of the holiday season as you explore beautifully decorated historic homes in Decatur. 2-7pm. Westminster Presbyterian Church. Immerse yourself in the festive atmosphere and enjoy the sights and sounds of Christmas. Don't miss this opportunity to create lasting memories with your loved ones. Exclusive this year, enjoy a first look at the recently relocated Judge Horton House on the new Scottsboro Boys Civil Rights Museum complex.

Joy of Christmas Concert December 14

Decatur Orchestra Sul Ponticello's Christmas concert of their annual performance of Handel's Messiah, and other Christmas favorites. 6-8pm. Southside Baptist Church, 709 9th Street Southeast, Decatur. General Admission: \$30.

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.

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Special Feature

Flirty Flame Candle Company: Mobile Candle "Pours" And So Much More

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

Sherry Jefferson of "Flirty Flame" found during COVID that she had the unexpected makings of an award-winning candle business, and she'll be the first to tell you that she is bountifully blessed. Prior to launching Flirty Flame Candle Company, LLC in 2021, Sherry got a degree in computer science with a minor in business administration from Alabama A&M. She spent 19 years in the Medicare insurance field, and she also was the co-owner with her nephew Darron Howard of Landon's Place, a successful restaurant on Elm Street.

It was the late, great Athens City Councilman Frank Travis who became a raving fan customer of Landon's, and encouraged Sherry to apply for the TVA Commissary contract. She landed the contract, and Landon's did well. Unbeknownst to Sherry, COVID was about to change everything blessedly for the better.

Sherry has always enjoyed making parties special, especially those for family events. And it was for one such gathering during COVID that she promised to bring candles, not just her signature cupcakes, cookies, and chocolate covered pretzels. Her family came together in order to honor her mom, who ALWAYS found a way to put a candle into something sweet and then celebrate. Sherry ordered a candle mak-



ing kit, and discovered a way to make a candle that smells like a birthday cake. The candles were a hit with her family, so, as she says, "I ordered another kit, and another, and another..." During the pandemic Sherry actually got COVID herself, and it was while she was lying in bed sick that the idea of going into the candle business came to her. She had no idea that she would go on to become an award-winning entrepreneur.

Sherry is an avid researcher, and she did a deep dive into all things candle. She found out about aromatherapy, the power of color and fragrance to trigger wonderful memories, and even found a way to make "gender reveal" candles. That discovery was a happy accident and now a trade secret, and here is what happens: the candle starts out being white, and after ten minutes it turns either blue or pink. Gender reveal parties are some of Sherry's favorites be-

cause the occasion is such a happy surprise.

Sherry began to do vendor events in 2021, and we first met at her



booth at the Athens Farmer's Market. For a while she shared a brick-and-mortar store with other artisans at the Decatur Mall, and the time came when she felt that she wanted to pursue making "pours" into something more mobile that could involve participants in a celebratory setting. Her vision and dream was to make the first mobile candle pouring service in the State of Alabama, and here's how that happened.

Sherry pitched her idea for a mobile candle-pour service at the Singing River Trail Launch earlier this spring, and won the grand prize of \$7500. The idea of someone bringing the event, empowering the guests to select their fragrance, make their own candles as well as memories wowed the judges, and part of her award package was to display colorful tablescapes and beautiful candles in the window of the Athens State University Launch Box across from the Courthouse steps on Marion Street. This is where I have my office, and I was happily greeted by Sherry's creativity every day. I was sad when the day came for that installation to go, but there are

still candles at the facility. If a "pour" is not something you can do right now, Flirty Flame candles are for sale at Athens Florist as well as the Flirty Flame online store at www.flirtyflamecandle.com.

One of my favorite "Sherry stories" has to do with some of her treasured memories,



and how she "captured them in a candle." As a child, she used to sit in her grandfather's lap, and he happened to smoke a pipe. Sure enough, Sherry found a way to "bring back Grandpa's smell," and the pipe tobacco candle is one of Flirty Flame's most popular. Another is the memory of her grandmother's honeysuckle bush that grew wild on the fence. As a kid, Sherry would eat the nectar, and the "Grandma candle" is a crowd pleaser.

Sherry uses very clean waxes, either 100% soy or a soy/coconut blend. She guides her guests through a process of selecting a fragrance, personalizing it with a name, setting the wick, doing the pour, and then enjoying the result. It takes about two hours for the candles to set up, so some people do a pour for a date night, go have a relaxed dinner out, and then come back for the memory they have made. Another service Sherry provides is to help families make memorial candles for celebrations

of life, and the candles can include photos, sayings, and Scriptures.

The possibilities for candle creativity are just about endless. Flirty Flame mobile pours are perfect for bridal or baby showers, holiday celebrations, engagement parties, or just people gathering together because they need some aromatherapy. Sherry says, "I am spreading fragrance and joy wherever I go." Let her do that exact thing for you, and call her today to find out how Flirty Flame Candle Company can make your holiday memories even lovelier.

Flirty Flame Candle Company

Facebook: Flirty Flame Candle Co, LLC

Instagram:
@flirtyflamecandleco
Athens Florist
105 South Clinton Street
Athens, AL 35611

256-604-3871 (cell) www.flirtyflamecandle.com

Flirty Flame

MOBILE CANDLE BAR NOW BOOKING

American Dream Project Winner - Decatur Mall 2023 Singing River Trail Launch Tank Winner 2024

Sherry Jefferson, Owner



256-604-3871 www.flirtyflamecandleco.com



What Makes Ronnie Roll

Fêtes For Vets

by Ali Elizabeth Turner





In the French language, the word "fêtes" means celebration, and Mayor Ronnie was pleased that there were so many events before, during, and after Veterans Day that were put on by our town to honor those that have served. We met at the Alabama Veterans Museum right after the parade on Monday, something in which we had both driven and had thoroughly enjoyed. I met Mayor Ronnie in the new Veterans Park adjacent to the Museum,

own private moment saluting the flags that fly there.

For my part, I had the great joy of driving Jim Watson in his 1966 bright red VW Bug. Never got out of first gear for the whole parade, but the distinctive sound of a Beetle horn brought smiles to people on both sides of the parade route.

Mayor Ronnie drove his own 1997 navy blue Miata convertible, and mentioned that, "It was the last year they made 'em with the popup lights." He showed me a picture of himself that had been sent by his daughter, taken when Ronnie was a young soldier, and before he went to Vietnam.

On Thursday the 7th, the Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association had an event at the Veterans Museum to celebrate the formation of the Patriot Trail. Mayor Ronnie told me that the Patriot Trail was an idea that came out of Priceville's City Council and had been spearheaded by their mayor, Sam Heflin.

IF YOU'LL SET A
FIRM FOUNDATION.

she'll build her
dreams upon it.

HELP US BUILD
THE 1ST HOPE HOME

at
Pure Hope Ranch

SCAN THE OF CODE TO JOIN OUR
matching campaign

and DERBLE your impact it

ditta to tillar any
direction of the state of the state



Yvonne Dempsey, who works for *Athens Now* and volunteers tirelessly at the Museum said the following about the Patriot Trail:

On Thursday, Nov. 7, the museum [hosted] the Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association's inaugural Patriot Trail *In Honor Of Veterans* Celebration from 8-10 a.m. Featured speakers [were] Sam Heflin, mayor of Priceville, AL, and Major General Janet Cobb. Executive Director U.S.S. Alabama Battleship Memorial Park. The N. AL. Patriot Trail honors and celebrates our veterans as it highlights museums, parks, memorials, and events in the North Alabama region. Several of the sites are close enough to visit in one day, perfect for fall outings with the family.

On Friday, the Veterans

Museum hosted Athens State University's Veterans Day celebration with many veterans and area residents in attendance.

Athens High School had their event on Friday as well and posted the following:

We just love all of these special celebrations of Veterans Day across #oneAthens. To our military heroes serving today and to those who have served in the past, we honor you. #Veterans-Day #thankyouforyours-ervice

We talked about some veterans whose health was becoming frail, and about whom we were concerned. We also talked about the division in our country. There was only one thing left to do, and that was to pray, so we did. And then it was time for Ronnie to roll.

Carissa's Corner



The Excitement Ahead

by Carissa Lovvorn

air, sunshine, flowers, Bible lesson, and tutus -- elements that make up a great service project for little girls. On October 19, Tutus on a Mission participants, along with one sweet little brother, met at Athens Big Spring Park for our second community service project. Their mission was to plant seasonal flowers in a small flower bed for all park goers to enjoy, and their lesson was to learn about shining their lights in large places.

Giggles filled the air as the tutu wearing girls and curly headed little boy made holes in the dirt. The children took turns planting fall flowers and filling the watering cans to ensure their project would survive the upcoming dry days. There was a moment during the project where I found myself

working beside one of the younger girls. After giving her several compliments about how nice of a job she was doing, she suddenly stopped, looked at me with such joy in her eyes, and said in an enthusiastic, childlike voice, "I was so excited to come here today! I've been counting down the days since Mommy told us!"

Naturally, there were a few tears of happiness that welled within my eyes as I realized that these events are making a difference in the lives of the participants. Later that day, I thought about how this little girl's excitement and anticipation of this simple project was a wonderful model for how we should view our return to our heavenly home.

The Bible contains several verses regarding the eagerness that we



above, not on earthly (Colossians

should experience here on Earth. In his letter to the church in Philippi, Apostle Paul reminds us that, "...our citizenship is in Heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ." (Philippians 3:20 NIV) Later, in his letter to the Christians in Colossae, he encouraged Jesus' followers saying, "Set your minds on things

things." 3:2)

While we should be filled with excitement about what lies ahead, it is amazing to think that our human minds can't even fathom what joy, peace, and wonders lie ahead. "However, as it is written: "What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has

conceived -- the things God has prepared for those who love him." (1Corinthians 2:9)

That little girl's profound excitement made an impression that I will carry with me for years to come. At the close of our Tutus on a Mission service project, a smile spread child's across every face as they stepped back and proudly admired their work. The rows may have been a little crooked and the colors not exactly as uniform as I had originally planned, but it was beautiful.

I hope that when I finally reach Heaven, I'll be able to look back at my own life and see the crooked rows with disorganized colors, but also see the beauty in the journey. Until then, I will eagerly and excitedly wait to join our Savior in Paradise.

Many blessings,

Carissa



Train up a child...

Proverbs 22:6

Captain's Log

You've Got Mail...Or Not!

by Brenda Wilkerson

Ugh, the first Captain's Log entry I am reluctant to share...

So, I nudged a mailbox in cul-de-sac #7 this morning. A cul-de-sac I have bus-danced in for 7 months! I let myself get distracted from total focus. I thought I knew this turn like the back of my hand. But...I hit it. A slow reverse nudge strong enough to knock it over with the loud crash of tumbling bricks that couldn't resist the brute strength of Ol' Yeller. A nudge that got the kids totally excited. In a matter of nanoseconds, my reputation crumbled like those mailbox bricks going from 'Rock Star' to

'Crazy bus driver lady that almost killed us all.'

Some kids were terrified, some cheered, and several could not wait to tell every single additional rider about the Great Event. I kept cool as the questions pelted me all the way to the school. Are you going to tell someone? How are you going to fix the mailbox? How will they get their mail today? Can I go look at the back of the bus for damage?

Upon arrival at the school and waiting for two buses ahead of us to unload, I talked to my kids through the intercom. I told them that everyone makes mistakes. Everyone has a decision to make about how to clean up after an accident. I told them I had three choices: 1. DENY or pretend it didn't happen; 2. BLAME the rowdy kids; 3. ADMIT the mistake quickly, apologize, own it, and get to the steps of a solution quickly. By a show of fingers 1, 2, or 3, the kids voted. Honestly, it did not matter what a bus full of elementary kids thought, as hard as it was, it was up to me to Lead. By. Example. With one last sentence to the kids, I said firmly, "Oh, and I'm going to tell Mrs. 'Assistant Principal' FIRST before you can tattle on this ol' girl." I dashed the hopes and dreams of a few who desperately wanted to rat on the crazy bus driver as soon as they took their last step off my bus. Nope, took that juicy piece of gossip right away from them. Once the excited kids unloaded, I had to follow through with the steps of reporting an incident. I had to radio it in on



channel 2, and everyone in the transportation shop could hear. I was told to call Mr. Bus Transportation. When I finally got through and introduced myself, I heard, "Oh, is this *Crash*?!"...

Lord, help us learn from the many hard life lessons we face and struggle through each and every day. Teach us to act quickly, fess up, admit guilt and responsibility, apologize, and work patiently to fix any damage - physical or relational - in our lives. Help

New & Used Tires

Wheel Alignments

us stay laser-focused on what you have put us in charge of (kids, job, students, family, neighbors, friends, church family, etc.). "I need thee, oh I need thee, every hour I need thee!!!...." #hymn

P.S. - This mailbox has now been replaced 3 times by the school system. Mr. Transportation knew exactly where this happened, and how much it would cost to replace it, and proceeded to ask if I knew how to lay bricks. Ooof!

All Size Tire Repair

& Auto Repair





Athens Auto Tire Wrecker Service

24 Hr. Road & Wrecker Service

306 Fifth Avenue Athens, Alabama 35611

Tommy Morris Office: 771-7537

Slinkard On Success

Grab Your Pen

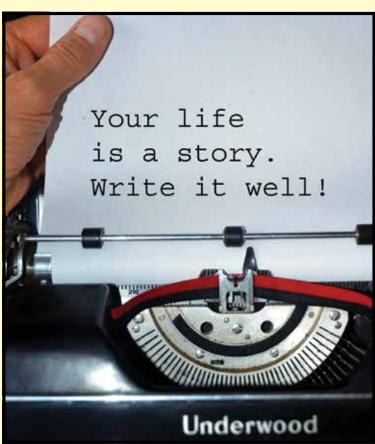
by D. A. Slinkard

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

I am writing this article and within just a few short weeks I will be turning another year older. I recently had the opportunity to speak to a group of young people, and I made mention of the fact we are the main characters in our own lives. You cannot be the main character in my life, and I cannot be the main character in your life. It is truthful that we have the pen in our hand to write the story of our life. Not only am I the main character, but this also makes me the author of my life.

Each day becomes a new page for how the story is going to go and with the pen in hand, ready to write, we need to make sure we live each day on purpose. I am currently on chapter number 42 but in a few short weeks, I will begin working on chapter number 43. What chapter are you currently working on? In your story, with you as the author, with you as the main character – who do you want to be? How do you want your story to go? What do you want the ending to be?

Do you want to be the hero? Or, do you want to be the villain? This was the challenging question I asked this group of young people because I do not believe anyone sets out in life and thinks to themselves, "Hey, I want to be the bad guy in my own life." Not at all. I believe what happens more often is a negative event happens in a person's life, and then another negative event, and then an-



the person begins to think negatively. Before they know it, they start making bad decisions, and one bad decision leads to another which eventually leads to a hard life.

ing around listening to that small voice in the back of their head that keeps telling them they cannot do it. That small voice keeps telling them how they will never be good enough. That small voice keeps asking them, "What is the think about who we want to be. We need to really think about how we want

get their life together and the cavalry is not coming. Pick up the pen - start today – start on the page you are currently on – and write out your success story.

Stop waiting for things to change because until you

6494 Hwy 72 West

Athens, AL 35611

our life to go. We need to

really think about how we

are going to accomplish

what we want out of life --

take an inventory and then

be prepared to take mas-

Too many people fail in

life because they do not

know where to begin. Too

many people are waiting

for someone to come along

and tell them what to do to

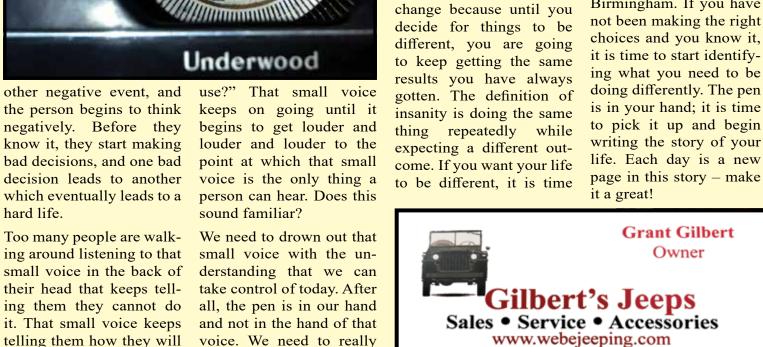
sive action.

to start writing out a different storyline. Maybe there are some characters in your life that you need to get rid of. Show me your friends, and I will show you your future. Maybe you need to find some new characters who have better qualities than what you are currently surrounding yourself with.

It is time we think seriously about where we are and where we are going. If I leave out of Athens and head south on I-65, I do not need to be surprised when I end up in Birmingham. If you have

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Clean, Green And Beautiful

Deck The Doors

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

The Athens-Limestone Beautification Board has been busy thinking up new and exciting things for Athens and Limestone County. Since we have the Beautification Awards Limestone all County Businesses, we wanted to have an opportunity for residents to compete in a contest as well. As the holiday season approaches, we are announcing a new Christmas Door Décor Contest. We think this will be a fun and exciting way to highlight the beautiful Christmas décor that we all enjoy during the holiday sea-



son.

The variety of Christmas decorations is endless, and it is so interesting to see different people's choices in themes. From fresh cut greenery and fruit, to bright reds and greens, to a mixture of

bright colors, the variety is exciting. From intricate to simple, there is something to be enjoyed about them all. The ability to create stunning decorations is such a talent, and inspiration, we hope that residents of

the less traveled areas and roads enter their work so that all are able to enjoy.

We all know that decorating for the holidays is a lot of work, but oh so enjoyable to admire once you are finished! Driving around looking at Christmas lights and decorations is a favorite past time of mine and many others, and we want you to know that your hard work and creativity are greatly appreciated and admired. We will post (without entries names and addresses) on Facebook for everyone to enjoy. This gives an opportunity for you to showcase your hard work even if you live in the more rural ar-



This contest will be open to ALL residents of Limestone County. For that to be possible, we ask that you send photos of your decorated door (as many as you want, we'd love to see details) with your name and address via email (KAL-BCares@gmail.com) or Facebook Messenger by December 16. Please don't post publicly since we are asking for a name and address. I will make a slide show of the submitted photos, the Athens-Limestone Beautification Board will vote based on the photos only. After we vote, we will distribute the winner's signs and small prizes on Friday, December 20. We will also post photos on our Facebook (unless you prefer we do not). We hope you are as excited as we are!





(256) 233-8000 KALBCares@gmail.com www.KALBCares.com



Cooking with Anna

Even In The Hard Times, Trust God

by Anna Hamilton

With the happiest time of the year knocking at our door, a lot of us are trying to make it through the thick of the hardest part of the year. Thanksgiving and Christmas can be wonderful times with family and friends, but it also brings with it stress and difficult situations to navigate. But there is hope. There are three things to remember when you are in the thick of the hard.

Number one: Difficult situations don't alter God's unwavering goodness. His goodness remains steadfast even in the face of the hard. No matter what we are facing in life, we can always depend on the goodness of God. He has promised to never leave or forsake us. When we have our full trust in Him, He will take care of us and guide us through the tough times. Nahum 1:7 tells us,

"The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in Him."

Number two: Growth is happening within you, even if the progress seems invisible in the moment. Spiritual growth, just like physical growth, does not happen overnight. It takes time, and sometimes the progress is slow. God continually encourages us towards spiritual growth. Through the Scriptures, we are taught how to grow up in Christ. We are never to just go through the motions of a Christian life, we are urged to grow and mature to become more like Christ. When times are hard, it may seem as if we are in a rut, but if we keep pressing on in faith, we will grow in Christ. We must remember that living things

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Roasted Beet and Butternut Squash Salad

Ingredients:

1 lb. beets, trimmed and washed

2 lbs. butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and diced

8 cups arugula

3 oz. goat cheese, crumbled

1/3 cup pumpkin seeds, toasted

1 Tbsp fresh parsley, chopped

1 Tbsp fresh chives, chopped

Drizzle of olive oil

Salt and pepper to taste

Dressing:

4 Tbsp olive oil

2 Tbsp red wine vinegar

1 tsp balsamic vinegar

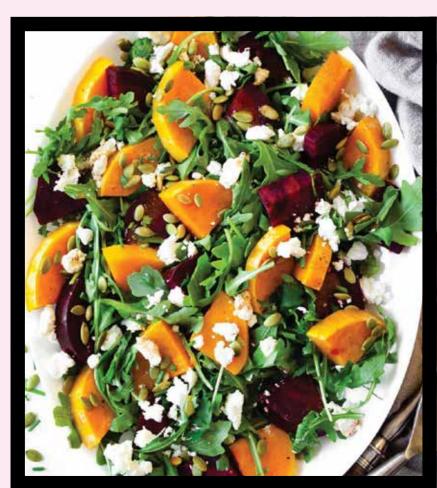
1 garlic clove, minced

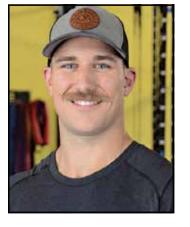
Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400F degrees.

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Health and Fitness

Getting Stronger At Any Age: Why Building Muscle Matters And How Crossfit Can Help

by Nick Niedzwiecki - Owner, CrossFit Athens

In recent years, the importance of strength training has become more evident, especially for people looking to improve their health at any age. Many people think that building muscle is only for younger individuals or bodybuilders, but research and real-life success stories show that strength training is beneficial -- and doable -- at any age. For individuals in small towns like ours, where health challenges are more common, gaining strength can play a major role in transforming our well-being, boosting our energy, and

even enhancing our quality of life. One effective approach to achieving this is through a popular fitness routine known as CrossFit.

Why Muscle Matters

Building muscle is about more than just looking fit; it's essential for our overall health. As we age, we naturally lose muscle mass, which can lead to a decrease in strength, mobility, and balance. Muscle loss is also closely linked to bone density, meaning weaker muscles can contribute to a higher risk of fractures and falls. For people of all ages, main-

taining muscle strength can improve stability, which helps with everything from lifting grocery bags to climbing stairs. Additionally, having more muscle boosts our metabolism, making it easier to manage weight and maintain healthy blood sugar levels, both of which are especially important in preventing or managing chronic conditions like diabetes.

The Power of CrossFit

When it comes to effective strength training, CrossFit has gained popularity for a reason. It's not just about lift-

ing weights -- it's a varied, community-focused workout program that can be tailored for people at any level, including beginners. Cross-Fit combines a mix of weightlifting, cardio, and bodyweight exercises that work multiple muscle groups, improving strength, endurance, and flexibility. Whether it's a high-intensity workout like squats and kettlebell swings or a simple strength movement like a modified push-up, CrossFit Athens offers plenty of options to help people build functional strength.

One of the best things about CrossFit is its adaptability. CrossFit Athens offers scaled options for each workout, meaning exercises can be modified based on experience, strength, or limitations. CrossFit is about doing what you can and pushing yourself safely. You will not find a more supportive community, which can make a big difference, especially if you're trying strength training for the first time.

CrossFit and Health at Any Age

If you're worried that CrossFit might be too intense, rest assured that people of all ages, including those in their 60s and 70s, benefit from it. The goal is not to compete against others but to improve at your own pace. Starting

small, maybe with two workouts a week, can be a great way to ease into it. In CrossFit, exercises that seem challenging at first can be scaled down; for instance, push-ups on the knees or lighter weights can build strength gradually.

For older adults, adding even light strength exercises a few times a week can make a difference in strength, balance, and flexibility. Building muscle and increasing mobility with CrossFit can empower you to perform daily tasks more easily and prevent inju-

Taking the First Step

If you're interested in getting stronger, Cross-Fit Athens is a fantastic option, regardless of your age. We offer beginner-friendly classes, and you can even try a whole week for FREE to help you see if it's a good fit. Even if you're unsure, trying one session can help you discover what's possible with a little guidance and support.

By prioritizing strength, you're investing in your long-term health, mobility, and quality of life. CrossFit Athens is a fun, flexible way to get started, and it might just be the boost you need to live a stronger, healthier life!

Call 256-777-8275 or email info@crossfita-thens.com to get started!



News From The Tourism Office



Swan Creek Christmas

by Stephanie Reynolds, Athens-Limestone Tourism Association

"Did you run this morning?" I was both pleased and puzzled by the out-of-the-blue text that lit up my phone. Pleased because she thought I am actually one of those "exercise people" who might have already run on a Saturday morning and puzzled because it was such an odd way to say hello.

"No, why?"

"I need to walk off some stress and I wanted to know if you'd like to join me on the trail for an hour or so..." (Per the usual, the conversation then took 3 different tangents including freeze drying, saunas, and sauce making before coming back on topic.)

"We could go to the Swan Creek Trail—close and pretty," I offered.

"Sure!" And it was decided.

Flash forward a couple hours later and a new discussion happened, entirely in my head, and with YOU, my fabulous Limestonians, as we started walking the trail. It went something like this:

Me: "WOW, WOW this trail is GORGEOUS! I've been here almost 13 years! Why didn't you tell me?!"

Imaginary You: "You're kidding me. Firstly, you knew it was here. Secondly, you've lived here almost THIRTEEN YEARS and never got your patoot in gear to walk it. At some point this is on you, girlfriend. Thirdly, aren't you sup-

posed to be in tourism and know about all these things?"

Sigh, yes. Yes, it's on me. And what a gem I have been missing for the last almost 13 years! I didn't realize that Swan Creek Trail (also known as the Athens Greenway Trail) was SO gorgeous and SO refreshing! I had seen photos, of course, but to see how it meanders and threads its way through trees and by water, how you feel both out in nature and close to civilization...it was amazing.

It is an easy trail, 2.3 miles down and 2.3 miles back, gently rolling. Great for a short run, perfectly comfortable to walk. There are benches upon which to rest and watch the water flow and the leaves fall. There were enough people to make us feel comfortable but not so many that we felt crowded. We felt extremely safe.

It is also easy to get to you can access the south trailhead at Winter Timber, enter by Lowe's on the frontage road, or ingress by the Sportsplex (drive past the Sportsplex, behind the ball fields, and the entrance is to the south of the ballfields). It's a great trail when you want a long walk but a short drive. This will be perfect to walk off that Thanksgiving turkey and Christmas cookies that we'll soon be enjoying as Limestone County begins its season of festivities! Speaking of which, here are some of the wonderful things we have planned



this season. Pick your favorites and GET OUT THERE! Let's make this a season of good, peaceful, blessed memories!

(See how smooth a segue that was?)

First up: This year we're doing a twist on the famous "Elf on the Shelf" search in Downtown Athens, AL and we're joined by a new friend who loves hide-and-seek: Athie the Elf!

RULES:

- 1. Follow/Like the Athens-Limestone Tourism Association AND Athens-Limestone Chamber on Facebook/Instagram!
- 2. Tune in at 8 a.m. starting on Nov 18 for a clue to Athie's whereabouts every day leading up to and through Christmas Open House.
- 3. Shop in Downtown Athens and find where the Elf is hiding for the day.
- 4. Bring Athie back to the staff of the business you found it in, leave your contact info, and we will give you an Athens stocking full of gift cards and holiday good-

ies!

Anyone can participate as we support small businesses and gear up for our Christmas Open House Event -- November 18-24, 2024!

The Athens-Limestone County Tinsel Trail!

Come enjoy the wonder and beauty of the season at Big Spring Memorial Park! Free to the public! (We are still accepting applications for tree sponsorship! This is a GREAT way to advertise your business, to bring awareness to your nonprofit, or to begin a family tradition! Go to alcchamber.org to sponsor a tree). The Tree Lighting Ceremony is Thursday, November 21 at 6 p.m.

Merchants Alley Tree Lighting Friday, November 22 at 5 p.m.

Skating On the Square

Friday, November 22 from 4-8 p.m. and Sat. and Sun. November 23 & 24 from 1-5 p.m. at Marion Street Downtown (\$5 per person, cash only)

Christmas Photos

(no Santa, just Christmas

scene) Friday, November 22 from 6-8 p.m. at the Launch Box (121 S Marion Street, \$25 per photo)

Christmas Photos with Santa Sat. and Sun. November 23 & 24 from 1-3 p.m. at Athens-Limestone County Tourism Office (100 N Beaty Street, \$25 per photo)

Merry Market On Marion Friday, November 22 from 4-8 p.m., Saturday, November 23 from 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Sunday November 24 from noon-5 p.m.

Limestone County Commission Tree Lighting Thursday, December 5 at 6 p.m.

Athens - Limestone County Christmas Parade Thursday, December 5 at 6 p.m.

Ardmore Tinsel Trail Tree Lighting Friday December 5 at 5:30 p.m. at Ardmore Town Hall

<u>Cookies and Pictures</u> <u>with Santa</u> at Ardmore Town Hall Saturday, December 7 from 10 a.m.-

Ardmore Christmas Parade Monday, December 9 at 6:30 p.m.

Athens Main Street 14th Annual Sippin' Cider Saturday, December 14 from 4-8 p.m.

Historic Mooresville Holiday Walking Tours Saturday, December 14 from noon to 4 p.m. (for more information and tickets, please visit https://www.mooresvilleal.com)

Can't wait to see you this wonderful Christmas season!

Save The Date: Riff Raff Rustic Outpost Early Black Friday Event 22-23 November

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

continued from page 1

Joel needed a piece of furniture in which he could store his guitars, and could find nothing to fill the bill.

Enter Steve Hill of the original Bargain Jungle on Hwy 72 across from the Athens Staples store. Joel had known Steve and his sister Pam Ennis since forever. Steve was at Bargain Jungle, and Pam was at Pam's Home Furnishings. It was Steve who suggested to Joel that Joel parlay his quest for a suitable home for the "Riff Raff" guitars, and Riff Raff LLC was born as a parent organization for all kinds of potential future businesses.

Joel really didn't know much about furniture, but he went to the market being held in Tupelo, and just before closing, he discovered a line of furniture that was high quality, made

in Indonesia as well as Mexico, and was named Bramble. Riff Raff is one of a few select dealers of Bramble furniture in North Alabama. He found what he needed, both for his guitars as well as his business. By way of further interest, Joel named the store "Riff Raff" after the AC/ DC band, from the '70s, and says with a grin and characteristic tongue-incheek humor, "It creates curiosity." Since that time, Joel has also been able to add lines that come from High Point, NC, which is known as the fine furniture capital of the world.

A year after Joel's unintended venture into what has become a highly successful furniture and home décor business, Steve Hill died. Another business came and went, and in March of 2024, Joel began to lease Bargain Jungle as a warehouse for the Athens Riff Raff store.



One of the reasons for using Bargain Jungle was purely born out of the need for ease of access. The door at the Athens store on Washington is narrow, and trying to get some of the larger pieces in and out became a total pain. But, once again a pain

point was transformed into purpose. The double glass doors at the Bargain Jungle/RRR location are nearly twice as wide, making it much quicker to move furniture on Special Event

days. Joel also mentioned that using the Hwy 72 location is also a gesture of honor to Steve. "It's come full circle," he told me.

Joel and his wife, Shar-





ma, were friends with the late Stacy Wolfe, who fought a brave and fierce battle with cancer, and while still alive, formed a foundation to help those in the same fight. Stacy was diagnosed in 2019, and died in February of this year. So, in honor of Stacy and the Stacy Wolfe Foundation (which is still going strong, by the way), Joel had a Christmas in July event at what is now known as Riff Raff Rustic Outpost, which will also continue to be happily known as the Bargain Jungle store in honor of Steve Hill. The Stacy Wolfe Foundation was the recipient of the success of the Christmas in

July event.

Now, the RRR logo (Riff Raff Rustic) is on the window, and try saying that quickly three times to see how you do! Bargain Jungle is still on the awning, and once a month, there are two days where you can purchase couches, chairs, mattresses, dining room tables and suites -- the larger things that do not fit well at Riff Raff Athens. As Joel says, "This is where the deals are." The Bargain Jungle/ RRR store is located at 1027 US Hwy 72 E in Athens, and is open for two days only each month.

In order to understand the difference in approach between the two stores, one needs to understand the difference between buyers of excellent furniture. At Riff Raff Home Décor on Washington Street, the pace is much slower. People stroll leisurely through the store, taking their time, and envisioning what pieces and accessories would be a perfect fit for their home. There is wall art, all manner of trending accessories, catalogues are available, and people from out of town who are just traveling through stop there routinely. Pieces can be custom distressed and finished. There is assistance with interior design if needed, and "window shopping" is encouraged. The furniture is the same, but the approach is different.

Joel told me that when the Outpost is open, people need to know right out the gate that if they see something that they want, it would be best to grab the price tag off the piece they want and take it straight to checkout because this is a "you-snooze-youlose" situation.

In a very short time, Riff Raff Rustic Outpost has become the site of North Alabama's largest monthly furniture event. The next event date is November 22 and 23, from 10 a.m.



to 4p.m. You need to get there early because people will be lined up and ready to find their dream piece or pieces of well-crafted, solid, rustic furniture. There will be wall art that is just for the holiday season, and all manner of décor to make your home lovely, cozy, warm, and inviting this winter, or

provide you with the perfect gift. Don't miss out!

Riff Raff Rustic Outpost Special Event

11/22-23, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Bargain Jungle Building 1027 US Hwy 72 E Suite B, Athens, AL 35611







Learning As A Lifestyle



Striking The Balance: How To Be Friendly Yet Professional At Work

by Eric Betts, Assistant Professor | Course Developer, Hampton University School of Religion

In the workplace, friendliness and professionalism are both essential for creating a harmonious and effective environment. Friendliness helps build trust and open communication, making it easier for employees to collaborate and support one another. A positive, approachable demeanor can encourage coworkers to share ideas, ask questions, and seek guidance when needed. However, without balancing it with professionalism, excessive friendliness can blur boundaries, potentially leading to conflicts of interest or misunderstandings. Striking the right balance means maintaining a warm yet appropriate attitude that fosters connection while respecting professional

Professionalism is the foundation that ensures work interactions remain respectful, equitable, and focused on the organization's goals. Professionalism encompasses attributes like punctuality, reliability, and respect for colleagues' time and perspectives. By maintaining a high level of professionalism, employees communicate that they value the standards and expectations of the workplace. For example, while it might be tempting to share personal details with a coworker to build rapport, doing so can sometimes lead to overfamiliarity that detracts from productivity or creates distractions. Upholding professionalism, even in friendly interactions, allows individuals to build

Establishing boundaries is crucial for maintaining this balance. Boundaries help employees recognize the limits of friendly behavior at work, avoiding situations that could lead to favoritism or unequal treatment. A helpful strategy is to keep interactions focused on work-related topics during work hours and save more personal conversations for breaks or social gatherings outside of work. Additionally, being mindful of topics discussed and maintaining discretion with personal information can protect privacy and ensure that friendly interactions don't interfere with objective decision-making or performance evaluations.

becomes even more critical for leaders and team

members, whose roles of-

ten require a mix of approachability and authority. Executives who foster a friendly atmosphere make it easier for team members to feel comfortable sharing feedback and seeking help, which can be crucial for early problem-solving and morale. However, managers must be careful not to let their friendliness interfere with their ability to make unbiased decisions, enforce policies, or provide constructive feedback. Setting clear boundaries—such as focusing social conversations around team events or during breaks—can help managers create an environment where everyone feels valued without risking favoritism or compromising authority.

Leaders also benefit from being transparent about these boundaries. For example, they might communicate that they are open to casual chats but will uphold objectivity in performance reviews and conflict resolution. This transparency helps understand employees that friendliness from their manager does not guarantee special treatment and that decisions will still align with the organization's goals. Clear communication, mutual respect, and a shared commitment to these principles can create a work environment where friendliness and professionalism enhance rather than conflict with each other, ultimately strengthening workplace relationships and productivity.

Finally, navigating these boundaries effectively requires self-awareness and adaptability. Team members should regularly assess their behavior and interactions to ensure that they remain professional and considerate of others' boundaries. Leaders and managers play a significant role by modeling appropriate behavior and setting the tone for how friendly and professional interactions can coexist. Clear communication, mutual respect, and a shared commitment to the organization's goals can create an environment where friendliness and professionalism are balanced, enhancing both workplace relationships and productivity.



1080 AM WKAC



The View From The Bridge

Seasons, Chapters, And Bookmarks...

by Jackie Warner

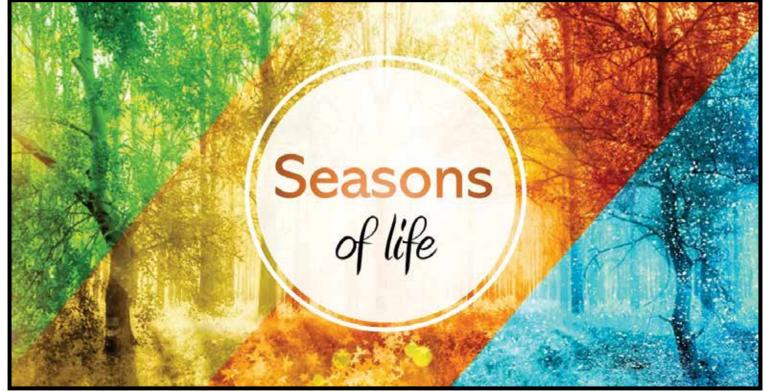
Career Development Facilitator "Impact, Engage, Grow" Community Matters

The losses that have brought great gain are sometime hard to take. I think back to a job I held in my career field some years ago; it was in my eyes the position I would keep until retirement. I remember thinking, "This is it and someday my name will be on the wall here." News flash: it wasn't my retirement job -not even close. It was a difficult season, what I thought was an awful chapter in my life. It was a chapter that took me places I had never been, during which I experienced pain I would not wish on anyone, and put me in tough situations that pressured me to make decisions without understanding.

Looking back now and reflecting on that chapter and season of my life, I wanted nothing more than to be free! There was no bookmark to pause it. I realized it was shaping and twisting and molding me in preparation for turning the page to the next chapter of my life's journey.

Romans 8:28 - "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."

To those of you reading this article, stop putting bookmarks in the way of your growth. I am reminded of the trees



in my front yard. Right now is their time to purge and go through a transformation. It is that time in life to be okay with looking a little different, shedding and getting rid of all that should not remain.

So too must we continuously strip ourselves bare to see who we really are and what is truly needed. If we choose not to, life has a way of doing to for us. I think we all can agree.

Spring, summer, win-

ter, fall, spring, summer, winter, fall.... Are you living the seasons of your life?

Spring is your awakening, your rebirth -- you are clean, pure, and it is an opportunity to plant seeds of greatness. You are getting ready to breakthrough for the blossom, the shine, and the runway. Then comes summer -- Yeah, the runway is calling your name. You are what's it, at your peak and in full bloom. I digress, as some of us do

not ever truly experience the seasons because we are too afraid to enjoy the journey!

As summer prepares to leave us, fall embarks on a busy time of preparation for the harvest first, then followed by the cleanse and purging, while winter brings hibernation and rest for what is up ahead.

"Every new season of your life will be an opportunity for you to learn and grow. Don't celebrate the good with-

out celebrating the bad because they both work together to prepare you for the next season of your life."

— Theresa Lewis

Until Next Time, Be Sincere, Kind and Intentional

Jackie Warner, Community Outreach Specialist

Email: thebridge.us@gmail.com

Check out upcoming events: http://thebridge-us.yolasite. com/





Horse Whispering

One

by Deb Kitchenmaster

Have you heard or said, "Back to square one"? What about these statements? "All for one, and one for all." Our Army declares, "An Army of one." Or "As one door closes, another one opens."

The word 'one' originated pre-1150 and was inherited from Germanic (the Indo-European language family). The number one symbolized unity and the origin of all things since all other numbers can be created from one adding enough copies of it. In its primitive form (without the bar at the bottom), the numeral 1 is a vertical line; it features only one angle, where the diagonal line meets the vertical line.

Now that we have tasted an ounce of history. what about the meaning of 'one'? Being or aMOUNTing to a single unit or individual, or entire thing, item, or object, rather than two or more. One refers to a single person or thing, as

well as the number one. One is all alone, but it at least gets to be the first in

Riders/handlers tend to

look at their horses as a mirror of themselves and are inclined to view themselves and their horses as one. The United States held a conference that in Germanic brought speakers who were researching in the field of equitation sciences -- the relationship styles among riders and how they perceive their horses. Research showed many saw their horses as 'self-objects.' As we reflect on the meaning of one, we remember one to be a single unit, individual, or entire thing, item, or OBJECT. A quote from the research: "People, objects, and experiences may all be considered self-objects and provide feedback that either fuels or undermines a person's self." Findings showed in their studies that the longer a person owned their horse, the more they were likely to consider themselves and



their horses as ONE.

Engaging in community, we created a safe place for young people from all backgrounds, with their own stories, to come out to horse camp. We worked with social services, home health care, school counselors, pastors, and foster care within and outside our county. We would start out with me communicating with the horse as the rider would work on their breath, relaxing, and balancing while developing their seat. The time would come within

their relationship with me and their relationship with their horse to begin to communicate and go deeper in connecting with their horse and their true self. Please understand, we were not performing or preparing to perform for an event. We were not in training for the Olympics. Our focus was on ONE, unlike anyone else, human being. Needless to say, fears would need to be dealt with, condemnation at various levels would need to be faced, and lies that one believed in their belief system would be overtaken by inserting truth into their belief system. In what way did any of these and other hindrances reveal their workings in ONE'S life? By taking things personally! Out of the abundance of the heart (soul) the mouth speaks, "I'm not good enough." "I'm so stupid." "My horse doesn't like me." The person believes something is wrong with them. That right there is exposing shame in the belief system.

We all need to take steps,

one by one, to walk out of shame and blame into 'teaching' moments, teaching experiences. Rather than asking, "What's wrong with me?" ask "What is here for me to learn, see, face, or change etc.?" Simply by setting your rudder to not take things personally, you have aligned yourself in a jet stream of rest, peace, and joy regardless of circumstances or situations. Say again and again, "I will not take this personally" -- even if it feels personal. When shame, fears, and condemnation are weakened in one's life, grace, love, and confidence becomes stronger. Remember, self-objects provide feedback that either fuels OR undermines a person's self (life, soul)...see Psalms

ONE NATION UNDER ONE TRUE, LIVING GOD.

> Your NEIGHbor. Deb Kitchenmaster 256-426-7947

horsinaround188@gmail.com



Rightside Way



Very Pretty... But Can They Fight?

by Phil Williams

Election night 2024 was an epic night with an epic result due to epic turnout by Americans seeking something better. Republicans won both the popular vote and the Electoral College, flipped the U.S. Senate and will likely retain the House. The GOP gained seats in governors' races, picked up new voters from minority groups, and even flipped several blue California counties.

This election was a complete repudiation of the liberal progressive agenda. So, bask in the moment, because now the real fight begins.

I am mindful of a scene from the classic movie: The Dirty Dozen. A classic role-call of action characters that could hold its own with anything in the modern action genre. Set in WWII, a bunch of outcasts, convicts, and misfits from a military prison were formed into an elite commando unit for a suicide mission deep behind German lines. Each man knew that mission failure meant death or back to prison. Mission success meant a new lease on life. The Dirty Dozen had to fight like their life depended on it.

One particular scene was comedic. A highbrow colonel got wind that a "top secret" group was coming on his base with a high-ranking general. He stopped the trucks, asking for the general to please inspect his top unit who were all spit-

and-polished in formation by the roadside. The Dirty Dozen were rough around the edges, unshaven, and disheveled. But one of them quickly played the part of an incognito general and walked the line of fancy troops. All was well until he stopped and addressed the arrogant colonel, saying "Very pretty Colonel....but can they fight?" The rest of the Dirty Dozen fell into fits of laughter at the prima donnas in formation.

That's where we are in the post-election timeframe. Trump does not need a bunch of pretty establishment, bureaucratic soldiers. We need a dirty dozen who will get the job done like their lives depend on it.

In every force-on-force confrontation, there is alwavs key terrain from which to stage operations. Terrain that brings advantage to the side that controls it. In military parlance, the right has now taken the high ground. But it is not just for sitting on. The right must prepare for the left's inevitable counterattack. The 2024 election was merely the D-Day operation to gain a commanding position on the battlefield.

Make no mistake, the left wants the same terrain that we hold now. The fight that is coming will not be won by pretty soldiers in pretty uniforms. We need fighters who will get busy, get dirty, and get the job done.

So, how do we do that?

Army doctrine teaches that stifling the opposition's ability to counterattack and taking back key terrain involves several things: disruption, flexibility, concentration of power, preparation, and security.

We do that by communicating constantly and transparently, appointing conservative judges, passing strong conservative legislation, and rekindling the economy by cutting taxes and repealing stifling regulation.

We have to be able to pivot to their attacks and not become myopic in our view of the field of fight. And recognize where the right made gains and concentrate our efforts there for quick wins in the 2026 midterms, while also developing a long-game strategy to preserve our principles. Also, we must keep our leaders secure because they are now at increased physical risk of attack.

But a strong battlefield commander knows you don't just sit in the defense and brace for the counterattack. Seizing commanding terrain means having a place from which to launch an offensive. Thus, we need to see our border secured immediately with a plan for removing masses of illegal immigrants from our communities. We need to grow our economy to benefit our citizens and put the U.S. back into a position of economic world strength. We need a military filled with warriors

and leaders who love this country and are willing to sacrifice for it. We need to exert energy dominance and develop a plan for an all-of-the-above use of the great assets we already have.

American citizens also need to know that the sanctity of the family, and faith, and property will be respected and defended because that is at the core of who we are. All of that and more is before us. All of that is worth fighting for.

To do all of that, there has to be a team of fighters. Donald Trump, JD Vance, Elon Musk, RFK Jr, Vivek Ramaswamy, Tulsi Gabbard...these are all folks who have proven their ability to lead large organizations, buck norms, and push back on apathetic leadership. These are potential reformers. But we need even more.

There is a strong likelihood Trump will have the opportunity to appoint at least one Supreme Court justice and solidify conservative legal positions on life, liberty, and property for generations to come. We need senators and congressmen who are willing to pursue conservative constitutional principles and not just be pretty while working toward their own reelection.

There will also be allies in the broad spectrum. Conservative grassroots media is on the rise as the mainstream media has proven its inability to be other than pretty. I predict that conservative outlets will have a new and increased opportunity for bringing truth and accountability.

So, yes, this election was huge. Catch your breath, hug some necks, slap some backs, and relish the moment. But it was not the full battle. We seized key terrain, and now we need a team who will not just be pretty, but will fight -a team who will preserve us for generations to come as a force for good and a city on a hill. We need a dirty dozen we can rally with to fight like our lives depend on it.

Phil Williams is a former

state senator, retired Army colonel and combat veteran, and a practicing attorney. He has served with the leadership of the Alabama Policy Institute and currently hosts the conservative news/talkshow Rightside Radio M-F 2-5 p.m. on multiple channels throughout north Alabama. (WVNN 92.5FM/770AM-Huntsville/Athens; WXJC 101.FM and WYDE 850AM – Birmingham/Cullman) His column appears every Monday in 1819 News. To contact Phil or request him for a speaking engagement go to www.rightsideradio.org. The views and opinions expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the policy or position of 1819 News. To comment, please

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The Alternative Approach



MAHA Movement

by Roy Williams

The transformation has begun. The world as we know it is changing right before our eyes thanks to the American people saying, "We have had enough." Enough of our borders being wide open, of the politicians lying just to get in office, of the woke movement that is undermining our Christian way of life, of the international banking cartel that is enslaving us, of the failure of our educational system, and so much more.

When President Trump takes power, his administration will move at light speed to close the borders, help the people hold politicians accountable, stop the woke movement, move us toward economic success, and clean house in the liberal educational system. He will also begin the process to send the illegal immigrants back to where they came from, get control of spending, and open the pipeline taking us back to energy independence.

With that said, one of the most important transformations will be recognized as the MAHA movement, which will begin to eliminate the immoral and ineffective sick care system that has taken us from the healthiest nation on earth in the 1970s to where we are

today, the sickest, weakest, and most obese nation in the world. For over 60 years, the pharmaceutical industry has monopolized the entire medical profession and the medical educational system. They have proved that there are no limits to what they are willing to do to protect their monopolies. Anyone or anything that tries to compete will be met with character assassination, the legal system, FDA, NIH, and even imprisonment for all that offers alternatives to their empire.

MAHA stands for "Make America Healthy Again," which is the correct statement when you understand that for many years, we were the healthiest nation on earth. The MAHA movement will reveal the truth about synthetic drugs that are designed to treat the symptoms of disease without ever even looking for the root cause of the disease. It will declassify documents proving that actual cures for most diseases have been identified and either bought out or covered up and made illegal for use in America and in some cases, around the world. We will learn how the tobacco industry used the money they earned from selling addictive cig-



arettes to purchase much of the food industry, and then began putting the same addictive ingredients in the food supply, which is part of the causes of the obesity, diabetic, cancer, and heart disease epidemics while they and the medical industrial complex reaped billions of dollars.

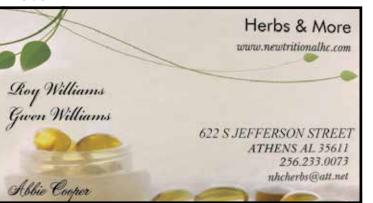
The good news is that America can once again begin to move in the right direction. It will take a couple of decades to educate the public, break the backs of the military, medical, educational, and financial industrialized complexes so we can live in a truly free society again. Remember, we the people don't have to wait to improve our situation, especially when it comes to our health. NEWtritional Health Care was established in 1999 and our motto has always been to, "Make America Healthy One Person at A Time," and we have never

swayed from those roots. We started with that idea in mind and have helped tens of thousands improve and, in many cases, completely overcome disease, without being dependent on the industrialized medical complex.

Over time, we have developed and formulated over 40 supplements that have been used by our clients for the last 25 years. Our products have been compared to products from all over the world, and no one has ever provided us with any formulas that even come close. Over time, the medical profession has provided us with the proof that our products do support cardiovascular, immune, respiratory, joint, bone, and even mental health. Our customers' medical reports show their tremendous improvements in overall physical health. We knew we were moving in the right direction when we began receiving reports of more energy, less pain, better sugar levels, increased desire, and healthier looking skin, hair, and fingernails. Today, we have products that are totally safe, don't interfere with any medications and are so affordable that everyone should consider them before subjecting themselves to an out of control and unsustainable medical industrial complex.

It has been a pleasure to serve our community for the last 25 years. We are the first in the southeast to become members of **MAHA** and when you decide to support your health instead of treating the symptoms, we are here for you. Check us out at Herbs & More in Athens, NHC Herb Shop in Killen, go to our website nhcherbs.com or call us at 256-757-0660. You will be glad you did.

Your friend in health, Roy P. Williams





Cooking with Anna (continued from page 13)

Even In The Hard Times, Trust God

by Anna Hamilton

grow, and as long as we are walking with Christ, we will continue to have a maturing relationship with Him. Psalm 92:12-13 says, "The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord they will flourish in the courts of our God."

Number three: Focus your gaze on Him and anchor your heart in His presence. Amid the turbulence, He's right beside you. He's not a distant observer. He's actively involved. When you are walking with Christ, you are never alone. God wants to be active in our lives. God truly cares about what we care about. He is our loving Father and wants to be involved in every tiny detail of our lives. When you are walking in the thick of worries and hardships, it can make you feel that you are all alone. That is exactly how Satan wants you to feel. Satan wants you to fell alone and abandoned; that is one of the greatest lies he tells us. God loves us and will never leave us. He even sent his Son to die for our sins in order for

us to have a way to someday live with him forever. God never tires of hearing from His children. So when things seem hard, pray and don't stop. God will never leave us. Deuteronomy 31:8 says, "The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you."

So when the stress of the holidays and just life in general try to keep you separated from God, remember that He is with us in the thick of things. He will never leave our side. Keep yourself focused on God. Read his words daily. Pray constantly. You are never alone in this world. Remember you are loved and a child of God. Everything will truly be okay.

This week's recipe will be the perfect addition to your Thanksgiving table. It is a delicious salad featuring two of fall's star vegetables. I hope you love it as much as my family does.

"Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." Hebrews 4:16



Directions: Wrap the beets individually in aluminum foil. Place the butternut squash on a parchment-lined baking pan and drizzle with extra virgin olive oil and a generous sprinkling of salt and pepper. Spread the butternut squash out evenly on the baking sheet and place it, along with the aluminum wrapped beets, into the oven to roast. Roast the butternut squash for 25 to 30 minutes until tender. Roast the beets for 50 minutes to 1 hour, depending on their size, until a small sharp knife can be easily inserted into the middle indicating that they are tender. Unwrap each beet and set aside for 10 minutes, until cool enough to handle. Once the beets have cooled enough to be able to handle, peel their skins. Or you can also use a paper towel to rub off the skins. Then slice the beets into ½-inch thick slices.

While the beets and squash are cooling, make the balsamic vinaigrette. Add all the vinaigrette ingredients to a jar with a tight-fitting lid. Shake until all ingredients are combined.

Once the beets have cooled enough to be able to handle, peel their skins. Or you can also use a paper towel to rub off the skins. Then slice the beets into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch thick slices.

Place the arugula on a platter. Arrange the beets and butternut squash in alternating rows. Generously sprinkle pepitas, goat cheese, and fresh chopped herbs over top. Finish it off with a yummy drizzle of balsamic vinaigrette and serve.



"Hope lies in dreams, in imagination, and in the courage of those who dare to make dreams into reality."

- Jonas Salk

I have always been fascinated with dreams and dreaming. Sometimes my dreams are so vivid, it actually feels like I have existed in another world. Recently, I had a dream that I was sitting at the end a dock, with my feet dangling into the water, watching a beautiful sunset. In that moment, I felt relaxed, peaceful, and calm. It was so absorbing that I woke up with a feeling of contentment, which stayed with me for the rest of the day. There are many theories as to why we dream. Sigmund Freud believed that our dreams were the passageways to understanding our unconscious mind...where we might find those hidden secrets and longings that we dare not share with the rest of the world. Carl Jung, saw dreams as our mind's way of expressing things openly, the psyche's way of communicating and reorganizing important information from our daily lives. And today, neuroscientists continue to explore dreams and dreaming as pathways to improving health, especially our mental health.

Dreams can help you overcome your fears. Neuroscientists use the term lucid dreaming to describe the state of dreaming when you are aware you are dreaming. When you are

Mental Health Minute

The Mental Health Benefits Of Dreaming

by Lisa Philippart, *Licensed Professional Counselor*

a lucid dreamer, you can manipulate and control the story line of your dream. For example, let's say that you are afraid of being in large groups of people. Just the thought of going to a work party, makes your heart rate increase and you start sweating. In a lucid dream, you can be in complete control. You can be however you want to be. In the dream world, you get to practice what you might be afraid to do in real life. The more you practice dealing with your fears in your dreams, the more you are reprograming your brain. You are preparing for change through your dreams.

Dreams can be thera- peutic. Even though our dreams are not real, the emotions that go along with them are quite tangible. If you are experiencing some

form of PTSD or emotional trauma, dreams can be a form of overnight therapy. And, you don't have to be experiencing some form of trauma in order to benefit from a night of dreaming. When you go through any type of emotional event, the release of hormones is triggered in your system which prioritized that event in your mind. This then serves as a reminder to your brain to work through the occurrence during sleep. What happens is that somewhere between the activating event and the point of recollection, the brain can separate the emotions from the memory, so it no longer presents as emotive. Essentially your dream story strips the feeling from the experience by creating a new memory of it.

Dreams help you learn. This is my favorite ben-

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efit of dreaming, and I use it often to help me resolve issues or clarify a decision. Have you ever fallen asleep thinking about a decision that you have been trying to make? You wake up the next morning and somehow the answer has become clear. I know you have heard the expression, "Let me sleep on it." Well, it looks like there may be some scientific evidence to support our ability to learn while we sleep. According to researchers at Harvard Medical School, if

you learn a task and then go to sleep, you could be ten times better at that activity than if you had stayed awake. Dreaming allows your brain to process and make sense of new information. Dreams have the potential to positively change your life, so sweet dreams everyone!

Lisa Philippart is a Licensed Professional Counselor whose practice is in Madison, Alabama





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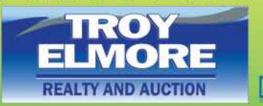








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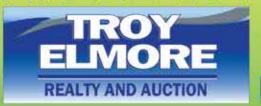








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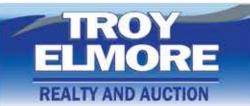
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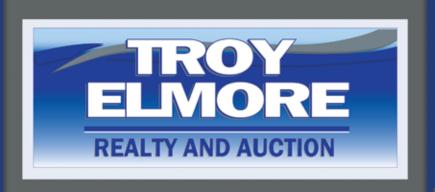
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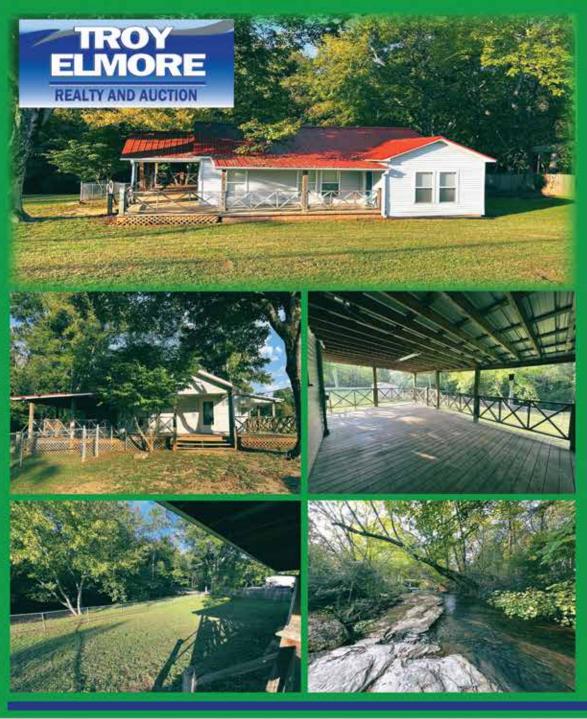
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