

January 17 - February 6, 2025

Athens Now

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See Our Listings Inside this edition...
Pages 25 - 32

What Makes Ronnie Roll



The Two Week Whirlwind...

Mayor Ronnie started off our time with something that could genuinely best be categorized as a "dad joke," and it was this...
Page 8



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Perfect Praise Music Of North Alabama: Letting It Out And Helping It Grow

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

Since 1996, Michael and Denie Riggs have taught thousands of people from preschoolers to Ph. Ds how to unlock their God-given musical gifts through an innovative, incremental approach that uses piano as its foundation. I don't believe...

Continued on page 15

Clean, Green And Beautiful

One is the Loneliest Number... Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful's success can be traced to one major source-our volunteers...
Page 12



Cooking With Anna



Get Some Rest!...

The world tells us that to rest is to be lazy. Somehow, we are supposed to be able to do it all, never get tired, and keep a smile on our face. The Lord knew that we...
Page 13

Sarah And Science: A Love Story

By Brandi Harris

Today, I'm going to share a story with you. At the beginning of this story, Sarah is seven and in her second week at a new school. Sarah loves everything about science, especially conducting experiments. Yesterday, she heard a story called "The Leaf Factory." Afterwards, she completed an experiment and wrote about it in her journal. She could hardly wait for the next story! So far, Sa-

Continued on page 17



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Contents

- Publisher's Point** 3
- All Things Soldier** 4
- Museum News** 5
- Calendar Of Events** 6
- Carissa's Corner** 7
- What Makes Ronnie Roll** 8
- Captain's Log** 10
- Slinkard on Success** 11
- Clean Green And Beautiful** 12
- Cooking With Anna** 13
- Health And Fitness** 14
- Cover Stories** 15 & 17
- From The Tourism Office** 16
- Learning As A Lifestyle** 18
- View From The Bridge** 19
- Horse Whisperer** 20
- Rightside Way** 21
- Alternative Approach** 22



Publisher's Point

#Athens Strong

On Wednesday, January 8, 2025, there was a prayer gathering, a time of music, laughter, and food held in the Launch Box to seek God, celebrate His goodness, and come together as a community to determine the needs of those who had been affected by the EF-1 storm on December 28. It was held just before the snow came and covered us with that unique blanket of beauty that makes everything clean, quiet, almost hushed.

The gathering had been sponsored by several entities and was simply called #AthensStrong. It was a joy from start to finish, and the overriding theme was deep gratitude for having the honor and privilege of being Athenians. The Malone family sang, and I had to fight back tears. Testimonies ensued, and the ones I found the most poignant were those of people like me who had come to Athens from other areas. I have said more than once that I think that often the people who came here as transplants and

weren't born and raised here sometimes love the place more. I know that I certainly do. I have lived here for 25 years this summer, and just when I think I can't love "us" any more deeply, something like this gathering happens and I am a "goner" once again.

John David Crowe led us in acoustical worship at the end, and what struck me was how comfortable everyone was with what I like to call God's unscripted diversity. Different denominations, different colors, different ages, different worship and musical styles, different prayer styles, and all of it bathed in love.

There were government officials, members of law enforcement, business leaders, ministers, and just regular folk. Here is how Jerome Malone, owner of Splash of Ink and pastor of Oasis: Christ's Church said it:

As our Athens-Limestone community continues to grow, it is important that we never forget the things

that make our city an amazing place to live, work, and play. Every now and then God will send us a reminder of what lies at the heart and soul of this special place. We are #AthensStrong simply because of our love for God and our love for people.

I am thankful that we live in a community where our community leaders can come together to acknowledge God for his protection from the storm and the providence of God as we come together to rebuild.

I want to send a special thanks to Mayor [Ronnie Marks](#) and Chairman [Collin Daly](#) for your leadership and guidance. Thanks to Athens Main Street, [Tere Richardson](#), [Michelle Williamson](#), [Shane Black](#), [Pammie Jimmar](#) and the Chamber of Commerce, [Ashley Klinger Bell](#) (First Priority), Sheriff [Joshua McLaughlin](#), [Kimberly Dunnivant](#) and [The LaunchBox](#) at

[Athens State University](#), [Blake Williams](#) and [Bethany Shockney](#) with LCEA, pastors [John W. Jude](#), [Bill Perkins](#), [John David Crowe](#), [Stephen Tanner](#) - [Country Financial](#), [Oasis](#): and [Cross Point Church of Christ](#) and the Athens community for your support and contribution to this effort.

What is the effort? Custom Tees made by Splash of Ink and the proceeds go to a fund that has been put together to assist those who were impacted by storm. For more information on how you can help visit the City of Athens Facebook page and be a strong part of a community that is stronger because of a storm. We are indeed bound by love, and in 2025, we're just getting started.

Ali Elizabeth Turner

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Righteous Restoration?

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



As of this print date, fireworks erupted on The Hill with regard to the portending confirmation of Pete Hegseth, President-elect Trump's pick for secretary of defense. The volleys during the hearing fell along predictable lines, and "Coach" Tommy Tuberville, the senior U.S. senator from Alabama was one of many who were, and are, in Pete's corner. I did not watch all four hours of it, but got a pretty good idea of the who, what, when, where, and most importantly, why of the various "inquisitors." Of particular interest to me was the excellent exchange between Mr. Hegseth and Senator Joni Ernst, who, like Hegseth, is from Iowa. She also served in the military for 23 years.

Senator Ernst was not one who originally planned on confirming Hegseth, but according to her own testimony while questioning him on Monday, said that they had engaged in several conversations, and the subjects had been tough ones. She was satisfied with his responses, and several have said that her affirmation will seal the deal. Her official statement was, "Our next commander-in-chief selected Pete Hegseth to serve in this role, and after our conversations, hearing from Io-



wans, and doing my job as a United States senator, I will support President Trump's pick for secretary of defense." The hearings were interrupted several times by hecklers who had to be removed. Later, the surprise came, and it had to do with Pete's plan to "make whole" the more than 8,000 service members who lost their careers because they refused to take the hastily developed and virtually untested COVID-19 vaccine during

the pandemic.

"Tens of thousands of service members were kicked out because of an experimental vaccine," Hegseth said. "They will be apologized to. They will be reinstated, reinstated with pay and rank."

I know that there are those that will object to such a move because, technically, the 8,000 violated a direct order. However, several members of the military

sued over the action, including Navy SEALs, and last summer the Navy settled the suit, which included clearing their records. The suit settlement affected 4,300 Navy service members, fully half of those who chose to lose their rank and career based on principle.

While it won't be cost prohibitive to apologize, we are looking at hundreds of millions of dollars to recompense our warfighters for what was forced upon

them. Some have settled in to the private sector and have no intention of returning to service, and some have aged out. However, those who took the risk and stood for their religious freedoms fought a different type of battle with a different type of adversary. I hope that Pete Hegseth is confirmed as secretary of defense, and I hope that he will be able to do what he has promised in the midst of a hearing that at the very least was grueling. I find it fascinating that he broached the subject. This discussion was not a part of what was on the table for the confirmation itself, and it could have opened him right back up to more criticism. But, to me, taking a stand like this when he didn't have to is exactly why I hope he gets confirmed.

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Museum News

Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary James L. Daniels Unit #51

by Yvonne Dempsey

The Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary (DAVA) is the subordinate organization to the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), subject to its supervision and recommendations and governed by the DAV Auxiliary Constitution and Bylaws. Our focus is on supporting disabled veterans and their families of through various initiatives and volunteer work. The mission statement of the Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary is "Making a difference in the lives of disabled veterans and their families."

Athens is home to the James L. Daniels DAVA Unit #51, subordinate organization to our parent organization, James L. Daniels DAV Chapter #51, and we are always looking for new members who want to attend the meetings, believe in our mission, and want to help.

Those eligible for membership in the DAVA are: Any person who is eligible for membership in the DAV; any person who has served in the armed forces of the United States of America, who has not been dishonorably discharged;

family and extended family members of any disabled veteran (or deceased) or of any person injured and still in active service; family and extended family members of any person who served with the armed forces of any nation associated with the United States of America as an ally, was honorably discharged, and became an American citizen; and family and extended family members of any person who has served in the armed forces of the United States of America and has not been dishonorably discharged or separated from such service.

During our first year, we hosted several events and activities for veterans, their families, and the public. Currently, we have some members who are going to a couple of assisted living homes, visiting and sometimes bringing goodies. We also helped some veterans and their families in need of assistance.

Although we strive to work for the benefit of our disabled veterans and their families, we need others to join our worthwhile endeavors. If this sounds like some-



thing you'd like to do and want a way to give back to those who gave so much, come join us.

If you are eligible to join, would like to help our veterans and their families, and have a couple hours each month to give, we welcome you to come join our auxiliary. We hold our meetings the first Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. in the DAV building located at 25369 Airport Road, Athens Al. If you need us or have questions, just call, email, or come by our meeting and ask to speak to a DAVA officer.



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Calendar of Events

#AthensStrong Storm Relief

Looking for ways to support the #AthensStrong Storm Relief Effort? Get your official “#AthensStrong” Tee/Sweatshirt and rep our city all year long! Visit this link and order yours today. <https://www.splashofinkscreenprinting.com/showrooms.htm> The campaign goes through January 26 and shirts are available for pickup on January 31. #athensstrong #boundbylove

Athens Alehouse Presents: A Marshmallow Toasting January 22

7pm. 113 S. Marion Street, on the square! Athens Alehouse Presents: A Marshmallow Toasting! Pick'n round the fire. Fireside sip-n-sing with Scotty Nix. Tabletop toasting stations provided. Bring the kiddos. S'mores, singalongs and wholesome stories. Family friendly.

White Azalea Estate Open House & Vendor Fair January 26

Join us for a tour of our venue and meet with some of our favorite vendors! 12 - 4pm. White Azalea Estate, 2659a Jeff Rd NW Harvest, AL. We will be giving tours of the venue as well as The Columns, which is the house on property that is available to rent for onsite accommodations for wedding parties. We are very excited to show off our new expansion that will increase our capacity and allow us to have a permanent ceremony space - that means no more flipping in between the ceremony and reception! This year we are showcasing our decor packages with a theme, Winter Wonderland. We are asking our vendors to participate in the theme, so come prepared to experience a magical time! Guests can expect gift bags, door prizes, food samples, cocktails, and special rates from vendors attending.

Coffee Call February 1

Alabama Veteran's Museum, 100 Pryor St W, Athens, AL. Veterans and their families are invited for breakfast and fellowship from 8:00am - 9:30am. at the Alabama Veterans Museum and Archive. 256-771-7578.

Gettin' Dirty At The Library The Library Garden February 11

11am-12pm. 603 S. Jefferson St, Athens. Presented by Alabama Master Gardeners and Emily Clem. Free and open to the public.

2025 Home & Garden Show Save The Date! February 15-16

Athens Middle School. Sat 8am-4pm. Sun 12pm-4pm. More details to come.

LaFayette Bicentennial Remembered February 20

In honor of the 50th anniversary of America's Revolutionary War, Gilbert du Motier, the Marquis de LaFayette, the last surviving general of that pivotal event, was invited to make a tour of all the U.S. states and 2025 is the 200th anniversary of his visit to the young State of Alabama. Mr. Larry Krumenaker's book, "Nine Days Traveling," covers this visit and the historical Alabama sites on his route that you can visit today. The Sons of Confederate Veterans invites everyone to the Disabled American Veterans building, 25396 Airport Road, starting at 6:00 p.m., to meet the author and learn more about this American war hero. Please email camp768@alscv.org with any questions.

2025 Athens-Limestone Empty Bowls Luncheon February 28

11:30 am to 1:00 pm. 303 Washington Street, Athens, AL. Please join us for the 2025 Athens-Limestone Empty Bowls Luncheon. The annual to-go luncheon includes delicious soup donated from local restaurants and a handmade pottery bowl to remind patrons that there are those in our community whose bowl may be empty. Ticketholders receive two servings of soup, bread, and a handmade bowl. Tickets are \$20 and available from Empty Bowls committee members, the church offices at First Presbyterian Church and Athens First Methodist Church, and online via Square: <https://square.link/u/R6H1W89s> All proceeds from the event go to local organizations fighting food insecurity.

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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The Two Week Whirlwind

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



Mayor Ronnie started off our time with something that could genuinely be categorized as a “dad joke,” and it was this: “Last two weeks have been a literal whirlwind.” I groaned, and we got started with our discussion. We spent some time looking at all the art pieces that had been submitted for the Martin Luther King Jr. birthday celebration by school kids from all over our area. Mayor Ronnie doesn’t do any of the judging, and he asked me if I had a favorite. There was one, and I won’t tell you what it looked like, but it was outstanding. Turns out, it was mayor Ronnie’s pick as well. “You know, the contest has just gotten so much better since we added the art,” he said. The MLK essay contest has been in place for years, and it’s always been one of the best parts of the

celebration.

We both had been at the all-city prayer meeting that was held in the Launch Box on January 10, and it had been so encouraging. More on that on page three. As it pertained to the twister, the path of the storm had been strange. It literally “hopped” several times. “It is going to be a long recovery,” said Mayor Ronnie. He also said, “Disasters teach you lessons,” and I agreed. Mayor Ronnie had been very involved in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. He noted that storms expose your weaknesses and strengths. We are in good shape due to the fact that we have had so many storms and we have had to learn how to handle them and work together. We talked about the tragedy of the wildfires in California, and how much they are going to need miracles



to get through it. We have a GREAT group of first responders,”

said the mayor, and he’s right. The Chamber of Commerce and Athens Main Street are making plans to have a fundraising concert that is going to be held in McCandless Hall. The purpose of the concert will be to help people who have been affected by the twister.

On to more positive topics. There had been a snow day, and it was just what we needed. The snow had been wet enough to make snowmen; people had a chance to play and rest. And because of the hard work that had been put into cleaning up after the “Christmas twister,” the city was in good enough shape to han-

dle the snow without it making things worse.

There are retail projects that are coming up. On the west side of Limestone County, a Food City is going in, and it is going to be what is known as the “anchor store.” There will be other shops as well. On the east side, there will be a new Publix store, and it will be located on Mooresville Road. We shook our heads at the fact that the growth does not let up, and that’s a good thing because we are growing well. There was just one thing left to do, and that was to pray. So, we did, and then once again, it was time for Ronnie to roll.



Carissa's Corner

Faith In the Pieces

by Carissa Lovvorn



Ahhh...fresh snow. Time for sledding, snowmen, fun-filled giggles, warm blankets, and hot chocolate. Playing outdoors until I was frozen was paramount in all my snow day memories... until this year. My recent ankle injury and upcoming surgery kept me from enjoying the winter fun. While my girls and husband bundled up to hit the "slopes" of our back yard, I settled in to work on a 1,000-piece puzzle.

I get a little obsessed while trying to finish a puzzle. There is just something about putting pieces together to make a beautiful picture. However, when you are working on a large puzzle, matching pieces aren't always easy to find. About half-way through the puzzle, I found myself looking intently for a specific piece to finish off one of the sections. I probably went through the box a dozen times. I decided to give up on finding that one. Then a dark notion came over me. "What if it is missing?...No, no Carissa. It is there, you just can't see it," I assured myself. Then I thought about how much trust a person has when working on a puzzle. Trust that the pieces are all there, that they will fit together appropriately, and that the picture will turn out how the maker designed it.

The faith used while working on a puzzle is much like the faith that's



required on our spiritual journey. Like a puzzle, there are times when our "pieces" obviously go together. I would call those the times when life is easy and carefree. There are colorful and intricate pieces. These may be a little harder to put together, but they are pleasing to the eye, so it makes the challenge enjoyable. These pieces are like the good things in life. They may require work, but they have good

rewards. Then there are the darker pieces. The pieces whose colors are muddled which makes it harder to find the matches. These are our valleys -- times when life doesn't make sense, and we question the bigger plan.

My life contains a lot of dark pieces, and I've struggled with not knowing the ending or thinking there may be a missing piece. Basically, at times, I've questioned God. How can He

use my heartache for the bigger picture?

Fortunately, I don't have to rest on my own understanding. Scripture

tells us that God works everything together for the good of those who love him. Furthermore, God proclaimed "I will lead the blind by ways they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them; I will turn the darkness into light before them and make the rough places smooth. These are the things I will do. I will not forsake them." (Isaiah 42:16 KJV)

Through faith we can continue connecting the pieces of our journey. We don't have to see the final picture to know that God is making it beautiful. We can also learn to appreciate the dark parts, because we need the shadows to notice the beauty in the highlights.

*Many blessings,
Carissa*

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Captain's Log

Chilly Discovery

by Brenda Wilkerson

"Why didn't anybody bury her?!" Lil Brother G asked as we drove by an older high school-aged girl as she lay lifeless 'sleeping' on the concrete culvert beside the long driveway at the end of a silent wooded cul-de-sac. She was lying on her side, arms crossed, her glasses sitting crooked on her face. Assuming she was dead, Lil Brother G was perplexed as to why someone didn't give her a proper burial. My mind raced for my own answers as the kids stood to see her and began to ask valid questions, "Where did she come from?" -- "We've never seen anybody here before." -- "Where is her coat?" -- and my favorite,

"Why didn't anybody bury her?"

I slowed down, stopped, pulled my brake, and opened the door. Her eyes opened, and she lifted her head and sat up. "Are you okay?" I asked. Nodding her head, she adjusted her glasses and fidgeted with her thin sweater that was not warm enough for the 35° chilly morning. Believing she was okay, we proceeded with our normal route, but I was peppered with so many honest questions about what we just saw. I could only guess as I too was at a total loss. We discussed it as long as the kids asked questions, and I kept it as positive as I knew how knowing some

precious tender hearts on board would worry all day about this chilly girl. *Lord, you know her situation inside and out. I pray for her and my bus babies as they begin to witness and process the difficult world around them. Help us always navigate with Your love when we don't have all the answers. Lead and guide us to love those hurting during this winter season. In Your name, Amen.*

As I wrapped up my very first semester, I can't help but reminisce. There were so many things that became part of my daily bus route that I could depend on like clockwork. For example, at my very first stop, all six kids would be lined up single file by the parents and ready to load, pronto! And the momma that would always kneel with baby sister on her hip, take her kindergarten son by the shoulder, look him dead in his eyes, and speak momma truth to his soul before he boarded. Then there was one stop that affected me differently...the Coffee Stop! Whenever I stopped for Lil G, his dad would always have a coffee cup in his hand. Always. Like every single morning. I found myself dreaming



about what flavor it was. Was it just plain black? Frothed with 2% milk? Popped out of a Keurig? Were the handsome deep brown beans ground fresh just moments before it was fragrantly embraced by the awaiting empty coffee

cup? Were the delectable mahogany granules poured over ever so slowly with hot water at the perfect temperature for the comforting taste and smell of emboldened flavor? What flavor was it? Amaretto? Salted Caramel? Mocha? Ackkkk!

So, every day when I turned on that street, my brain would trick me into thinking I could smell that lovely fragrant coffee bean juice even before I rounded the corner to the 'Coffee Stop' driveway. It sounds crazy, but I will miss my 6:48 a.m. daily dreamy coffee break!


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Slinkard On Success

'B' Is For Bravery

by D. A. Slinkard

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

The second article for 2025 brings us to the letter 'B' and our word is bravery. It seems this word does not have the same meaning today as it once did because our society is changing to be far different than how it used to be. It seems in today's world, the men are more feminine, and the women are more masculine. When you look at a 20-year-old today compared to a 20-year-old from sixty years ago, there really is no comparison. It shows a world in which we lack bravery.

For us to have success in 2025 and to have success in life, I believe we need to choose bravery, and this requires us to be intentional with our actions and a mindset shift. If a person has bravery, it does not mean they do not have fear, it simply means they are able to accomplish things despite the fear. It is important to understand our 'why' and what drives us because, oftentimes, bravery stems from having a clear purpose or goal that is bigger than our fears.

Having bravery does not require a person to face massive challenges immediately, but small acts of courage, such as speaking up in a meeting or trying something new, will help build confidence. I used to work with a friend, and if he had to stand before a group of coworkers to say anything at

all, he would crumble and would lose all ability to form any kind of cognitive sentence. Instead of seeing our fear as a stop sign, we need to view it as a way we can grow. That same individual who once had trouble speaking in front of a group of ten people now regularly speaks in front of 300 people without even thinking twice about it.

This goes to show that true bravery is about progress and not always about flawless execution. I see many people who want to wait until they have everything figured out when it comes to starting that new business or have everything planned out when it comes to their next venture in life. But instead of waiting, we need to start doing! We need to commit to doing something and then figure it out along the way. We think we have to always have the answer to the questions that arise, but it never seems to fail, there will always be something we did not think about.

I am also a firm believer we must visualize our success we want to achieve. We need to spend time visualizing



ourselves succeeding in whatever challenges we face. Seeing ourselves being successful in our own mind is powerful because before anyone else can believe in me, I must first believe in me. And our thoughts are a powerful tool to use. Sadly, though, not enough people visualize their success or even think about the impact they want to have on the world, and this is why bravery is lacking in so many people.

Bravery is also about resilience—the ability to bounce back after failure or setbacks. No matter how courageous we are, life will inevitably throw obstacles in our path. What defines us is how we respond. Instead

of letting failure deter us, we should view it as an opportunity to learn, adapt, and try again. Each setback we overcome strengthens our resolve and builds a foundation for future success. Life is 10% what happens to us and 90% of how we respond. Take a moment and let that last sentence set in for a minute.

We must remember that bravery is contagious, and when we act courageously, we inspire others to do the same. Whether it's in our families, workplaces, or communities, our brave actions create a ripple effect, empowering those around us to face their own fears. In this way, bravery becomes not just a personal virtue but

a force that can transform the world for the better. We never know the impact we are having on other people, but we need to be mindful because we never know when someone can use our actions to help take them to the next level.

So, as we step into 2025, let's commit to embracing bravery. Let's choose courage over comfort, progress over perfection, and intentional action over hesitation. Let's remember that bravery isn't about the absence of fear; it's about moving forward in spite of it. By doing so, we can build a life and a legacy defined by growth, resilience, and purpose.



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Clean, Green And Beautiful

One is the Loneliest Number

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

Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful's success can be traced to one major source- our volunteers. We know that nothing would be possible without the funding we receive, but we wouldn't need funding if we didn't have such an amazing volunteer base to work with. We rely on the residents of Limestone County to help us at every turn. Lately, it just seems like every turn needs two more volunteers.

Our most active volunteers, James and Kathleen Cutting, kicked off 2025 picking up trash on HWY 251. They were able to recover large pieces including a tube TV, already full bags of kitchen garbage, boxes, furniture cushions, and more. A whole truck bed full of

other people's trash...I can't decide if I think these folks' houses and yards are pristine since their trash is spread down the highway, or if I think their places are full and this is the overflow. Either way, everyone has weekly trash pickup or there is a transfer station in Limestone County.

Mr. Cutting may have received a tip when he volunteered at the Eagle Utilities and Vault Company's tornado cleanup, that there were a few tires in the creek bed on Hall Road close to Hwy 251. I only saw maybe 5 or 6 when I was driving by, but Mr. Cutting ended up pulling 21 tires from that spot. He left one lonely tire until he has more tools to dig it out with. Don't worry, there was plenty of litter too, not just tires. I would

like to point out that it was just last year that the Cuttings tackled the bridge area at Hwy 251 and Holt/Hall Roads, maybe 2/10 of a mile from this tire Taj Mahal. They had already removed 16 tires and 7 televisions from under the bridge. After he sent me these pictures, I told him that I have a feeling that we'd find Piney Creek full of trash if we tracked it from top to bottom. That's a project for a warmer day.

Not only do the Cuttings volunteer to get out and get dirty, they dispose of the trash the right way. The newer flat screen and plasma televisions (and other electronics) go to the Limestone County Recycling office. They hold on to the old tube televisions until our Household Hazardous Waste Collection. They collect the tires and take them to one of the Limestone County Commissioners' sheds to be recycled. This is a FREE program thanks to the Alabama Department of Environmental Management, and I hope that everyone takes advantage of it. As tires break down, they not only release toxic substances into the air and water, they also release microplastics (plastic pieces smaller than 5mm) into the water. These microplastics travel and are ingested by wildlife of all kinds.

If you ever want to vol-



unteer with us, give us a call. You can volunteer on your own time, or you can join us at a cleanup! We are steadily filling our spring calendar with planned events. If you would like more information on the tire recycling program, give us a call and we can send you

in the right direction. Every little bit helps, and everyone benefits from a better environment. And if you know the Cuttings, be sure to thank them. It's not enough, but they surely deserve it!



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Cooking with Anna

Get Some Rest!

by Anna Hamilton

The world tells us that to rest is to be lazy. Somehow, we are supposed to be able to do it all, never get tired, and keep a smile on our face. The Lord knew that we needed rest. Just like a parent knows when their child needs to take a nap. Rest is not lazy, it's holy and it's both a commandment in Scripture and a gift from God to us.

I am plagued with feelings of guilt if I take time to rest. These intrusive thoughts from the devil keep me from enjoying rest. It keeps me from ever being fully relaxed. And

yet, God told us to rest. When God tells us something, it isn't just a slight suggestion or recommendation, it is a command.

Both work and rest are clearly defined in the Bible. From the very beginning, God made day and night. In His wisdom, He knew that there would be a time for work and rest. God commanded the Israelites to labor for six days but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord. In Exodus 20:9-11, God's command for a Sabbath day of rest

continued on page 23

Creamy Curry and Almond Chicken

Ingredients:

6 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves

Butter

2 tsp curry powder

1 cup sliced mushrooms, sauteed

2 cans, cream of chicken soup

2 cups sour cream or Greek yogurt

½ cup slivered almonds

Salt and pepper to tasted

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Season chicken with salt and pepper. In a skillet over medium heat, lightly brown chicken breasts in butter. Transfer chicken to a 9x13 pan.

In a bowl, combine curry powder and soup. Pour over chicken. Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 1 hour.

Remove chicken from sauce and set aside. To the sauce add sour cream, mushrooms, and almonds.

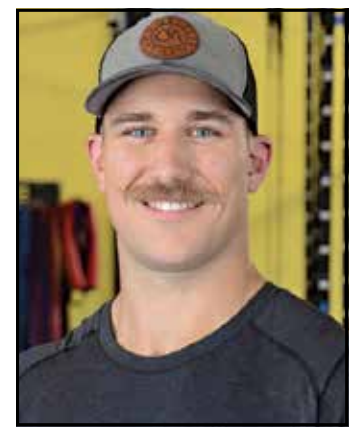


Return chicken to pan and cover with sauce.

Place in oven, uncovered, for approximately 20 minutes, or until bubbly. Serve with rice, quinoa, or mashed potatoes.

The Power Of Consistency: *Your Key To Better Health And Wellness*

by Nick Niedzwiecki - Owner, CrossFit Athens



For many people, the idea of taking control of their health and wellness can feel overwhelming. You might think, “Where do I even start?” or “Can I really stick to a healthier lifestyle?” The good news is that you don’t need to be perfect to see results. Instead, focusing on being consistent with your nutrition and exercise is what truly makes the difference. Small, steady changes can transform your health in ways you never imagined.

Why Consistency Matters

When it comes to improving your health, consistency is far more important than intensity or perfection. Think of it like planting a garden. You wouldn’t expect to plant seeds one day and have a full-grown garden the next. It takes time, regular watering, and sunlight to see the fruits of your labor. Your body works the same way. By consistently feeding it nutritious foods and staying active, you give it the opportunity to grow stronger, more energized, and healthier over time.

The Benefits of Consistency

Better Long-Term Results: Consistency builds habits that last. Crash diets and extreme exercise routines might show quick results, but they’re often impossi-

ble to maintain. When you focus on small, sustainable changes—like drinking more water, eating more vegetables, or walking a little each day—you’re setting yourself up for long-term success.

Improved Energy Levels: Have you ever noticed how sluggish you feel after eating junk food or skipping meals? Consistently eating balanced meals with a mix of protein, healthy fats, and carbohydrates keeps your energy levels stable throughout the day. Pair that with regular exercise, and you’ll likely find yourself feeling more alert and productive.

Physical and Mental Health Benefits: Regular exercise and good nutrition don’t just help you lose weight; they also improve your overall health. Consistency in these areas can reduce your risk of chronic diseases like heart disease and diabetes, improve your sleep, and even boost your mood. Exercise releases endorphins, which are natural mood elevators, while balanced nutrition supports brain health and mental clarity.

Momentum Builds Motivation: The more consistent you are, the easier it gets. Each small victory—whether it’s a healthier meal

choice or completing a workout—builds momentum. Over time, these small wins add up and help you stay motivated to keep going.

How to Get Started

If you’ve never taken control of your health before, start with simple, achievable goals. Here are a few ideas:

- Focus on one meal at a time. Try adding a serving of vegetables to your lunch or swap-

ping soda for water.

- Move a little each day. Even a 10-minute walk can make a difference.

- Be patient. Remember, progress takes time. Celebrate small wins along the way, like choosing a healthier snack or completing a week of regular activity.

- Seek support. Tell a friend or family member about your goals,

or consider joining a group or working with a coach for accountability.

The Bottom Line

Taking control of your health doesn’t have to be complicated. By focusing on consistent, small actions, you can make real progress that lasts. Over time, those little changes will add up to big results. So start today—your future self will thank you!



Perfect Praise Music Of North Alabama: *Letting It Out And Helping It Grow*

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

continued from page 1

ve I have ever interviewed anyone for the front page of *Athens Now* that has a near *century* of combined teaching experience spread between only two people, but these two have been at it awhile. Denie began to play at the age of 3, and started teaching when she was 12. She now has 63 years under her belt, and Michael estimates he logs in at about 30 years, and as an ordained minister, also has a background in electronics.

Musically speaking, both Michael and Denie have been what could be called “classically trained,” but they have also availed themselves of a musical education that has come from a variety of resources. As people of faith, they have focused on developing worshippers, and have had the opportunity to do so both here and abroad. They have online classes as well.

The name of their school is simply Perfect Praise Music, and their foundational Scripture is Revelation 22:2, which talks of the environment of healing and worship that awaits us in heaven. Until then, we are all commanded to bring as much of that as possible to our fellow human beings, and it is to that end that the Riggsses have dedicated themselves.

Denie’s primary instrument is piano, and Michael’s is guitar. Michael told me they “believe in building a thorough foundation that is incremental. This is so nothing is missed. Students ought to be trained so they can play anything they want.” He then added that Perfect Praise Music students will be equipped so that they can “navigate music theory on the instrument of their choice.”

Now, lest you think this sounds a bit stuffy, these guys are anything but. They literally put the “fun” into music fundamentals. As parents



of five, and grandparents of a veritable passel, they have taught every type of student. Denie has specialized in the “littles,” and right now they have room in their preschool program. Denie has written early childhood musical curriculum as well as a book whose subject is essentially “music for babies.” Its title is *Perfect Praise Baby*, and it is available on Amazon.

Denie makes an interesting observation, regarding music, babies and their brains, which is:

The Perfect Praise Baby book contains musical tools to take your baby from newborn through all of the stages to strong walker. Over 200 variations are given, along with the amazing music research specific to babies. For instance: At this age, more neural synapses are seeking paths to wire in a baby's brain than at any other age. Music stimulation at this time of your child's development changes brain wiring for the rest of his/her life.

Denie also has experience with teaching music to people who struggle with autism, dementia, and other challenges. She and Michael have taught the Perfect Praise model on the mission field as well, which brings us to the focus of this article. The Riggsses know that we are both fearfully and wonderfully made, and that believers serve the Chief Musician. That being said, Michael and Denie are the most intent on equipping worshippers musically and spiritually of any age, background, denomination, and experience, having done so by the thousands over the last almost thirty years. There is a fascinating Scripture that talks about God seeking those who will worship Him in Spirit and in truth, and worship is something that transcends music; it is a lifestyle for all, and something Michael and Denie love to teach. Even if you do not consider yourself to be a musician, they know that if you are a human, you have some music in you, and they

want to teach you how to “let it out and help it grow.” By the way, “coming soon,” folks from North Alabama will have the opportunity to take a music writer’s workshop with award-winning worship leader and Christian recording artist Lenny LeBlanc. It will be held on February 22, and you can find more information on the Perfect Praise Facebook page.

I asked Michael why I should choose Perfect Praise Music for myself, a child, or a grandchild, and here is what he said: “We believe our approach to music has the ability to maximize intelligence, produce skilled musicians, and teach little ones in a worship-based, fun environment.” Visit online today at www.perfectpraisemusic.com to see if Perfect Praise is right for you or your family.

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“First It Rain...

by Stephanie Reynolds, Athens-Limestone Tourism Association



“...then it blew, then it frizz, then it snow” -- I have no idea where my father got this saying, but it was a staple as I was growing up. We Limestoneians have experienced all that in the past month. Even as I typed that last sentence, an alert on my watch popped up with, “Next blast of Arctic air arrives tonight” (fun fact: Just this morning it was warmer in North Pole, Alaska, than it was here).

When we travel, we often think about books to read, restaurants to try, clothes to bring. We might even throw in a hat and some sunscreen. But being weather savvy while traveling is more than just planning for sunburn. Every area of the country has some truly traumatic weather potential that can

spring up faster than you can adapt if you are not ready.

How likely is it that you will get caught in a bad weather situation and need any supplies or skill? Not likely. However, it's sort of like an airbag on a car or a fire extinguisher -- you probably won't need it, but if you do need it, you will REALLY need it.

And you are a smart person (as evidenced by reading this paper) and part of this amazing area, and I want you to come back safe, so let's make sure you're ready.

Start by assessment: Ask yourself, “Where am I going and when? What are the weather risks at that time of year? Where am I traveling through on the way to my destination and what

will the weather be?” You don't have to be nervous or frightened; planning and preparing is actually kind of fun. You feel like an explorer of some lost jungle.

Look at the weather (west and south, especially). Check once or twice a day as you drive, especially if there are big weather fronts coming through.

Weather types and (very minimum) preparation:

1. Ice and snow: DECENT CLOTHING including actual warm shoes, mittens, hat, coat. A snow scraper, hand warmers, a blanket in case you have to spend the night in your car.
2. Flooding: Knowledge (turn around, don't drown). You don't know the flood prone areas of where you are or the dips and bends in the road. Just

stay away from water over the road. Also, the water might just be a couple inches over the asphalt, but you don't know if the soil is worn out under the road.

3. Fire: Avoidance -- don't risk it! But grass fires can pop up unexpectedly, so have a map with alternate routes in case you're caught. ALWAYS have a fire extinguisher in your car. If you do have to abandon your car, pull it off the road if you can do it safely so emergency vehicles can get through.

4. Severe weather: A way to be alerted, a plan to get off the road (hint: never go under an overpass. It works like a wind tunnel). If you are stuck away from structures, get out of the car and into the lowest

point (usually a ditch).

5. Heat: Fluids for you and your vehicle, cool packs that are made for injuries (very inexpensive at stuff mart).

Gear! More Gear!

1. A road atlas: A lot of us rely on Google maps, but what if you don't have cell service or have to pull off your route due to road blockage? A road atlas, that amazing book of knowledge from back in the day when we rode in the rear of the station wagon, is still being published and incredibly useful.

2. Water: Just carry it. Even if you are going through the swamp, you need water. And don't just take one water bottle per person. A case of water is less than \$5, even if you spring for the good stuff. There have been too many incidents of a family of 4 having to share half a bottle of water in the desert for 2 days.

3. Food: For many reasons. But honestly if you're going on vacation and the entire back seat isn't filled with road trip snacks, do you even travel, bro?

4. Phone apps: Download the local weather apps for your trip -- you can delete them when you get back home if you want. Make sure to turn on alert notifications. Also keep track of road conditions with a DOT app.

Again, will you need this stuff? Most likely no (except the food and water). However, it never hurts to be prepared!



Sarah And Science: *A Love Story*

By Brandi Harris

continued from page 1

rah spends all her time in science, where she feels safe and comfortable.

By the third day at her new school, the teacher noticed Sarah's activities followed a pattern. Sarah always avoided a certain area. She would walk the long way around the tables, as far away from the shelves as she could get, tiptoeing by the children working with grammar materials. She only left science to gather supplies, each time carefully avoiding the attention of anyone near grammar.

What Sarah doesn't love is reading. Each week at her last school, she would meet with the teacher and her assigned group to practice. Her reading wasn't the worst, but it was slow and choppy and sounded weird in her ears. Over time, she became embarrassed and began avoiding reading altogether.

Sarah's new Montessori teacher didn't know exactly why Sarah was avoiding grammar. She seemed eager enough for most stories and activities. She obviously loved learning. When

she reviewed Sarah's file from her previous school, she realized Sarah's name was often put on the yellow and red sections of the classroom behavior chart. She felt Sarah may be discouraged.

The Montessori teacher observed Sarah was quite capable. She could hear Sarah slowly sounding out words on the experiment cards. She'd seen her ask classmates for help. She also knew Sarah was very aware of her surroundings, often watching others working. Keeping all of this in mind, Sarah's teacher started teaching grammar and phonics lessons just near enough to Sarah for her to overhear. The teacher also suggested older children work with Sarah on projects. A week or so later, the teacher asked Sarah's friend to invite Sarah to a grammar story. Sarah eagerly accepted the invitation to join and began her first official grammar lesson: suffixes.

The next day, Sarah and a friend worked, building the words in blue letters and adding the suffixes in red letters. Sarah read "Test, Testing, Tested" aloud to her friend from the chart and started the

next row of words. The teacher watched Sarah confidently read the whole chart aloud.

What's so unique about this story? First, the teacher took an indirect approach and incorporated reading into Sarah's choice activities. She did not intervene or correct. Second, the teacher took cues from Sarah's behavior. As Sarah built relationships, she willingly joined. In less than a year, Sarah usually chose the position of scribe and orator in group projects. As her self-confidence grew, so did her reading ability.

This type of scenario happens again and again in Montessori schools. In Sarah's case, her classroom teacher was an AMI trained guide, who knew that the most important thing for Sarah is the construction of her inner self, not the checking of boxes. She knew that Sarah would reach her academic goals from her own drive to learn, once she was ready.

Sarah's new class was a traditional Montessori class of six- to twelve-year-olds. This grouping of different levels works to all the students' advantage. It allowed Sarah to meet her educational goals, becoming an important and admired leader, while the older student moved into the adolescent group with confidence and a sense of fulfillment.

The Montessori teacher, or "guide," is there to inspire. Her stories offer just enough information to ignite a need to know more, inspiring children to research the "why" and



"how." It is truly magical to see. The first story of the year teaches children that all things follow a natural law, even humans. But we humans are special. We have three unique gifts that set us apart from other living creatures. We have a mind to think, a heart to love, and hands to work. By creating stories filled with gratitude for those who've gone before us and for our special gifts, guides instill a sense of how all things are interconnected and all things are important.

As in Sarah's case, the trained Montessori guide takes great care to protect children's self-esteem and dignity in all areas of lear-

ning and discipline. For those who've experienced hardships, the guide helps rekindle their inner drive by sparking curiosity and building confidence.

Our local Montessori community is a homeschool group called Mooresville Montessori located in East Limestone. To find out more about joining or about career opportunities, please visit www.mooresville-montessori.com.

Resources: [Children Who Are Not Yet Peaceful](#) by Donna Bryant Goertz.
[From Childhood to Adolescence](#) by Maria Montessori.

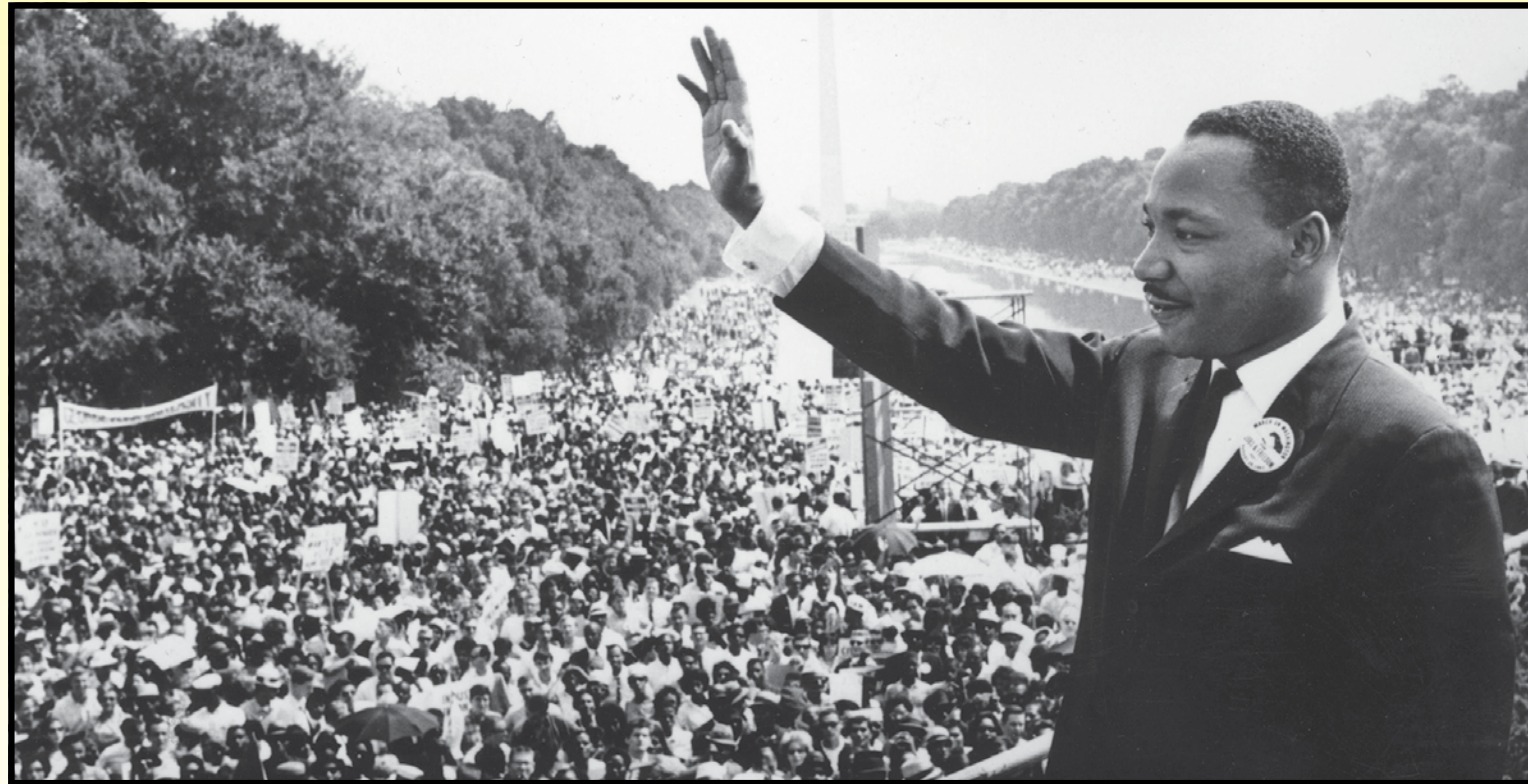
Complacency Vs. Contentment: *Striving For A Better World In Honor Of Dr. King*

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



As we honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., we are reminded of the delicate balance between contentment and complacency. Complacency reflects a sense of stagnation—a reluctance to grow or challenge the status quo. It is an acceptance of things as they are, often rooted in fear or apathy. Contentment, by contrast, represents a state of peace and gratitude that exists alongside the recognition that there is still work to be done. Contentment does not hinder growth; instead, it provides the emotional grounding needed to pursue change with clarity and purpose.

Dr. King's life exemplifies how content-



ment and a pursuit of progress can coexist. He drew strength from the wisdom of elders like Mother Pollard, a devoted participant in the

Montgomery bus boycott, who famously and "ungrammatically" said, "My feets is tired, but my soul is rested." Her words encapsulate the

power of contentment in the midst of struggle. Though her body ached from walking miles for freedom, her soul found peace in the righteousness of her cause. This profound balance between personal peace and collective action enabled Dr. King and countless others to persevere in their fight for equality.

The challenge for us today is to embody this same balance. Being content does not mean settling for mediocrity or turning a blind eye to societal wrong. Instead, it means appreciating the blessings in our lives while recognizing the work that remains undone. It is about cultivating gratitude as a source of strength, not as an excuse for inaction. True contentment allows us to care for our well-being and simultaneously

extend ourselves in service to others. It is a foundation from which we can advocate for a world where equity, justice, and dignity are available to all.

In observing Dr. King's day, let us recommit to the vision of contentment that propels action rather than complacency that fosters stagnation. Through this re-imagining of contentment, we honor his dream and his legacy. May we find the courage to pursue better lives for ourselves, but especially for others, standing firm in the conviction that peace and progress are not mutually exclusive. Contentment should inspire us to build the "Beloved Community" Dr. King envisioned—one rooted in love, righteousness, faith, and a shared humanity.

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Dating In 2025

by Jackie Warner

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



It has been so long since I have dated. I have catered to all those around me: my friends, parents, siblings, and without a doubt my job! Here we are in 2025 and I have decided to get back to me -- understanding more about who I am and what I need.

We constantly pour all we have from an empty cup into others. Over and over, we are giving and going into a multitude of life deficits that are never repaid. I am sure many a reader of this article would say, "Guilty."

When was the last time you really looked in

the mirror; sat in silence; pampered you for you...not for the world, but just for you? What about closed your eyes and breathed? We must change our mindset and be intentional to self... and stop worrying about having someone else to do these things with or to validate that it is okay!!!

In our minds, we ponder who can I call? -- Who can go with me? -- What will others think? We might also be on the other end of the spectrum and feel, "I would do this or that, but I am scared to do it all by myself."

I have traveled and re-

ally enjoyed seeing new places and spaces when I was required to for my job assignments. The problem now is if it is not a work trip, then I start trying to figure out who is going to go with me. Do I really need someone to go along with me? No, because then I am catering to their habits and concerns and really lose out on enjoying the trip for me. I challenge each of you this 2025 to start dating the most important person...yourself, yes, YOU!

Accept and love yourself where you are in this moment of time with no regrets -- 2024

is gone. Start living...

- Shift your mindset
- To see your growth, move from your comfort zone
- Stop confusing solitude and freedom with loneliness because time with self allows for recharge and clarity without the pressures of people and environment
- Take yourself out to a nice brunch or dinner
- Catch a movie
- Enjoy your favorite hobby
- Schedule a massage or makeover

- Take the day off and schedule the whole day just for yourself
- Enjoy nature or plan a walk or picnic in the park; bring a good book or your favorite music playlist

Make a date with yourself!

Until Next Time, Be Sincere, Kind and Intentional

Jackie Warner, Community Outreach Specialist

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



Am I Strategic Or Reactionary?

by Deb Kitchenmaster



Happy Blessed New Year, Athens Now! Today I am a voice of encouragement, "PRE-PARE, PREPARE, PREPARE." For you see, it is the very nature of what is involved with the action of 'preparation' that answers the question of whether we are strategic or reactionary.

Preparation for a 9,000 mile tour was underway with a friend who lived in Canada and was coming into the United States on an 'Awaken Life Tour.' We had been introduced to each other a couple of decades earlier, when my daughter and he (Brian) were classmates attending Christ for the Nations in Dallas, Texas. He was now married, blessed with two beautiful daughters, and a 'rapper' -- encouraging people of all ages.

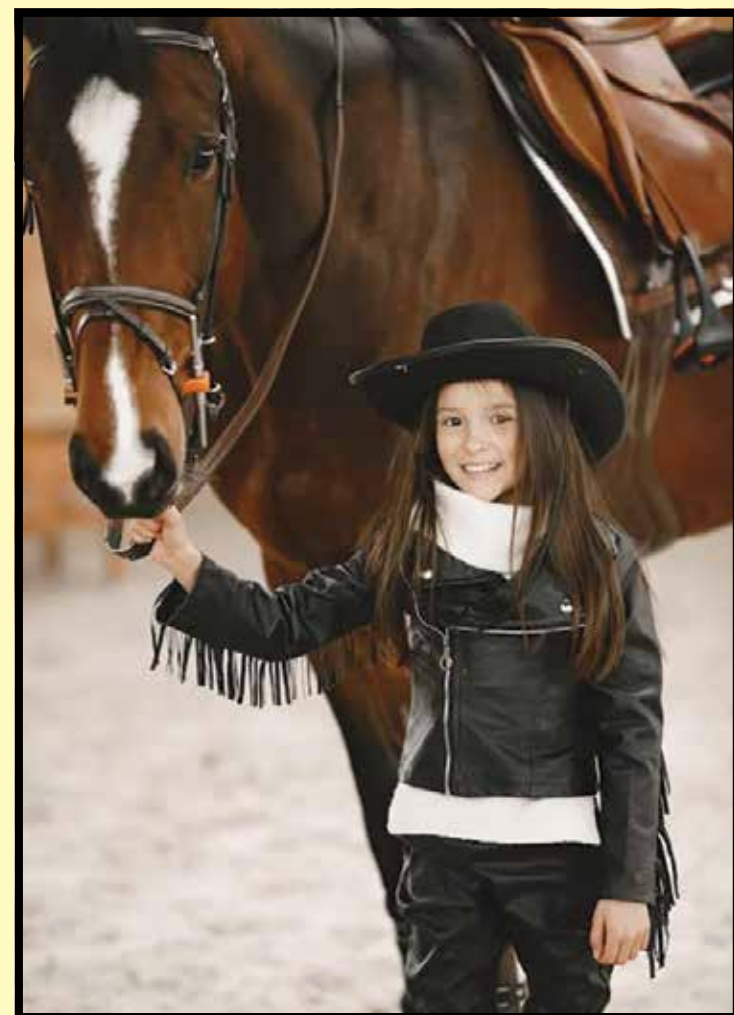
As perfect, unfailing love was tapping out unforced rhythms for each mile of this tour, our presence, our home, and our horses became part of the preparedness. Their first visit was after they left Arkansas, and their second visit was when they returned from Florida. Each time we enjoyed horse activities. At that time, their youngest daughter (age 9) appeared to be a confident, enthusiastic horse lover with some understanding and limited experiences with horses. Groundwork was a new experience and reading a horse's body language was an entirely novel way of connecting with a horse from her mindset. In the round pen, I witnessed a 'shift' in this outgoing, almost demanding personality into a respectful listening leader, willing and attentive to

receive feedback from her horse. Confidence is being willing to try, becoming sure of what you're doing, learning from your mistakes, and functioning with an absence of fear. Confidence grows as you show up again and again. Demanding is replaced with leading; it's a process.

As you can imagine, the preparation that was required to tour 9,000 miles took time, focus, and communication. It's very much like the preparation that takes place when you're connecting a human with a horse. When you're traveling that distance, you want to set yourself up for success. Check tires, oil, and fluids in your motor home; clothing; food and water for the journey. When connecting with a horse, you want to set your horse and yourself up for success by doing the following three things:

- Learn how to read your horse properly. The ears, swishing of the tail, eyes, head set, and nostrils are telling you a story. Pay attention.
- Know how to respond to your horse. Is my horse scared or defiant? Do I apply pressure or do I gently touch in an affirming way?
- Utilize equine psychology, as it is an important tool. Simply put, is my horse responding to me because I am making him or because the horse wants to?

What about you? Do you realize there is a preparation involved in learning?



Ninety percent of people quit their goals before ever achieving them because of not liking what they 'feel.' Many people "want it" but few people "get it." It's not about them or the program; it's a lack of understanding how we learn. We ALL have a comfort zone. It's a zone where we feel normal and neutral because there aren't any challenges, and we are comfortable. However, all learning occurs outside the zone. It's my responsibility to step outside my comfort zone, and when I do, to pay attention to what I am sensing in my body, emotions, and surroundings. I have to ask myself, "What am I doing?" or "What is going on?" or "What am I to learn?" Become aware,

awake, and alert of YOU?

Out of all the names that could have been given to identify the Holy Spirit (the same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead), one of the names given is COMFORTER. Father Love knew there would be times where we would become uncomfortable. He sent the Holy Spirit.

Receive comfort from the Holy Spirit as you step out of your comfort zone onto the ground of learning.

The young girl is now a young woman working with horses and youth in Canada.

*Your NEIGHbor,
Deb Kitchenmaster*

horsinaround188@gmail.com





What Did You Do With The Children?

by Phil Williams

Solicitor General Elizabeth Prelogar.

Have we have slipped off into some post-apocalyptic mayhem? In my opinion there are things for which a nation will be judged. Those moments that future generations scornfully assess in hindsight.

We look back on the Salem witch trials and are repulsed by them. But they happened. We look back on slavery and are repulsed by it, but it happened. We look back on the Nazi genocide of Jews and are repulsed by it, but it happened. I believe that how this current generation cares for and protects our kids is something that future generations will either praise us for, or be repulsed by.

Look south to our Southern border as hundreds of thousands of unaccompanied young children have inexplicably streamed into our country. Some as young as two years old have shown up alone with nothing but a phone number written on their arms. The Biden administration allowed these precious ones to come into our care and then promptly lost them. A recent report from the inspector general of Biden's own Department of Immigration and Customs Enforcement details the awful statistic that the U.S. government has lost track of over 320,000 minor children who entered the U.S. unaccompanied. They are just gone. Into the ether with only the hope that

they not being trafficked and abused.

Every single day we catch more glimpses into the activist factories that some schools have become: Great educators stand idly by while wolves in sheep's clothing occupy the classroom down the hall and teach children that grammar is bendable for the use of pronouns, that biology is fluid, that history is racist, that civics is for tyrants. Female athletes are forced to share showers with males and lose their medals and scholarships in the name of trans-equity. Educational settings where every value, every belief, every patriotic vibe and faith-based position is laid bare and vacated by activists who pose as teachers and coaches.

An entire generation is being abused. Lost. Banned about as trophies.

Children in America too often face the social contagion of constant pressure to follow their own truth. They are "affirmed" by medical interventions and surgeries resulting in a lifetime of counseling and medication. We are a society that tells children to understand, accept, and even participate in adult versions of sexuality, while at the same time setting age limits on when they can drive, sign contracts, marry, join the military, or get a Costco card. We tell children they are important while at the same time blithely move past the idea that a third of a

million of them can be handed off to strangers and then forgotten to the world.

We have reached the zenith of social schizophrenia, on the one hand telling a child we are going to "affirm" them, while on the other demanding that they be altered, thereby affirming nothing more than them being made wrong. We claim to value children as dear to us, and yet we callously have a national policy of allowing vulnerable children to wander across our borders, then be farmed out to alleged family members, and promptly wash our hands of them and write them off the books.

We have to reign this in. They will be adults soon enough, if they make it that far. How will they remember their childhood? Kids are a gift from God, and we are called to be good stewards of His gifts. I'm concerned that our nation claims on the one hand to do all that we can for kids, while on the other we destroy them at a rate never before seen.

Gone are the days of turning a blind eye. Gone are the days where we can just shrug our shoulders and say, "That's not my kid so it's not my fight." If it's not your kid today, it may be your grandchild tomorrow... or that sweet neighbor's kid who plays in the yard...the little minions that run in the hallways of your church, play on the corner playground, or get too loud in the

grocery store. This, my friends, is a fight for all of us!

As a nation, as a culture, we will be held accountable one day. Future generations will look back on this time. What will they say about us? It is not enough to say that we were good stewards with our possessions, our skills and talents, our natural resources, or our time.

One of the greatest forms of stewardship that any culture can be measured against is found in the simple question: "What did you do with the children?"

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/talk-show 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 send an email with your name and contact information to Commentary@1819News.com.



The Alternative Approach

New Year - New You

by Roy Williams



Freeing yourself from the medical establishment is closer than you think. Now you can get to the root cause of any disorder or imbalance. For over 60 years the medical establishment has driven the whole world into a dependency situation using fear and misleading advertisements to take us exactly where they want us to go. They have driven us into their extremely expensive medical concepts including radiation, chemotherapy, x-rays, CAT scans, food choices, and so many more I don't have enough space to cover. We have reached a point where they are over medicating everyone, using way too many prescriptions, many that should never have been approved in the first place, especially vaccines.

America finally reached a turning point, which the last election has clearly shown. We the people have spoken, loud and clear, and the whole world is paying attention. We have simply had enough of the double standards. The elites never are held accountable and the thieves, rapists, and murderers are back on the streets so fast it can make one wonder who is in charge. That leaves the middle class, who are held accountable, to pay the

finest and serve the sentences. The politicians lie, cheat, and steal, making themselves millionaires before leaving office, and nobody even asks how they did it or where the money came from.

Now that I have that off my chest, let's get back to my opening statements about the sick-care system in America. Over the last 60-plus years, using a government agency called the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), they have blocked or censored any recognized research surrounding natural solutions and even cures for diseases in America. It goes back to the Rockefellers and other powerful enterprises who blocked any real health solutions from ever seeing the light of day. Many of the Native Americans' very effective remedies were destroyed.

As a result, we, the American people, have gone from being recognized as the longest lived, healthiest people on earth in the 1960s and 70s to almost dead last (no pun intended) just 50 or 60 years later. How could that happen, you may ask, when we spend more on overall healthcare than any other nation on earth, and our health insurance is increas-



ing every year. We schedule more doctors' appointments, are diagnosed with more disorders, have more procedures, and take more prescriptions every year than the rest of the world combined. If our health care system is so good then why are those numbers continuously going up instead of going down? Could it be that we have been deceived? Have we been sold a bill of goods? How much do we have to spend before the number of people diagnosed with cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and arthritis actually begin to decrease?

We, the people, must accept the fact that the medical industrial complex and all the organizations associated with it have monopolized the entire system to make sure no cures are ever recognized and that prevention will not even be discussed. They are so corrupt that anyone or anything that even tries to stop disease will be met with lawsuits, slander, and character assassination. They have and will spend millions to strangle the message about

anything that offers a better, safer, and more effective plan. The Bible teaches us that, "The love of money is the root of all evil." Their money is more important than life itself, especially the lives of those who actually believe they are the only ones with the answers.

Now, let's talk about the new year. Let's plan to thrive in 2025. Even though they will probably never acknowledge it, God designed the human body to heal and it not only can, it will when it is provided with the raw building materials that are necessary for the healing process to engage. Please remember, not one cell in the human body is dependent on synthetic drugs to heal. Healing happens naturally when we put the proper nutrients into our system, not drugs. Thousands of us are living proof that it's exactly what can happen. Starting with my wife and me. We made a decision many years ago that we were not going to use the modern-day medical system unless absolutely necessary.

The results have been noth-

ing less than profound. We have been married for almost 45 years and only had health insurance for short periods of time when it was provided by our employer. Even then, we never went to the doctors, never took prescription drugs, and have never been sick, with the exception of a flu or cold on rare occasions. Other than going to a walk-in clinic to get an antibiotic for an abscessed tooth, a hernia surgery, and eye surgery, we have been able to avoid the medical industrial complex altogether. It has saved us literally tens of thousands of dollars.

What we have done, though, is make sure we have covered all the bases when it comes to proper nutrition. We also made a decision to stay in fairly good physical condition, and most important of all, we have put God first in our lives. To learn more, go by Herbs & More in Athens, NHC Herb Shop in Killen, online at www.nhcherbs.com or call us at 256-757-5660.

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Cooking with Anna (continued from page 13)

Get Some Rest!

by Anna Hamilton

was not only expressed as a command but also as a gift. God gives us the day of rest to enjoy His presence. It is a time to stop working so hard and to simply worship Him. The Sabbath is called holy because it is meant to be set apart for God.

Though you may not feel like you are able to rest, know that the Bible has many examples of people who were able to take to rest in impossible situations. Daniel slept in the lions' den. King Darius had appointed men to rule throughout the kingdom and Daniel was one of them. However, because Daniel served God and had found favor with King Darius, it made the other appointed men jealous. So they passed a decree that who ever prayed to another god would be thrown into a den of lions. They knew they would catch Daniel because he prayed to God every day, and sure enough, Daniel found himself in a den of lions. Daniel had full faith in God and in return, God closed the mouths of all the lions. Daniel was able to rest even in the midst of the lions. Daniel was awarded for his trust in God.

Paul was able to sleep in prison. In Acts 12, Peter found himself in prison for preaching the good news of Jesus. Peter was bound in chains and heavily guarded. The church begin to pray for Peter without ceasing because they knew the persecution that surely awaited Peter. Yet, there lay Peter, fast asleep. In fact, he was in such a deep sleep that an angel had to hit him on the side to wake him up. Peter didn't even fully come to himself until the angel left him outside the prison walls. Even as Peter lay in prison, bound in chains, he trusted that the Lord would always be with him. No matter what anyone on earth would do to him here

on this earth, the Lord would always be with him.

Jesus was able to sleep in a horrible storm. While Jesus rested in the bow of the boat, the apostles where above on deck battling a horrible storm. The boat was being tossed and beaten by waves, wind, and rain. The apostles where terrified, surely thinking they would drown. They went to look for Jesus and found him sleeping soundly. They woke Jesus, saying that they feared they were going to drown. Jesus simply responded, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid." He got up and rebuked the winds and waves and just like that, the storm ceased, and everything was completely calm. All of the men with Jesus were amazed with Jesus in that moment. This wonderful story of faith is recorded in Matthew 8 and Mark 4.

No matter your circumstance, you can rest when you have God. God wants us to rest. Spending that time to rest restores our souls and gives us time to praise God for all the gifts He has given us. Resting in God is a spiritual concept that refers to finding peace and rest from worry, stress, and confusion. It's a way to show trust in God, and that you believe He is in control of your life.

This week's recipe is a delicious twist on just regular chicken. Now I'm going to be honest, my hubby thinks he doesn't like curry powder, so I have to sneak it in this recipe. If your family doesn't like curry powder, there is still a good chance they will enjoy this warm and creamy chicken dish. Give it a try today!

*"In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety."
(Psalm 4:8)*

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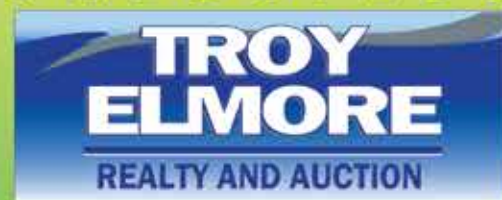
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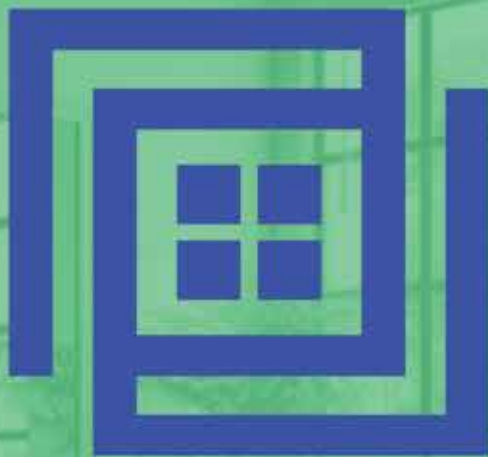
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everyone else is
already taken."
- Oscar Wilde*

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