

June 20 - July 03, 2025

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## Isom's Orchard: "New Face And Same Guts"

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

For years I have told anyone who will listen how much I love doing what I have come to call my annual "Isom's Interview," and this year is no exception. The Isom family has been a part of Limestone County for generations,

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## Register Now: *The Annual Fortify Alabama Anti-Human Trafficking Conference Is Coming Up On July 18*



By Ali Elizabeth Turner

Last year, more than 100 community volunteers, law enforcement officers, counselors, social workers, emergency response personnel, ministers, survivors, and many

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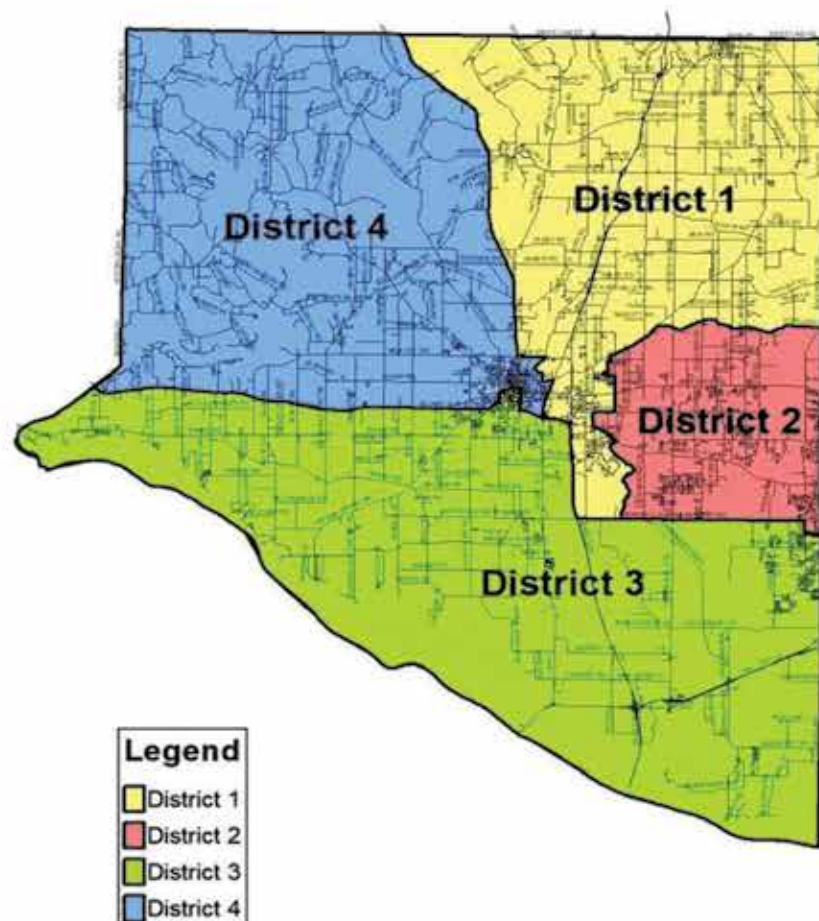
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*- Chairman Collin Daly*



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**Publisher's Point**

**Army 250**

On Saturday, June 14, 2025, the United States Army turned 250 years old. It was also Flag Day, and there was a bash put on in our nation's capital that could only be described with two words: stunning and spectacular. To say that it went off without a hitch does not do it justice, and to say that I and millions of other Americans were both joyful and deeply moved is the focus of this **Publisher's Point**.

There were displays of period costumes that illustrated Army uniforms from the Revolutionary War until the present day. Then, there were aircraft that spanned the last eight decades.

- World War II-era aircraft:
  - B-25 Mitchell bomber
  - P-51 Mustangs
  - Douglas C-47 Skytrain
- Current Army aircraft:
  - UH-60 Black Hawks
  - AH-64 Apache attack helicopters
  - CH-47 Chinook heavy lift helicopters
  - MH-6 Little Bird helicopter
  - AH-6 Light attack helicopter
  - MH-60 helicopter
  - MH-60L DAP helicopter
  - Bell UH-1 Iroquois or 'Huey' helicopters
  - Bell AH-1 Cobra helicopters
  - Hughes OH-6 Cayuse helicopter



My dad flew P-51 Mustangs during WWII, amongst others. By contrast, the display of drones as well as robotic "dogs" illustrated the future of warfare, and definitely gave one pause. The re-up ceremony conducted by President Trump was something that I am sure will live forever in the hearts of the soldiers who decided to give more years of their lives in defense of America.

The music was marvelous. The performers were the U.S. Army Drill Team; the U.S. Army Band-Latin Ensemble; the U.S. Army Band-Downrange; DJ Nyla Symone; Scotty Hasting, a wounded warrior who served in Afghanistan; and country singers Noah Hicks and Warren Zeiders. Speaking personally, I saved the best for last, and that was the legendary Lee Greenwood. Mr. Greenwood is now 82 years old, and as many times as I have heard him sing "God Bless The

USA," this time I sobbed unashamedly. His voice was clear and strong, as was his message. He stated on his Facebook page the following:

*What an unforgettable honor to perform "God Bless the USA" for the U.S. Army's 250th birthday. Proud to stand with our heroes and celebrate this incredible milestone.*

Lee Greenwood told me once in a chance meeting here in Athens at a dedication of a Wounded Warrior home, "We serve the God of second chances; keep going, girl." We do indeed, and I intend to.

And then, there were the fireworks. Honestly, I did not know that fireworks could do what they did. If I didn't know better, I would have said they were computer generated.

As wonderful and awe-inspiring were all the happenings of the entire gala, what

encouraged me the most were two young people who were curbside reporters for FOX news. Their names are Lawrence Jones and Emily Compagno. They were boldly patriotic, positive, and delightful. Both came from long lines of soldiers who served; in Lawrence's case, slaves who were first freed and then fought. What could have been a better example of what our country stands for? Not the tanks, not the "birds," but the people who live out the story, and make soldiers glad to be, as I often heard in Iraq, "part of something bigger." Happy Birthday, Army, and thank you for keeping us free.

*Ali Elizabeth Turner*

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## Korean “Kinfolk”

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

In January of 1951, four young Athenians headed off to the legendary cold of the Korean War. They were Walter Miller, Melvin Clem, Marvin Todd, and Dale Casteel. As is often the case, people who have lived through armed conflict become bonded in a way that is difficult to explain, and that was certainly the case with these gentlemen. Recently, I met with Walter Miller who was 19 at the time he began his military service, and he told me that they signed up as battle buddies with the 1343rd Combat Engineering National Guard out of Athens. Walter attended Athens High School, and Dale Casteel was still in Clements High School. Marvin and Melvin were in their '20s. Melvin was in college at the time, and Marvin had finished high school. Walter actually got his diploma from Ath-

ens High by going to night school when they returned. They returned in 1952. All are in their 90s now, and Marvin and Melvin are bucking to become centenarians. The total of young men who deployed from Athens with the 1343rd was 142. “There were no deaths, and one lost a leg,” Walter told me. A National Guard member of note in Athens history was Buddy Evans, who served in Korea as a medic. Buddy went on to become many things -- sheriff of Limestone County from 1963-1978, coroner for 8 years, and he opened Catfish Cabin and Greenbrier Restaurant.

Backing up just a bit, they trained at Fort Campbell beginning in August of 1950, and headed to the Korean peninsula by boat. The cold that they encountered in the dead of the Korean winter was tough for anyone to handle, let alone

young men from Alabama that rarely saw snow that actually stuck for more than a couple of days, let alone a temperature of -42°F. “Until it became winter, the weather was a lot like Alabama,” Walter told me. A lot of times the guys were in the same tent, and they worked every day. Their job largely centered around repairing roads and bridges. Previous to the Korean War, the Japanese had cut down all the trees, and Walter mentioned that all that was there were little scrub pines.

I learned something that saddened me, and that is that not only did Korea become the “Forgotten War,” but they were vilified as well. Thankfully it was not as bad as after Vietnam, but Walter mentioned that there were signs posted up North that said, “No dogs or soldiers allowed.” His-



**Korean War brothers from left, Walter Miller, Melvin Clem, Marvin Todd, Dale Casteel**

tory tends to repeat itself, and I am glad that at least for now, we are in an era where soldiers largely are honored, as they should be.

The fact that all of the 142 came back alive is nothing short of a miracle. They went on to live “regular” lives, and Walter did construction for a few years, and then worked for Amoco for 25 years. “I retired 33 years ago,” he told me. They began getting together for reunions on the decade, at first ten years, then twenty, thirty, and so forth, and had a large reunion of more than 100 that was held at Joe Wheeler State Park. As the numbers dwindled, they began to get

together for a meal once a year, and had their most recent reunion back in April. For several years, they kept a ceremonial bottle of champagne. They had an agreement that once it got down to the last two, they would pop open the bottle and toast each other and the rest of the “Korean kinfolk.” Walter told me with a twinkle in his eye that the bottle came up missing, so they replaced it with an unopened bottle of whiskey, and he is the keeper. “But I don’t think any of us actually drink,” he said. Here is a cheer for four men who endured unspeakable cold and more that we might be free.

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## Special Feature

# The High Road

by Donna Clark

I'm reading a wonderful book, *Jesus – the High Road Leader*, written by John Maxwell and Chris Hodges. The blurb on the back cover piqued my interest and also challenged me. As I read, I found areas in my life that didn't measure up to high-road living. As sad as that is, I'm thankful for it. I can now begin to pray and ask God to help me in these areas where I am missing the mark. I hope this article will do the same for you, reveal some areas that you could possibly be falling short in. Even if you're an unbeliever, I hope that you'll stay with me, read the words, and reflect upon your life. I feel we all want to be successful, for our lives to matter, but the reality is that none of us are perfect and we are all in need of help in some degree. We need Godly direction and the strength that can only come from God, to go in the way He sets before us.

The authors tell us the most important words Jesus ever spoke was "Follow Me." Don't just do as I say, do as I do. How is that accomplished? How do we love our neighbor as ourselves? How do we reflect a perfect Jesus in an imperfect world that is consumed with bitterness, anger, hostility, and hate? In His Sermon on the Mount, we are told to love our enemies, turn the other cheek, and go the extra mile. It's not only what Jesus encouraged us to do, He did it Himself.

If you're a fan of the Chosen series, you may remember the episode where Jesus and His disciples, while traveling down a road, are met by a group of Roman soldiers. Immediately, the soldiers place their heavy gear on the backs of Jesus and His

followers, for by law, the Roman soldiers were permitted to make that demand. One mile was to be given if these soldiers so directed. When the mile is reached, Jesus teaches His disciples a valuable lesson, He instructs them to continue further than what was required. This had to be difficult, serving an authority that had caused their people so much difficulty and pain. You may be thinking how this is relevant for today. If you've lived any number of years, I'm sure you've had a situation in your life when someone mistreated you, misjudged you, caused you harm and pain in some fashion. If no forgiveness was asked, no sorrow seen by your offender, and you were asked by that person to help in some way, would you? Would you give what was requested and more? Our humanness says this isn't fair, and I'm here to agree that many things are not. We can argue that any act of kindness towards such an individual is not deserved. I'm not saying we should allow ourselves to be abused or be a doormat. But I do believe we must look at Jesus' words and ask for His guidance in such situations. He may ask that we serve the one who has caused us pain, and if so, we are to do as He did by giving even more than asked. The thing to remember is that the



deed is not really being done for the other person, the deed is done for the One we serve and our desire to follow His example and be obedient to His instructions.

Going back to the Chosen episode, as the Roman soldiers notice that Jesus and His followers are continuing on further than the required distance, they begin to slow their pace, stop, and look at this group of Jews. You then see Romans humbled by the actions of these men and women. At that time, they remove the packs from the travelers, taking the loads from their backs and placing them on their own. A statement was made and it was noticed. The extra mile was given. This story is given to teach us much about humility, forgiveness, even turning the other cheek and loving

our neighbor, whoever that may be, as ourselves. How can we possibly go wrong when we seek God for direction and then follow?

Would our world be a better place if we lived by His teaching? To not keep score or seek revenge, but to look at the One who has given us a high road to walk and to follow on it. Think of the impact that could be made in the lives of others when we are seen following a Man who loved so deeply. A Man who was so genuine, caring more about honoring His Fa-

ther and reflecting His character than proving a point or making a statement for Himself. What an example for us today.

So, I leave you with this – Would you say the road you travel is a higher road? Are you willing to go the extra mile even if it's not fair? Much has been given to us, are you willing to give to others?

Choose the high road.

- Donna



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# Calendar of Events

## **2025 Kiddie Carnival**

**Now - July 19**

The Athens Lions Club 2025 Kiddie Carnival is open every Thursday, Friday & Saturday night, (CLOSED JULY 3RD, 4TH & 5TH), 6:30pm-9:30pm. We have 10 rides that are best suited for kids ages 2-10 years. Free admission to the carnival and each ride is just a 50¢ ticket. We also have bingo and delicious concessions on site such as hamburgers, hot dogs, chicken sandwiches, chicken fries, funnel cakes, bottled water and soft drinks. Also served are cotton candy, sno cones and other crowd favorites. Bring cash as we do not accept Credit Cards or Debit Cards. For updates and additional information about Kiddie Carnival visit our Facebook page: Athens Lions Club Kiddie Carnival. The Athens Lions Club property is located at 309 E Forrest St. in Athens, AL, it is across the street from the current Athens Julian Newman School. Free parking for the Kiddie Carnival and other events is at a parking lot across the street from the Kiddie Carnival. We do not offer private party rentals.

## **Glow Run 5K**

**June 21**

6-10pm. Join us for a glowing 5K celebrating women in every season of life. Every step supports our mission to uplift and empower women. Light up the night at the Through The Seasons Glow Run! Swan Creek Park, Highway 31, Athens.

## **Limestone County Master Gardeners presents Saturday Gardening Workshop: Maintaining Your Garden**

**June 21**

10 AM at Athens-Limestone County Public Library. After you've worked so hard planting your garden and it has started to grow, do you know what to do when the bugs come and the days are long and hot. Let Extension Agent Lily Oaks teach you how to keep your garden beautiful and productive throughout the gardening season. FREE and open to the public.

## **Free 25 Point Car Inspection**

**June 22**

The Mens' Ministry Outreach of the Athens SDA Church is holding a free 25 point car inspection and road rally 1-4 p. m. at the church parking lot, 1207 N. Pryor Street, Athens, AL. All are welcome to participate.

## **Wonder Junction Vacation Bible School**

**June 23 - 26**

Join us every night from 6-8pm for vacation bible school at The Church at River Mills. 13435 Elk River Mills Road,. For

ages 3 yrs - 6th grade. Also join us for our VBS Kick-Off event on June 22 from 4-6pm with water slides, games, food & snow cones! 256-444-1306. [www.churchrivermills.org](http://www.churchrivermills.org)

## **Show Your Ride Car Show**

**June 28**

The Lincoln-Bridgeforth Park Committee presents the Show Your Ride Car Show. All cars and trucks are welcomed. Food trucks will be available on site. 7:30 AM-3:00 PM. The Historical Pincham-Lincoln Center, 606 Trinity Circle, Athens, AL. Registration will be from 7:00 AM - 9:00 AM at the Pincham Lincoln Center with an entry fee of \$20. Proceeds to benefit the LBPC's Christmas Charity program. Awards will be given to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners.

## **Art After Hours with 3 Savile Row**

**June 29**

Marion Street in Downtown Athens. Bring a chair and enjoy a night of music in historic Downtown Athens. Dine at local restaurants in the downtown area before the concert. 3 Savile Row is the Tennessee Valley's premiere Beatles music tribute act. The band includes dedicated musicians passionate about sharing their love of the Beatles' music with the world. 3 Savile Row faithfully showcases classic Beatles music from every era. Includes an art station for kids. The Art After Hours concert series is sponsored by: Alabama Tourism Dept. through Sen. Tim Melson, City of Athens, Morell Engineering and Athens-Limestone Tourism Association. You may also like our next event next month: July 5th at 7:00 pm, Art After Hours with JED Eye (A Fourth of July weekend celebration) in Athens.

## **Red, White And Boom**

**July 4**

Red, White And Boom 4th of July Festival. Starts at 10am. Athens Sportslex, US 31 N, Athens. Join us for a spectacular 4th of July celebration at the Red, White and Boom festival. Get ready for a day full of fun, food and festivities the entire family can enjoy.

## **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.



## Slinkard On Success

# “L” Is For Listen

by D. A. Slinkard

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

The next letter in our series is “L” and stands for “Listen.” I never thought I would be writing an article about the importance of listening; however, I have learned to never say never! In fact, I recently celebrated twenty-two years of being married to my beautiful wife, and I have found that when I listen to what my wife says versus just hearing her, I tend to stay out of trouble. When I listen to my wife, I can better comprehend what she is saying, and I am not just hearing the words she speaks.

In fact, I believe this is a problem our society is plagued with in that too many people do not take the time to listen to others when they speak. I think back over the course of my life and wonder how many arguments or misunderstandings I could have personally prevented if I would have just listened to the individual I was speaking with instead of already thinking about what my rebuttal was going to be. Do you ever find yourself in a conversation, not listening to the other person, instead just waiting for your opportunity to jump in and speak what is on your mind? Yep, I am guilty of this too.

I believe it takes a special skillset for an individual to learn how to listen. If listening was easy, then everyone would be able to do it. Bosses would not have to repeat the instructions twice, fast-food drive-thru would be much faster...and possibly the food orders would actually be correct. I know, I may be pushing a little too far on that



last one, but just imagine a world in which people took the time to actually listen to what others were saying. I wonder how many “police brutalities” would not exist because of listening to direct commands the first time. I wonder how many unemployment lines could be avoided because of listening to the instructions of the company. I wonder how many divorces could be prevented because of spouses taking the time to care what the other has to say.

The ability to listen really does have more of an impact on our lives than what we realize. How many times could I have done better on exams throughout my educational years if I would have just listened a little harder to what my teacher was teaching in the classroom? Instead, I was thinking about a baseball field or hitting a hard line drive into the gap to win the ball game or thinking about anything other than the subject being taught in the classroom. This all begs the question: How much trouble could be avoided by “troubled” teens if they would just listen to the teachers in the classroom setting?

How does a person become a better listener? First, we

need to listen to learn, not to just be polite, yet too often this is what happens. We take no real interest in what the other person is saying, thus it is easier for us to become distracted. We cannot control what others do; however, we can control ourselves, and we need to

focus in on exactly what the other person is saying. When we take the time to ask questions, not only do we listen better but we also have a better understanding of what the other person is trying to say. It can also be beneficial to repeat back what you heard because, in case of misunderstanding, this is a perfect way to clear up any confusion.

Another important aspect to think about when learning how to listen is to think about and pay attention to your talk/listen ratio. I have heard it said like this, “You have two ears and one mouth, so you should listen twice as much as you talk.”

What does your listen-to-talk ratio say about you? I have found it helpful to wait until others are finished speaking until I begin to respond.

To achieve success in life, there are some things we need to work on to improve who we are as individuals. I am not always the best listener, but it is something I am working on. I am curious as to what are some of the struggles other people have. Feel free to email me and let me know what you struggle with and how you overcome those struggles. Who knows – your struggle could be one of the topics for an upcoming article for *Slinkard On Success*.



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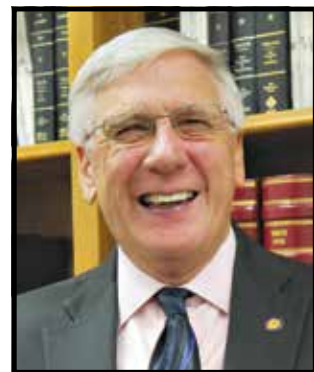




## What Makes Ronnie Roll

# Put Our Arms Around Our Country And Our City

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



We met two days after the Army's 250th birthday celebration, which had also been Flag Day. Mayor Ronnie was a sergeant in the U.S. Army and served in Vietnam from 1968-1970. He chose to celebrate the Army's birthday by getting together with buddies who had been there. He chuckled as he said, "I don't think we told any 'fish' stories," and he also saw a recap of the event in Washington, D.C. We could have talked all morning about every aspect of it, but he moved on to the good news that "The Wall That Heals" is coming to Athens in November.

The Wall That Heals is a ¾ scale mobile version of the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C. It was started in 1996, and has visited more than 800 cities in the U.S., Canada, and Ireland. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund selects the cities, and this year it is our

turn. The Wall That Heals travels on a 53-foot trailer, and will be open 24 hours a day as it rests in Beasley Field on the campus of Athens State University from November 6-9, 2025. The City of Athens is one of the sponsors, as are the Alabama Veterans Museum, Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 511, Limestone County Commission, the Limestone County Legislative Delegation, and Athens State University.

The Wall That Heals is 375 feet long, and stands 7.5 feet tall. One of the features that has served to be a source of healing is the fact that people can find the name of their friend or loved one and do a rubbing of that name. There is a mobile education center that is part of the exhibit along with a "Hometown Heroes" photo exhibit. There is a website specifically for the Athens event, and it is



[www.thewallthathealsathens.org](http://www.thewallthathealsathens.org).

We moved on to the topic of elections, and Mayor Ronnie said, "We need to return to a place where we debate, discuss, and resolve." As it pertains to what had just happened in

Washington, D.C., we reflected on the fact that the Army was older than our nation itself. "Can you imagine what it took to write the Constitution?" I replied that I could not. What they went through to give us the most anointed work next to the Bible and that it is still standing is nothing short of a miracle.

We moved to the topic of protest, something that is foundational to the Constitution. "People have the right to protest," said the mayor. I agreed. "But they don't have the right to harm innocent people

and destroy property," he continued. I agreed. As a 'Nam vet who faced down coming back to a nation that was largely unthankful, he experienced the arrogance and lack of gratitude from people who are exactly what I used to be. "We need to put our arms around our country and our city," he said. I nodded in the affirmative. This weekend was a reminder for us both of what it costs to live in the land of the free and the home of the brave. There was only one thing left to do, and that was to pray, and then it was time for Ronnie to roll.

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**Cooking with Anna**

# **My Identity In Christ: God Says *I Am Saved***

by Anna Hamilton

*No matter where you have been, what you have done, or what you are facing, there is one powerful truth that stands firm: you are saved by God. This truth isn't based on your performance or perfection, but on God's mercy, love, and grace through Jesus Christ.*

*By becoming a Christian, God's love reaches you. From the beginning, God has loved you with an everlasting love. He created you in His image and longs for a relationship with you. Even when we stray, God's love never wavers. "But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).*

*Your salvation began not with your effort, but with God's initiative. He saw your need and provided the way through Jesus.*

*A Christians, it is important to remember that we are saved by grace, not works. Many people struggle with the*

*idea that they must earn their way to God. But the Bible is clear: we are saved not by what we do, but by what Jesus has done. "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast" (Ephesians 2:8–9).*

*You don't have to fix yourself before coming to God. You come as you are, and He does the saving.*

*Jesus paid it all. At the cross, Jesus took your place. He bore your sin, your shame, and your punishment so that you could receive His righteousness and eternal life. "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Romans 10:13).*

*This promise is for you. If you have placed your faith in Jesus—believing He died for your sins and rose again—you are saved. It's not a feeling; it's a fact backed by the*

*continued on page 16*

## **Southwest Chickpea and Black Bean Salad**

### **Ingredients:**

*1 (15 oz.) can chickpeas, rinsed and drained  
1 (15 oz.) can black beans, rinsed and drained  
1 cup frozen fire-roasted corn, thawed  
1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved  
½ small red onion, finely diced  
1 jalapeno, finely diced  
¼ cup cilantro, minced  
1 avocado, cubed*

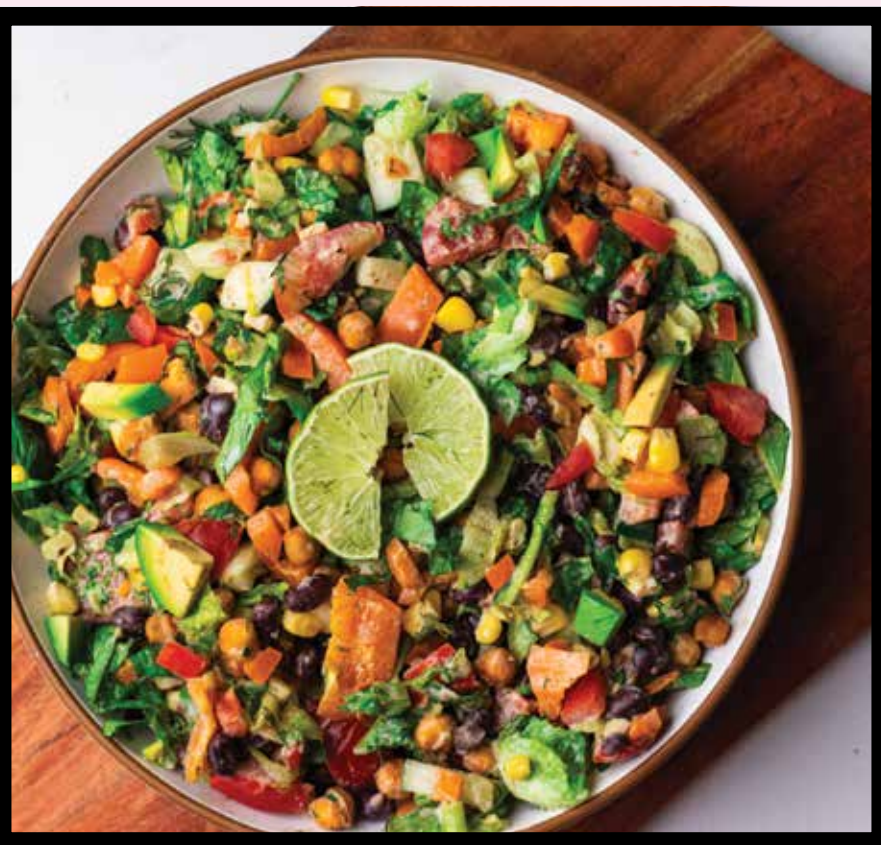
### **Dressing:**

*Zest of one lime  
Juice of 2 limes, about ¼ cup juice  
2 Tbsp. olive oil  
1 Tbsp. maple syrup  
1 large clove garlic, crushed  
½ tsp cumin  
1 tsp chili powder  
1 tsp smoked paprika  
Salt and pepper to taste*

### **Directions:**

*In a medium mixing bowl, combine chickpeas, beans, corn, tomatoes, red onion, and cilantro.*

*In a separate bowl combine lime zest, lime juice, oil,*



*maple syrup, and remaining seasonings. Whisk the vinaigrette together and pour dressing over beans and gently toss everything together to coat.*

*Place beans in the fridge to chill for at least an hour before serving. When ready to serve, mix in your avocado and make sure to toss again, then enjoy!*



# Reversing Metabolic Disease Starts At Crossfit Athens

by Nick Niedzwiecki - Owner, CrossFit Athens

In many southern towns like ours, we face a growing health crisis—one that doesn't make headlines daily but affects nearly every home: metabolic disease. Conditions like obesity, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease are part of everyday life here. But they shouldn't be. These diseases are largely preventable and, more importantly, reversible. That's where CrossFit Athens comes in.

Metabolic disease doesn't happen overnight. It's the slow result of years of poor nutrition, inactivity, and stress. But the good news is that change works the same way: one day, one choice, one habit at a time. At CrossFit Athens, we help people re-

claim their health and reverse these conditions through a powerful combination of functional fitness and nutrition coaching.

Let's be honest—most people don't need another gym membership. What they need is a plan. A coach. A community. A place that holds them accountable and walks beside them as they take control of their health. CrossFit Athens is that place. We don't just offer workouts. We offer life change.

Our training is built around movements you use every day—picking up things, standing up, getting off the floor, running, carrying, climbing. The difference is we do them with structure, intensity, and coaching. And whether you're 25



or 65, every workout is scaled to meet you where you are. You don't have to "get in shape" to start. You just have to start.

But workouts alone aren't enough. The other half of the equation is

what you eat. Most of our local health problems trace back to poor nutrition—heavily processed foods, sugar-loaded drinks, and portion sizes that don't match our activity levels. That's why we teach the CrossFit nutrition methodology: lean protein, vegetables, whole foods, and real portions. You won't find crash diets or gimmicks here—just education and support to help you fuel your body the right way.

We've seen members reverse type 2 diabetes, come off blood pressure meds, lose 80+ pounds, and rediscover energy and confidence they thought were gone for good. And it didn't happen with a magic pill. It happened through consistency—showing up to class, eating better meals, and staying connected to a community that encourages prog-

ress, not perfection.

If you're reading this and you feel overwhelmed, don't be. You don't have to fix everything at once. You just have to take the first step. At CrossFit Athens, that step starts with a conversation. Come talk to us. Let us hear your story, and let us show you how we can help change the ending.

Metabolic disease isn't just a statistic. It's robbing families of quality time, energy, and years of life. But it doesn't have to. The solution isn't easy—but it is simple. Real food. Smart exercise. A community that won't let you quit.

Your health is worth fighting for. And at CrossFit Athens, we're ready to fight with you.

To get started, visit [crossfitathens.com](http://crossfitathens.com), email us at [info@crossfitathens.com](mailto:info@crossfitathens.com), or call 256-363-6884.



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## Isom's Orchard: "New Face And Same Guts"

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

*continued from page 1*

and it "just ain't summer without Isom's." They solve the problem of needing and wanting fresh, local produce and being able to get it at a reasonable price. This is stuff that is freshly picked, and boy, the flavor says it all. Here is a bit of their story:

*By way of history, the 300-plus acres on both sides of Hwy 72 that comprise Isom's Orchards was purchased in increments by Wes's grandfather, Edison Kent Isom, beginning in 1933. Thankfully, the family approach to farming has always been what could be considered "old-school," in that it involves crop rotation and letting the land rest without apology. Back in the day, they used as a manual a book published by what is now known as Auburn University, and its focus was to get high yield without wearing out the land. Wes's dad, Joseph, started selling produce out of his truck in 1957, and did a robust business in the summertime selling peaches. Wes grew up working in the orchard and on the farm, and he and Marlene will tell you that they know without a doubt that this is their life's work. In 1961, the first produce stand was built, and in 1966, Joe added apple trees to the lineup. The produce stand was replaced in 1974 with the one that stood on Highway 72 until this past winter, and in April the brand-spankin' new one on essentially the same spot opened up with selling strawberries. They started selling on the front porch, and then opened up the interior about 3 weeks ago.*

"New face and same guts," Wes told me with his trademark grin. He went on to say, "It was time for a good housecleaning. You would not believe the stuff we found that we had to get rid of. Farmers tend to hang on to things 'just in case,' and it felt good to get cleaned out." Prior to taking down the old stand right around Thanksgiving of 2024, Wes and his wife, Marlene, traveled around for about three years to look at other stands for ideas.

The new building has been carefully crafted to reflect a timeless approach that is also married to the 21st century. There are several large garage doors that can be brought down in a moment in case there's a pop-up storm. People can keep shopping until the squall is spent. "We aren't really adding anything, and we aren't taking anything away," said Wes. They keep the air moving with an array of commercial size fans strategically placed around the building. This was by design, because they did not want to pass on the cost of air-conditioning to the consumer. However, the two rooms that are air-conditioned are the restrooms. Wes is kind of an "if-it-ain't-broke-don't-fix-it" kind of guy, and the 80' x80' building



is proof. The one "splurge" is the knotty pine throughout, and it is beautiful. The first cooler has been built, and the plan is to have the second cooler ready to go next spring. Wes also knows that trying to remodel the 1974 stand would have been what he calls "putting new patches on old jeans," and they love their new digs. One more thing that is being planned for next year is a play area for kids while their parents shop.

Wes took a good bit of our time together talking about everyone who helped birth a dream that Marlene had had for close to twenty years. Wes was determined to make sure everyone was thanked, and I think he was a bit nervous that he might forget someone. If he or I made that mistake, please forgive us. The lumber came from Flanagan Lumber in Athens, and Wes told me that they beat the prices of the big box



stores. Brad Malone did the excavating and site work. Encore Electrical installed the wiring, Luke Johnson "pounded out" all the carpentry, Stateline Garage Doors put in all the doors, and Summertown Metals handled the metal fabricating for the walls. JG Plumbing took care of the septic systems, All Star Plumbing covered the interior plumbing and there were countless friends and raving fan customers who helped with other aspects of getting the "brand-new-old-Isom's" up and at it. The grins on Wes's and Marlene's faces, even after a long day on their feet say it all: THANK YOU!

Isom's is about more than summertime produce. They

also have a U-pick field for flowers, and once again will have the sunflower field which can be used as a wonderful backdrop for photographers. Because this has been such a wet spring and early summer, the flowers aren't here yet, but they are coming! Peaches definitely need for the rain to stop soon, so that's a prayer request for everyone who loves them some Isom peaches. The autumn line up of pumpkins (Wes's favorite crop), fresh cider, the scarecrow contest, and more are on their way. Until then, there is plenty from which to partake at Isom's Orchards, some of what makes summer so special in Athens-Limestone County.



### Isom's Orchard

24012 US-72,  
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# Clean, Green And Beautiful

## *A VBS Success*

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

On June 12, we held what has now become an annual litter cleanup with the Athens First Methodist Church 6th grade vacation Bible school class. This class volunteers with different nonprofits throughout the week. We were very fortunate that they chose to work with Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful for one of their service days. We love working with youth groups like this, because this is the age when our lessons really sink in, but we also have a lot of fun!

Last year, we chose to work in the Jack's and Dollar General areas at Pryor Street and Highway 31. We spent a lot of our time trying to get around a stalled train, so this year, we chose a spot that was within walking distance of the church. After working in the empty lot beside

the United Way last year, I learned that gravel is quite the camouflage. So that is where we decided to meet. Nine fantastic upcoming 6th graders and their three leaders met me there and we got busy. It didn't take long, and a wonderful man came out with a case of water for the group!

Don't be fooled by our three bags, they were full! While we had a few large things like a piece of carpet, a box, a few bottles, our bags were mostly full of small pieces of Styrofoam, food wrappers, and smashed aluminum cans. You have no idea how much of those types of things that it takes to fill a bag. Our largest find of the day was a homemade sled, which was fitting considering we were on Ice Pick Hill. This sled was made from a sheet of aluminum siding and a section of an



aluminum ladder. It still had some small pieces of plywood seat attached, and even the handle. I took it to be recycled, but I bet that sucker was fast.

The most fun was probably getting the sheets of Styrofoam wrap out of the trees. There were a few small scrub trees towards the back of the lot that looked like the trees at Toomer's Corner after an Auburn win. Thankfully, these trees were still young enough that they were flexible. Once we got our hands on the right limbs, the kids got every single piece that was wrapped around them. There were several pieces that had been through a windstorm or two.

It was sunny and hot, but we had a great time, and the kids were amazing! We love to get the call every year for this cleanup, and we would love to add more! And we can schedule for any time of the year; the cooler the better! We look forward to this again next year with another amazing group, maybe we can even find a shady spot!





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## Register Now: *The Annual Fortify Alabama Anti-Human Trafficking Conference Is Coming Up On July 18*

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

*continued from page 1*

others gathered at the Jackson Center in Huntsville to discuss a difficult topic, and more importantly, what we as a community can do about it. That topic is the sex trade, both in terms of what is typically thought of as prostitution, and the more recent development of organized sex trafficking. Of course, assisting in the restoration of those that have been trafficked is top-of-mind, and implementing practices that can prevent it are just as vital.

Registration is open to anyone, including those who are concerned citizens, parents, or grandparents seeking to be an informed part of the solution. Speaking for myself, I am looking forward to attending and am confident it will be a valuable investment of my time and resources. The conference price of \$40 will include breakfast pastries, a buffet lunch, exhibitor tables for organizations dealing with trafficking, and the ability of getting 5 CEUs for atten-

ding the conference. It will be held at the Jackson Center from 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. To register, go to <https://givebutter.com/fortifyalabama>.

It is unthinkable to consider that there has never been a time in human history when more people have been enslaved, but it's true. Trafficking, which includes forced labor as well as sex trafficking, is second only to the drug trade, according to Homeland Security, and the I-20 pipeline here in Alabama is a hotspot. As a nation that paid a horrific price to eradicate slavery, it stands to reason that we as Americans and especially Alabamians are uniquely positioned to obliterate this blight. According to the International Labor Office, in 2024, trafficking generated \$236 BILLION in revenue.

The purpose of this year's conference is to educate the public regarding what is referred to as the "Five Ps" of trafficking, and to do so through the presentations of people who have either been trafficked, their parents, law enforcement and trauma specialists, along with

others who are dedicated to trafficking's eradication. The Five Ps, according to [www.endinghumantrafficking.org](http://www.endinghumantrafficking.org) are:

- *Prevention: This focuses on reducing vulnerability to trafficking by educating communities, schools, and individuals, particularly those in at-risk populations.*
- *Protection: This involves identifying and assisting victims, providing them with necessary support and services to aid their recovery and reintegration into society.*
- *Prosecution: This element centers on holding traffickers accountable for their crimes through legal action. This includes investigating and prosecuting cases to deter future offenses.*
- *Partnership: This emphasizes collaboration between various stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and international bodies, to address human trafficking effectively.*
- *Policy: This refers to developing and implementing policies and legislation that support anti-trafficking efforts, clarify roles and responsibilities, and provide a framework for effective action.*

Recently I spoke with Ni-



cole Wilson, the founder of Fortify Alabama, and who will also be one of the conference speakers. Nicole has experience in dealing with this issue and is dedicated to empowering as many people as possible in making an indelible mark on this unspeakable evil.

When we went to print, the confirmed speakers were as follows:

- Nicole Wilson – Founder and President of Fortify Alabama
- Captain Phil Simpson – Tuscaloosa Police Department and West Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force
- Investigator Jessica Wilson – Human Trafficking Expert and Certified Child Trauma Counselor
- Jared Miller – Founder and CEO of Freedom Aviation Network

• Chris Ziebach – Founder and Executive Director of Camille Place

• Leslie Watts – Mother of Trafficking Survivor and Teacher

• Drew Watts – Father of Trafficking Survivor and Retired Law Enforcement

It is expected that there will be more speakers to come.

In addition, there will be booths that will be staffed by various organizations that support the end of trafficking and those who are on the front lines of this battle, both as survivors and those who serve them. They are:

- Alabama Anti-Human Trafficking Alliance
- Barn of Grace Ministries
- Fortify Alabama
- Freedom Aviation Network
- North Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force
- Trafficking Hope
- Always Endure / House of Hope
- AshaKiran
- Camille Place

Vendor spots are still available. To register for the conference, go to <https://givebutter.com/fortifyalabama>, and thank you in advance for taking a stand to fortify Alabama the Beautiful. See you there!







## Captain's Log

# *The Shoestring*

by Brenda Wilkerson

"Will you help me tie my shoe?" came a tiny voice amidst the noise of all the kids clamoring aboard for our afternoon flight home. I looked down to see a very knotted-up shoestring.

Well, 99% of me wanted to say, "Not right now sweetie. The kids are loading and you are one of the first stops. Your mommy can help you when you get home." But something told me to take the time to help this stressed out kindergartener.

This five-year-old is the oldest of three, and I got the 'mommy-sense' to give it a try, knowing her mommy already had her hands full. I could tell this curly-headed, freckle-faced angel had tried several times because of the countless knots that were stacked on top of each other. She tried. She really tried. How could I look into those big blue eyes and say anything else but, "Of course! Give me your shoe."



We wrestled the shoe free as the usual onboard chaos churned behind us. She watched expectantly as I danced with at least seven knots! -- even using the assistance of the point of a pen. Yep, she sure tried and I commended her ef-

fort!

At last, the two tiny shoestrings were momentarily free from each other. She propped her tiny foot up on the metal rim of the garbage can, and with some help, she nestled her foot back into that left

shoe. I soon presented her with the prettiest double-knotted, dirty shoestring I ever tied. Ta da! We both celebrated momentarily, and like magic, the stress wrinkles between her little eyebrows disappeared. She then turned with a grateful smile, and wrestled the chatty influx of children to get back to her assigned seat.

As I buckled up and read-

ied for the afternoon take-off, it hit me. The shoestring. It preached to my soul. The smallest act of kindness can make the biggest difference to the receiver. I know we all have been the receiver of someone's gift of kindness and time. So our call to action today is find that one soul to gift a small portion of your time today.



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# FEAR: *It Does Not Have to Win!*

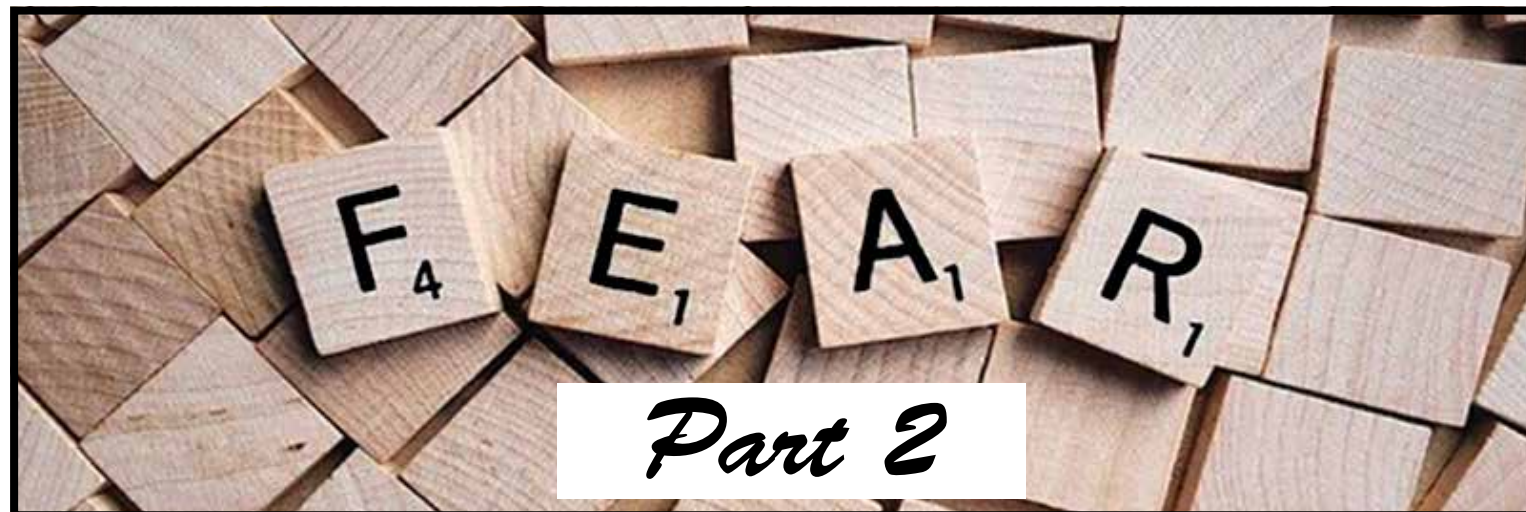
by Detri McGhee - CLU, ChFC

Continuing our thoughts on FEAR, let's consider the power, value, and possible negative results of BOUNDARIES.

Research shows that children behave better on playgrounds with fences. They also utilize the whole area, right up to the fence, whereas, when no boundary is clearly and strongly defined, they tend to stay more toward the center of the area.

Think of the paradox here: A fence increases the child's sense of safety and freedom within their "world" when they know that beyond these lines, they are not protected. Boundaries: Instructions, sometimes without words. You may go here. Stay within these lines and you will be safe. If you cross these boundaries, there are dangers that you will not be protected from.

Who sets our boundaries? For children, this is most often parents, caregivers, teachers. Since most people reading this are probably adults, let's explore it from that perspective. In reality, everyone we encounter, as well as a myriad of things in our world, sets a level of boundary for us. From the water flow in the shower, the people you share a home with, the clothes that may or may not fit as well this season as last, the car's speed, the traffic flow, the limit of people in the elevator, the doors we open and close, the desk top we sometimes fill with clutter, the co-worker we must tolerate even if they are difficult, and the



boss we report to...all the way to God, you and I will one day stand before... BOUNDARIES.

We get to CHOOSE how we respond countless times each day to those limitations: Those boundaries. So, the question is: How do you respond to the boundaries life is handing you moment by moment?

First, we need to think. BIG WORD THERE! -- THINK! All too often in today's society, we do not think! We take what the world -- its people and its things -- tell us or call us to do, and we blindly accept it, letting them (whoever they are) tell us what is right. Necessary. True.

Who are YOU? Do you know what you really want for the future? What do you truly value?

Have you ever assessed your options and taken control of the power you possess to determine things you simply WILL NOT DO? Or things you commit to DO?

I smoked cigarettes for a few years, starting in college -- everyone else was -- (Great reason to blindly follow the pack, right???)

When all the "Stop Smoking" campaigns hit the air, I realized that I was damaging my body and endangering my children. One late night when I had smoked all the cigarettes I needed that day, I vowed to never smoke another cigarette. It felt so good to declare my strength. The next morning, I jolted awake and realized what I'd done. I was literally filled with dread and fear. I wanted to keep my word, but oh, how my body craved that addiction. Other than God's mercy and empowerment, there is no explanation for how I kept that vow completely. I have never had another drag. I could jump off the Empire State Building before I would smoke.

Often I have wondered why I can't get the same control over other areas of my life, such as sugar consumption, and lack of exercise. But that boundary -- "I WILL NEVER ..." -- gave me great power and resolve. Oh, that I/WE would decide WHO we are and WHAT we will/won't do.

Mentally carry every thought to its logical con-

clusion. Suppose you DO give in to that desire to flirt with that co-worker? Will they flirt back...or will they report you for sexual harassment? Suppose they flirt back? Will it end in an affair? Suppose it does and one of you wants out but the other seeks vengeance? Or suppose it works out, and you fall in love (lust?) and marriages are destroyed, children are traumatized, people see you negatively now, and you lost 1/2 your possessions, or more.

Suppose you recognize that the desire to flirt or respond to another's advances to you might give you temporary pleasure, but because you have decided beforehand that you will not be unfaithful, you realize that what you want to DO is not something you want to HAVE DONE. What you

do might please you for a moment, but what you have done is forever set. Regret and forgiveness are wonderful! Needed! Blessings! But innocence is far better.

See you for PART 3!

**Today's Principle: There should be some things you simply will not do.**

***Detri would love to hear from you! How do you develop your EI? Especially your thoughts on how to handle criticism, worry, fear or problems you would like to get feedback on from others. Email: [detrimcghee@gmail.com](mailto:detrimcghee@gmail.com) or Facebook: Criticism Management by Detri. Free outline for Criticism Management available at [www.criticismmanagement.com](http://www.criticismmanagement.com)***



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Cooking with Anna (continued from page 9)

# My Identity In Christ: *God Says I Am Saved*

by Anna Hamilton

## Word of God.

*Once you have confessed that Jesus is the son of God, believe that He died for your sins and rose again, and have been baptized in the name of Jesus, you belong to God. When you are saved, you become a child of God. You are forgiven, redeemed, and sealed with His Spirit. Your identity is no longer defined by your past, but by God's promise. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).*

*You are no longer lost—you are found. No longer guilty—you are forgiven. No longer alone—you are His.*

*When you are saved by God, you can live in peace and confidence. Salvation doesn't mean life will always be easy, but it does mean you never walk alone. God is with you. His Spirit lives in you, guiding, comforting, and strengthening you each day. "I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life" (1 John 5:13).*

*You don't have to live in fear or doubt. You can rest in the assurance that you are saved by God—fully, freely, and forever. You are loved. You are chosen. You are saved. And nothing can separate you from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

*If you ever wonder about your worth or your future, remember this truth: God has saved you, and His promises never fail.*

*This week's recipe is a delicious, smoky, Southwest style salad. It is packed full of veggies and protein. It is perfect for a hot summer evening or your next backyard BBQ. Feel free to pair with grilled chicken or grilled salmon for even more flavor. I hope you enjoy it as much as my family does.*

*"If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved" (Romans 10:9-10).*

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# BOOM, Baby, BOOM!

by Stephanie Reynolds, Athens-Limestone Tourism Association



THE 4TH OF JULY!!! Oh, how I love this holiday!

It is a holiday of dream-to-reality -- the longing for beach vacations and sultry evenings on the porch that we shiveringly clung to in January are realized! Sand in our toes, sweet tea in our hands, and half of summer still stretching out before us. Delicious!

It also is the broader dream-to-reality of humanity: freedom attained, promises filled, potential realized. It is the holiday of some of the highest virtues of mankind—bravery and sacrifice, paying in struggle now so descendants can play (at the beach!) later in freedom.

It is a day to start thinking bigger, to shake off the inertia of the past, and to think more, try more, do more!

And we are starting this year right here in Athens-Limestone!

Y'all may or may not know that our office hosts the fireworks display for Athens-Limestone County. We have greatly enjoyed lighting up the night sky with a million little jewels every year,

but it's time to do more. We want to celebrate the whole gorgeous, beautiful evening with YOU!

Please accept our very heartfelt invitation to join us at the Sportsplex at 4 p.m. on July 4th (4 on the 4th—easy to remember) for our Red, White, and BOOM! 4th of July party. We will have food trucks, vendors, and a Battle of the Bands!

Let me tell you why I love this so much, why it is more than just a party. Each part of the event was created with YOU, our neighbors and friends, in mind.

Firstly, the location: Every year my kids and I park at the Sportsplex to watch the fireworks. The viewing is EXCELLENT and the traffic is easy. Our amazing police do a great job, and the access is wonderful. I know there are a lot of places to park along Hwy 31, but honestly, I find this to be faster to get in and out of, and the fireworks are RIGHT THERE and easy to see. There is plenty of grass for the littles to run in, as well as the playground! Far from the busy street, safe and cool (well,

cooler, anyway) grass instead of pavement.

Secondly, with supporting our local neighbors with their small businesses, non-profits, and cottage industries with a vendor fair: Small business is the heart, soul, and strength of a community—what is more American than growing big dreams from small business!

Thirdly, I wanted to support local bands: How many amazing musicians are tucked in garages and basements and just need a stage and someone to say, "Yes! We want to hear you! Come play!" I am pre-screening the bands and the line-up is ahhh-mazing!

Fourthly, we wanted to make it easy for the party to continue for you and your family. You don't even have to cook, we will have plenty of food trucks to please everyone!

We can't wait to celebrate this glorious holiday with YOU!

Note: There are still a few vendor slots available. Please contact me (Stephanie) at 256-529-7758 or [stephanie@exploreathensal.org](mailto:stephanie@exploreathensal.org)



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# Intentional Focus

by Jackie Warner

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



Over the years, my vision has changed, and recently, I needed a new eyeglass prescription. Using my laptop or reading messages on my phone has become increasingly difficult, so getting new eyewear has truly helped me to refocus and see more clearly.

But let's take a moment to lean into the word "**fo-cus**." In life, our struggles with clarity aren't always about a literal change in eyesight. More often, they have to do with *where we choose to focus*. Whatever the view—our relationships, our careers, our homes—the picture itself remains the same. What changes is *what we choose to see* within it.

I have spent years looking at my "life picture," filled with family, children, my spouse, my job, and my hobbies. The most important question isn't whether or not the picture has changed but *what part of it I have chosen to focus on*. Two people can look at the same image, but their perspectives will differ depending on experience, mindset, and circumstances.

As life changes, so does

our focus. For years, my attention was locked on raising my children. They were my center—my priority. But as they grew into adulthood and stepped into their own independence, I found myself looking around, suddenly noticing aspects of my life that had always been there but had simply been out of focus; *nothing changed*—not my spouse, not my home. It was me who changed. My vision had been locked on my children, and now that they were no longer the focal point, other areas of my life became clearer.

Many times, we think something has shifted or disappeared, when in reality, *it has always been there*. We just weren't focusing on it.

Clarity isn't always about altering the picture; it's about adjusting *how* we see it. When life doesn't look the way you thought, lean on God's wisdom rather than your own perception.

• **Isaiah 43:19** – *See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.*

• Sometimes, what feels



like a loss is actually an opportunity for something new. God is still working even when we don't yet understand it.

• **Romans 8:28** – *And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.*

• Even when things don't look like what we expected, God is still at work for our good.

**1. Seek God for Clarity and Wisdom**

• Pray for understanding. Ask God to reveal His purpose in what you're seeing now. You might not have all the answers immediately, but He promises to guide you (James 1:5).

**2. Find Gratitude in the Reality**

• Even if things aren't what you thought, there is still something to appreciate. Gratitude helps shift your focus from what's missing to what's present.

**3. Move Forward with a Renewed Focus**

• God has given you a new lens. Instead of dwelling on what was unclear before, embrace the new perspective and look for ways to grow, love, and trust Him in it.

Discovering that something isn't what you expected can be unsettling, but it's also an opportunity for *growth, wisdom, and spiritual renewal*. The key is to *adjust*, not *resist* - because what you see now is likely what God wants you to focus on.

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## The Alternative Approach

# Chemotherapy Is A Disaster

by Roy Williams

Does the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) do a good job of regulating anti-cancer drugs so that the approved drugs are guaranteed to improve your survival and quality of life? Dr. Prasad says, "The sad answer is no, and that's the conundrum we find ourselves in. The U.S. FDA is doing a terrible job when it comes to anti-cancer drug regulation and policy. Medicare is doing a terrible job, the NCCN (National Comprehensive Cancer Network) is doing a terrible job, but also the alternative medicine and fringe people who say they have the cure for cancer, many of them are also being deceptive and dishonest. That's the mess we have ourselves in." Dr. Prasad is a hematologist, an oncologist, and an epidemiologist, and has been heading the FDA's CBER since May 6, 2025. CBER is the Center within the FDA that regulates biological products for human use under applicable federal laws, including the Public Health Service Act and the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act. He is an advocate for scientific transparency and accountability.

Unfortunately we live in a society where nobody knows what to believe anymore, which is exactly what can be expected when a person or organization sets out to push an entire society in the direction they want it to go, so they can make the most money without having any compassion

or care for how much it costs the patient or how many people they hurt or kill. Somewhere along the way they lost the concept of "Do No Harm" or always do what is in the best interest of the patient.

Dr. Mark Sircus, doctor of oriental medicine and author of health-related books, says, "It appears that the world of medicine has undergone significant changes in a few months, and we are hearing things from the John F. Kennedy-appointed medical professionals that we would not have even dreamed of a few months ago.

Dr. Prasad, will undoubtedly act as a disruptor in the profit-driven regulatory maze, serving as a watchdog that demands proof that vaccines work. In 2022, he scientifically fingered mRNA vaccines as causing heart damage (clinical and subclinical myocarditis) in almost everyone, continuing the long wave of severe injuries following new vaccines introduced into the market. Vaccine injuries have been observed for over a century. Still, the vaccine establishment and the idiots we read in the press never allow those injuries to come to light because it would instantly destroy the vaccine program. The experts are medical terrorists who should be arrested, tried, and shot for all the suffering they have caused. Dr. Mary Talley Bowden and a coalition of health-freedom activists aligned

with the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) movement are calling for an outright federal ban on all mRNA vaccines.

But the truth is, many years ago, researchers found that an increase of 1.2 metabolic units (oxygen consumption) was related to a decreased risk of cancer death, especially in lung and gastrointestinal cancers. That research has been buried, but there are numerous essays on the relationship between oxygen and cancer. Dr. Sircus says, "The fact is that we can massacre cancer with oxygen and bicarbonates. Oxygen levels are sensitive to a myriad of influences. Any element that threatens the oxygen-carrying capacity of the human body will promote cancer growth. Likewise, any therapy that improves the oxygen function can be expected to enhance the body's defenses against cancer. For cancer to 'establish' a foothold in the body, it has to be deprived of oxygen and become acidic. If these two conditions can be reversed, cancer can not only be slowed down, but it can be overturned."

Dr. D. F. Treacher and Dr. R. M. Leach write, "Mammalian life and the bioenergetic processes that maintain cellular integrity depend on a continuous supply of oxygen to sustain aerobic metabolism. Reduced oxygen delivery and failure of cellular use of oxygen occur in various circumstances and, if not recognized, result

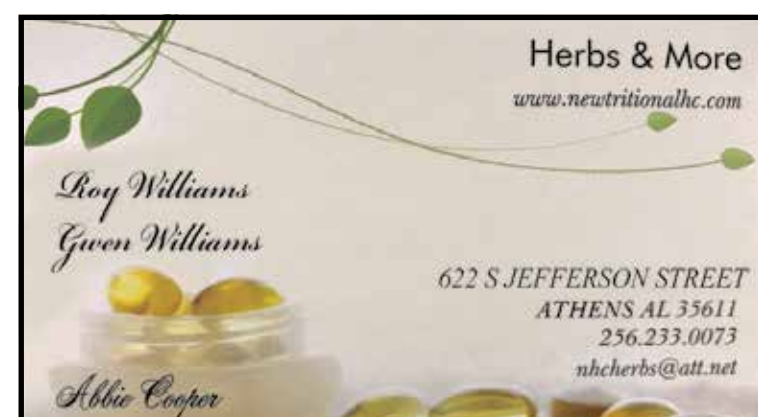


in organ dysfunction and death. Prevention, early identification, and correction of tissue hypoxia are essential skills. In other words, by making sure that the body is receiving enough oxygen at a cellular level, no one would ever develop cancer in the first place. Another important fact is that even after someone has developed final stage cancer, they can overcome it simply by oxygenating every cell in the body."

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flowing through your body. From there it becomes a simple process of raising your oxygen levels into the healing range. Burt Golding of Positive Power Nutritional's has helped over 200 clients raise their oxygen levels into the healing range and he says, "Every one of them went from terminal cancer to remission within 48 hours." Yes, the medical profession and the pharmaceutical industry have kept this fact hidden for years. Don't you think that it is time to stop the insanity? Go by Herbs & More in Athens for a free oxygen reading and see if your body is oxygenated.

*Your Friend in Health,  
Roy P Williams*





## AMERICAN

by Deb Kitchenmaster



The American citizen, the American flag, and the American horse bring light into a nation. Arise and shine for the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

The United States is a country of 50 states, covering a vast territory of North America, with Alaska in the northwest and Hawaii extending the nation's presence into the Pacific Ocean. Americans are the citizens and nationals of the United States of America. U.S. federal LAW does not equate nationality with race or ethnicity but rather with CITIZENSHIP.

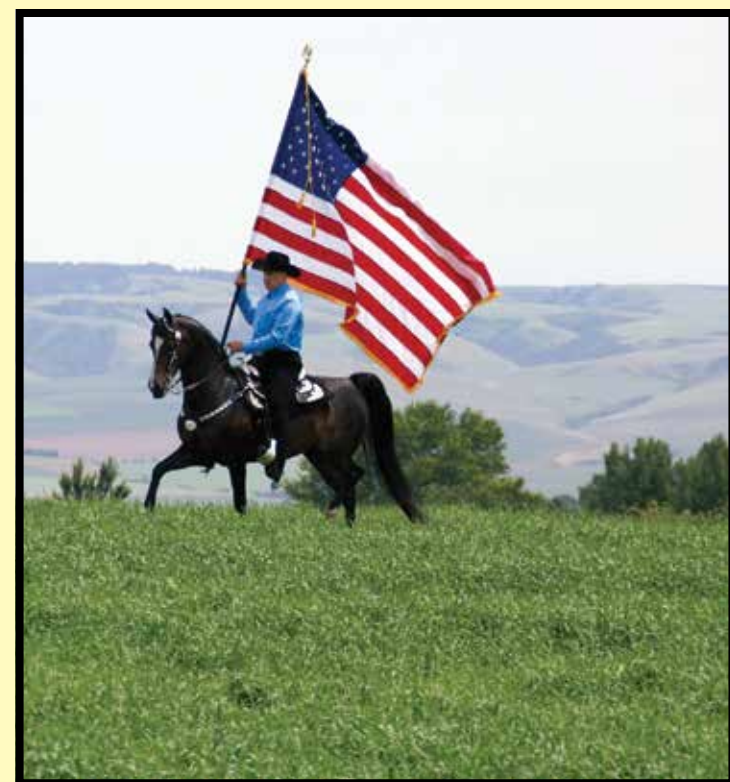
"American" generally means a resident or a citizen of the United States; but is also used for someone whose ethnic identity is simply "American." An American achieves citizenship through birth (birthright citizenship) or naturalization, a LEGAL process for non-citizens to become citizens.

The 14th Amendment states: "All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States, and of the state wherein they reside." American identity refers to the complex and evolving sense of self that encompasses the shared values, beliefs, and cultural practices of people living in the United States. This identity is shaped by historical events, cultural influences, and social dynamics, reflecting both UNITY and DIVERSITY "within" the nation.

The American flag with its 13 stars and 13 stripes was officially adopted by the Continental Congress on June 14, 1777. This would be the first of three major flag acts passed by Congress. A national flag is a powerful symbol that represents a nation's identity, unity, and standards. The American flag acts as a visual representative of the country -- its people and its government.

The colors of the flag are meaningful. Red means valor and bravery. White means purity and innocence. The blue color on the American flag represents vigilance, perseverance, and justice. Each time a state was added to the union, a star was added. It was last modified on July 4, 1960. Our current American flag displays 50 stars and 13 stripes.

As the lyrics of "Stars and Stripes Forever" state: "The red, white, and starry blue is freedom's shield and hope." Our flag is more than just cloth and ink, it's about liberty, justice, freedom, love of country and national purpose. The flag of the United States is a symbol of freedom. Americans face the flag, place their hand over their hearts, and recite the Pledge of Allegiance in honor and respect to those who have given their very lives on battlefields fighting for our freedoms here in the United States of America.



The first American horse breed is the Morgan horse. In an attempt to pay back a loan, this little bay colt was given to a singing schoolmaster, Justin Morgan. Prior to taking a teaching job up north in Randolph, Vermont, Justin lived in Springfield, Massachusetts. His neighbor was struggling; out of the kindness of his heart, Justin loaned him some money. As time passed, Justin needed some medical attention, plus he wanted to add a pitch pipe to his music class. Justin boarded at the home of one of his students, Joel Goss.

During summer break, Justin decided to walk the 100 miles south, from Vermont to Massachusetts, accompanied by Joel, with the intention to collect the loan from his old neighbor, farmer Abner Beane. Abner wasn't able to give cash but he offered Justin his two colts, Ebenezer and little Bub. It was the WILLINGNESS of this lit-

tle horse that became an American legend. Little Bub's name was changed to Figure and referred to as Morgan's horse. Figure labored all day; for fun in the evenings, the guys would race him against other horses. There was not a horse in Vermont that could out walk, out trot, out run, or out pull him. New Yorkers heard about this little horse and brought two thoroughbreds down to race. Figure won both races! This little horse brought a bloodline into America where generals relied on their Morgan mount in times of war. Morgan horses are known for their superb temperament, athletic ability, and versatility.

"Freedom lies in being bold." Robert Frost

The righteous are as bold as a lion.

*Your NEIGHbor,  
Deb Kitchenmaster*

*horsinaround188@gmail.com*







**Rightside Way**

# *Big Beautiful Parade*

by Phil Williams

Did you see it? I did.

The big beautiful parade. The 250th birthday celebration of the U.S. Army. The honor, the strength, the legacy. Pro-America. Peace through strength personified. In one fell swoop the U.S. Army shook off its Biden malaise, squared its shoulders, spit on the ground, and got its swagger back. It felt like the Reagan era.

I know. Because I was there.

In 1986, I was just a year removed from casting my first vote when I pulled the lever for Ronald Reagan. In the middle of the Reagan era, I earned a trip to Fort Benning, Georgia, to become a U.S. Army paratrooper. I had the sense that it was a thing that would make me a part of something bigger than myself. That it did. It was bigger-than-life-flag-waving-go-big-or-go-home thing.

And because it was the 80s, I drove to Benning playing the soundtrack to Top Gun as loud as I could. The literal soundtrack of bigger-than-life-flag-waving-go-big-or-go-home.

Fast forward to the summer of 2022 and the movie Top Gun: Maverick. The sequel three decades in the making. Tom Cruise was back and flying with an attitude. Moving like a bat out of hell, putting the mission first, protecting his wingman, and unabashedly American.

Top Gun: Maverick grossed over \$1.4 billion, with some saying that in the wake of COVID shutdowns, it was Top Gun: Maverick that saved the movie theater industry. A movie devoid of wokeism and virtue signaling. Every second of that movie made you proud to be an American, and proud of the U.S. military.

Liberals? They hated it.

"Top Gun: Maverick is a success, so right-wing culture warriors are claiming it," said liberal hack Matt Gertz. Or my favorite word salad from Jesse Hassenager, "[T]op Gun 2 is studiously 'apolitical' in the way that rightwingers love, because it allows them to claim just-plain-folks victory where white male/military dominance have no sociopolitical dimension..." Does anyone know what that even means?

I prefer the sentiments of Monica Crowley who said of Top Gun: Maverick, "Even though it's set in 2022, it catapults us back to the mid-1980s, when we had a real president, men were men, and there was unabashed pride in America."

That was the 80s. That was the background sentiment of Top Gun: Maverick. The bigger-than-life-flag-waving-go-big-or-go-home decade.

And that was how I felt again today as I watched historic events unfold on Constitution Avenue in our nation's capital. Thousands of troops marching in for-

mation, with many wearing uniforms representing every U.S. conflict dating back to the Revolutionary War. Hundreds of military vehicles including M1A2/Abrams tanks, Bradley fighting vehicles, Apache gunships, towed howitzers, and a parachute jump by the Army's Golden Knights. The bands, the flags, salutes rendered, and fireworks above the Washington Monument. President Trump issue a proclamation from the White House declaring his intent to "pay tribute to every legend of liberty who sacrificed their life to keep America safe, sovereign, and free."

I was transported to the 80s. Reagan was president. Top Gun music. Fort Benning. Airborne School. We have been set free to be bigger-than-life-flag-waving-go-big-or-go-home people again.

Once again the liberal left hated it.

Asinine arguments about cost, and tyranny, and bravado were muttered in feeble attempts to mask the fact that the left so hates Donald Trump that they can't celebrate the U.S. Army. And maybe, they just hate America. Why else, would Flag Day and the U.S. Army birthday be the best time for the left to stage their "No Kings" protests?

Never mind that military parades in DC are not new. Never mind that hometown parades celebrating the military are a staple of American life. I've

marched in them myself. It's patriotism, its honor, its legacy.

The U.S. Army deserved a parade this weekend, but I believe the nation as a whole needed it. We needed it like a sick man needs medicine. It was like a shot of testosterone for the national soul. We needed to be reminded of the strength and dedication of our armed forces. We needed to wave flags and be mindful of who we are as a people. We needed our swagger back.

If Joe Biden and his cronies were still in office, they would have made a quick note about the Army's birthday by addressing ghosts of systemic racism, extolled the virtues of a transgender service member, and Army recruiting would still be in the pits and military readiness downgraded.

No, thank you. I'll take a parade any day of the week. Roll me some Abrams, fly me some gunships, march me some troops, wave me some flags!

The American audience was hungry to be both entertained and filled with the pride that comes from being an American. It's okay to be proud of who we are. It's absolutely right to flex the muscle of America, and doing so is not offensive.

What a breath of fresh air to hear, "Job well done" from leadership in a way that is unequivocal, balanced, conservative, and compassionate all at the same time. What a pleasure to join with others to

stand for the anthem and get misty eyed when the flag waves.

It's about having a mission in life, and taking pride in the quality of our effort and its outcomes.

Don't you love living here? I do! I always have. But it feels good to feel good again. What a pleasure to be told that we're the good guys again. What a relief to feel relieved. It feels like Reagan. It feels like the 80s. It's a whole batch of that bigger-than-life-flag-waving-go-big-or-go-home attitude.

Happy 250th birthday, U.S. Army! Congratulations America – it's good to have you back.

Strike up the band. Let's have another big beautiful parade!

*Phil Williams is a former State Senator, retired Army Col and combat veteran, and a practicing Attorney. He previously served with the leadership of the Alabama Policy Institute in Birmingham. Phil currently hosts the conservative news/talkshow Rightside Radio M-F 2-5 pm on multiple channels throughout the southeast. His column appears weekly throughout Alabama. The views and opinions expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the policy or position of this news source. To contact Phil or request him for a speaking engagement go to [www.rightsideradio.org](http://www.rightsideradio.org).*





# Gaslighting

by Lisa Philippart,  
Licensed Professional Counselor



***"If you repeat a lie often enough, it becomes accepted as the truth."***

*- attributed to various sources*

I will admit that several months after completing my master's degree program in counseling and human services, I had forgotten about the term, gaslighting. So, when I began working with severely mentally ill adults, one of my clients reminded me exactly what it meant. That's right, my client educated me about gaslighting from her personal experiences. (And I continue to learn something new from my clients every day.) The *Psychology Today* definition of gaslighting is "a form of persistent manipulation and brainwashing that causes the victim to doubt herself

or himself, and ultimately lose her or his own sense of perception, identity, and self-worth."

If you have never seen the 1944 Ingrid Bergman film *Gaslight*, it is worth your time. In the movie, a husband purposefully drives his wife insane by flickering lights, making noises in the attic, and then claiming that the very real experiences were all in her head. Thus, gaslighting is a tactic in which someone, in order to gain more power or control, makes the victim question reality. Anyone is susceptible to this manipulation tactic, which is commonly used by abusers, dictators, cult leaders, and narcissists. The process is done slowly over time, so the victim is unaware of having been brainwashed.

Let's look at some of the

characteristics of gaslighting. Gaslighters' actions do not match their words. What they are saying is just talk, so look at what they are doing. Words are for manipulation and mean nothing to them. In fact, they can't help but tell outright lies. Once you are told a huge lie, which you discover is a huge lie, you can't be sure if anything they say is the truth. The gaslighter's goal is to keep you unsure and off balance. Add to this the fact that some gaslighters will deny they ever said something, even if you have proof they did. Again this makes you start questioning your reality...maybe they really never said that. And the more they do this, the more you question yourself and what is real, and begin to accept their reality. The frightening thing about gaslighting is that it is done

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gradually over time. One lie here, then another lie there, then questioning what you said or they said. The best analogy I have heard is the frog in the boiling water. If you turn up the heat slowly, the frog never realizes what's happening.

The client I mentioned who introduced me to gaslighting was in a divorce situation. Gaslighters know how important your kids are to you. And they recognize the importance of your identity. Her ex-husband had been using her daughter as ammunition both in terms of question-

ing her abilities as a mother and in questioning her sanity. This leads me to the most effective tool of gaslighters...telling you or others that you are crazy. If people doubt your sanity, they may stop believing you when you tell them what is going on. Gaslighters appears as the "calm" ones, explaining how you are the one out of control. Then you end up having to defend yourself! Often, too, gaslighters will throw in positive comments to confuse you. Just when they spent the last 20 minutes cutting you down or telling you that you are useless, they will throw in a praise (usually for something that was of benefit to them.) You think, "Maybe they aren't so bad." Yes, they really are.

Finally, gaslighters tell you that everyone (your family, friends, the media) is a liar. Again this is to force you to question what is real. It's designed to make you turn to the gaslighter for the "right" information, which of course, isn't correct at all. The more aware you are of these techniques, the better you will be at identifying and avoiding the gaslighter's snare.

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



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