

April 3 - April 16, 2026

# Athens Now

information & inspiration

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# Hang On To The Old Or Grab On To The New

By Steve Garner

There is a storm coming and it has a name. It is "Change." There is nothing we can do to stop it. It has been slowly happening since the beginning of time. Now it is accelerating to a speed that we

simply must take notice of. The question now becomes what to do with the change.

I may be biased, but I have always believed Limestone County to be the best place on earth to live and raise a family. I am not like others who have never left

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STEVE

# GARNER

For Limestone Co. - District 1 Commissioner

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# STILL HOPE

*Angel Studios announces that Still Hope is on their Top Ten Streaming list!*

FATHOM ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS A STUDIO 52 PRODUCTION AN INSPIRING TRUE STORY "STILL HOPE" LUNA RIVERA, ALEX VEADOV, WILMA RIVERA, JOHN D. MICHAELS, MICHELLE HARO  
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FEBRUARY 5, 2026

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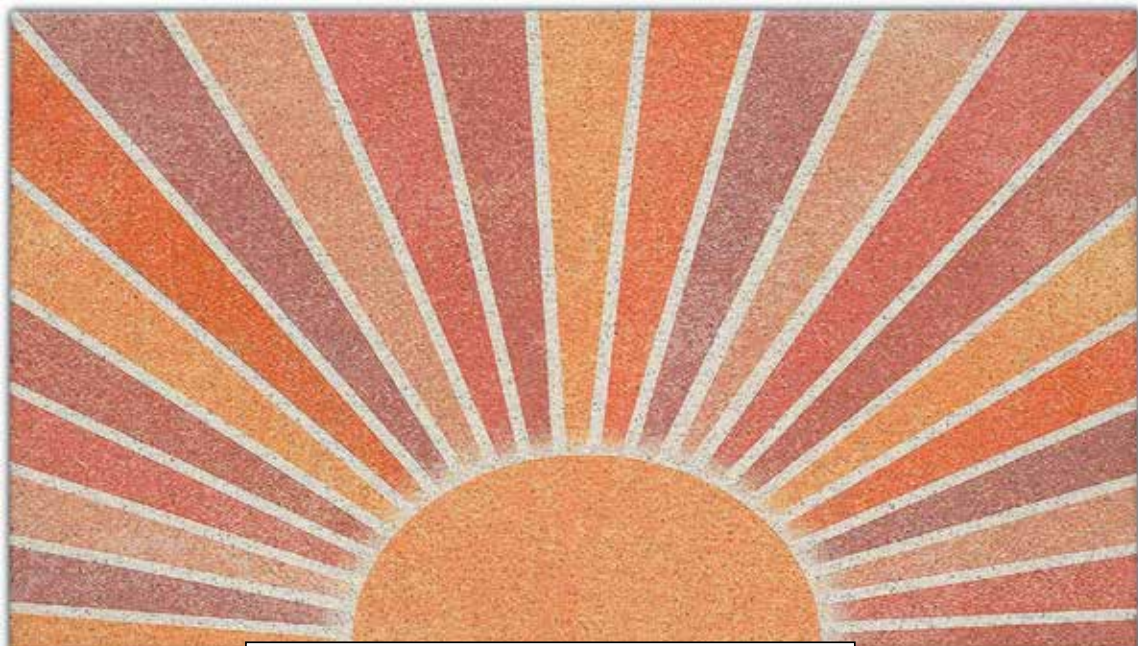
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**Publisher's Point**

*The Divine Doormat*



*Nogrit Boho Outdoor Entrance Doormat*

This week is Holy Week, and this year Passover and the Resurrection overlap. Both events shaped human history and will continue to do so as long as there are humans on this planet. What happened in both cases was more epic than what could ever be produced on a screen or bound in a book, although masterful attempts have been made to do so. And thankfully, we have the original, divinely written accounts from which we can garner strength and comfort all year long, every year.

Truth be told, you would think that as a believer writing a *Point* about events that are so central to my faith would have been kind of a no-brainer, right? I mean, how often does the publication date of the first edition in April coincide with Good Friday? Wasn't this nearly the editorial version of "just add water?" One would think...

However, I was coming up drier than toast, and my faithful crew was patiently waiting. The deadline was looming, and this may seem silly to some, but I asked friends and family to pray. You see, I take my job as the publisher of *Athens Now* as a serious and sacred charge. Fifteen years ago, I was given a gift, an opportunity to provide "information and inspiration" to the people of Athens-Limestone Coun-

ty, and ultimately to people in 80 countries, which is mind-boggling. Except for one edition during COVID, by God's grace, we have been able to complete our mission, albeit sometimes by a nose.

So, what finally shook out was a story that at the least would be incredibly easy to miss, and at the worst could appear to be self-serving. However, in my mind, it perfectly illustrates *The Greatest Story Ever Told*. It is about a doormat.

A young woman whom I have met personally is a triumphant "sur-thriver" of human trafficking, and has graduated from the restoration program at Pure Hope Ranch. She not only has done the bravest thing a person could do, and that is to allow God to split the Red Sea for her, and then allow herself to be continually transformed by what

was purchased on Calvary; she has studied hard to become an EMT. She also is about to move into her first home. That calls for a housewarming.

So, through the marvels of modern technology, a list of needed and desired items available on Amazon was circulated online, and it featured everything from faux plants to a toilet brush. And then my eyes beheld a doormat, and not just any doormat, but one that has a stylized sunburst on it. How can I explain what happened next? That doormat became the symbol of Holy Week, and I almost missed the chance to let the story do its work. Our family literally "checked off the box," snapped it up, sent it on its way, and it is supposed to arrive today, on Good Friday. From now on, a "divine doormat" will greet her guests when

they arrive at her door.

The sun is indeed rising in her life in a whole new way because the Son is rising in her life in a whole new way. A doormat is a symbol of welcome along with humble cleansing, and while I know that someday it will get completely worn out and probably will have to be discarded, the stories behind it never will. And, talk about the joy of giving, now that could be a subject for a whole 'nother Point!

May you have a most blessed Passover and Resurrection, with love from all of us at *Athens Now*.

*Ali Elizabeth Turner*

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# Redstone Base U.S. Subvets Celebrate 126th Submarine Service Birthday With Submarine Exhibit At The Alabama Veterans Museum in Athens

by Carl P. Farina, Redstone Base USSVI

Saturday, April 11, is the 126th anniversary of submarines in the service of the United States Navy. The USS Holland (SS-1) was the first submarine in the U.S. Navy, commissioned on April 11, 1900, for a cost of \$150,000 (approximately 4 million dollars in today's money). Submarines have been a continuous vital component of the U.S. Navy since that day.

The creed of the United States Submarine Veteran's organization is: *To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of their duties while serving their country. That*

*their dedication, deeds, and supreme sacrifice be a constant source of motivation toward greater accomplishments. Pledge loyalty and patriotism to the United States Government.* It is with this thought in mind that we proudly invite everyone to visit us at the Alabama Veterans Museum in Athens on Saturday, April 11, from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m.

The SubVets from the Redstone Base, United States Submarine Veterans Inc. (USSVI), in Huntsville, AL, will be presenting a special exhibit of personal items and artifacts along with displays on very note-

worthy and historical submarines. There will be SubVets on hand to share their accounts (sea stories), explain the operations of the submarines, and share what life is like underwater for extended periods of time.

The stories of the submarines USS *Thresher* (SSN-593) USS *Scorpion* (SSN-589) and USS *Herring* (SS-233) will be the centerpiece of this exhibit. USS *Thresher* was lost during sea trials on April 10, 1963, 220 miles east of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, with 117 sailors and 12 shipyard workers and subcontractors aboard. USS *Scorpion* (SSN-589) was lost on May 22, 1968, 400 miles off the Azores as it was returning from a Mediterranean deployment with 99 sailors aboard. USS *Herring* (SS-233) was lost in WWII on June 1, 1944, during her eighth war patrol near Matsuwa Island in the Kuriles with 83 men aboard. USS *Herring* was designated by the



USSVI as Alabama's lost boat state assignment. A memorial to USS *Herring* (SS-233) resides at the USS *Alabama* (BB-60) museum in Mobile, AL.

Today, all submarines in the U.S. Navy are nuclear powered and come in three versions. The Fast Attack, or SSN; the Ballistic Missile, or SSBN - such as USS *Alabama* (SSBN-731); and the Cruise Missile, or SSGN.

As it has always been, U.S. Navy submarines

are crewed solely by volunteers from within the Navy. Because of the stressful environment aboard submarines, personnel are accepted only after rigorous testing and observation. After approximately one year of intense study, the sailors earn their dolphins or "fish" (gold for officers, silver for enlisted personnel) the proud badge that symbolizes to the world: *"Qualified in Submarines."*

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## AHS Principal Inducted Into AL Sports Hall Of Fame

Courtesy of Athens City Schools

Congratulations to Athens High School Executive Principal Mr. Willie Moore on his induction to the Alabama High School Sports Hall of Fame, Class of 2026! Mr. Moore is one of just 12 administrators and coaches statewide chosen for this prestigious honor. The induction ceremony was held on Monday, March 23, at the Montgomery Renaissance Hotel Spa and Convention Center. Honorees were chosen by a selection committee assembled by the Alabama High School Athletic Directors & Coaches Association (AHSADCA) from a competitive pool of 60 nominations submitted by member schools and other organizations.

With a career spanning more than three decades in education, Mr. Moore has made a lasting impact on countless students and student-athletes. His leadership, character, and commitment to excellence, both in the classroom and on the field, have earned him this honor, which reflects a distinguished career rooted in service, integrity, and the heart of a true champion.

Mr. Moore joined Athens City Schools in 2018, and has served as Executive Principal at Athens High School since 2020. He holds a bachelor's degree in special education from The University of Alabama and a master's de-

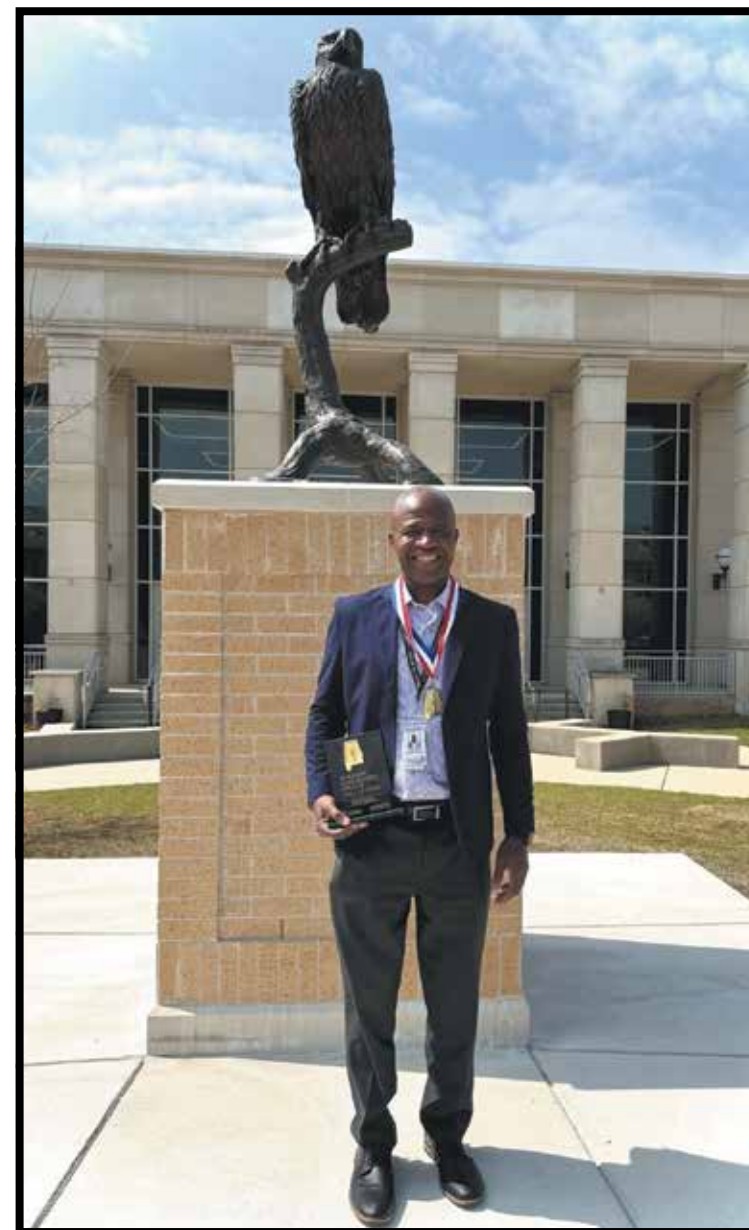


gree in educational leadership from Alabama State University. Beginning his coaching career in 1995, Mr. Moore has served as a softball and football coach as well as a state-champion basketball coach. His many accolades include AHSAA State Coach of the Year ('14), AHSAA Making a Difference Award ('15) among others. He moved into administration in 2016.

In addition to his leadership at Athens High School, Mr. Moore serves on the Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools (CLAS) Board of Directors and President of the Alabama Association of Secondary School Principals (AASSP).

Learn more about the AHSAA Class of 2026 Hall of Fame at [ahsaa.com/Media/AHSAANOW/](http://ahsaa.com/Media/AHSAANOW/)

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We are #AthensProud of you, Mr. Moore!

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# Calendar of Events

## Good Friday on the Square

**April 3**

Community worship evening to celebrate Good Friday and Easter weekend. 5:00 PM-7:00 PM. Limestone County Courthouse. 200 W. Washington St., Athens.

## Get ready to explore – Athens, AL Historic Walking Tours are BACK in April!

This year's tours:

- April 4: Houston Memorial Library, Guided by Will Weir
- April 11: Historic Athens Downtown Square, Guided by William Pepper
- April 18: Athens State University District, Guided by Leah Oakley
- April 25: Beaty Historical District Guide TBD

We are excited to announce the return of FREE, guided walking tours each Saturday during the month of April. Residents and visitors are invited to take part in a casual stroll through historic Athens and learn about our history and heritage. The one-hour walking tours are scheduled to begin at 10AM at the Athens' Visitor Center meeting room with check-in beginning at 9:45AM. You can park at the Visitor's Center next to Big Spring Memorial Park. No pre-registration is necessary. Knowledgeable guides will escort participants through historic neighborhoods and landmarks where they will share the history of the city including history of local businesses and families, architectural styles of the homes and other colorful moments in the community's history. See you there!

## Taste of Athens-Limestone

**April 13**

The Taste of Athens-Limestone is a food festival celebrating the diverse restaurants and dining experiences across Athens and Limestone County. This exciting new event will bring together many area restaurants for a night of food, fun, and community connection. Come taste your way through the many flavors of our local dining scene and sample the signature bites from all the participating restaurants. 6:00 - 8:00 PM. First Baptist Church Family Life Center, 201 Hobbs Street East, Athens, AL. TICKETS: \$25 each. Tickets can be purchased from the

## 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.

following:

- <https://www.zeffy.com/.../ticke.../taste-of-athens-limestone>
- Athens Florist & Gifts, 105 South Clinton Street, Athens
- Refine Chiropractic, 22099 US Hwy 72E Suite G, Athens, AL (in the Hwy 72 Publix shopping center)

## Master Gardeners Meeting Earthworms: Nature's Soil Engineers

**April 14**

Limestone County Master Gardeners will host an educational program on Earthworms April 14 from 11am to 12pm at the Athens Limestone County library. The library is located at 603 S Jefferson Street, Athens, AL. The program is free of charge and open to the public.

## Limestone County Historical Society Meeting

**April 19**

Local student, Ava Slinkard, will share her interest in WWII with the Historical Society the afternoon of April 19 at the Rodgers Center of First Presbyterian Church on the square in Athens. A French Resistance Historical Reenactor, Ava will present her research into the service of five Limestone County WWII soldiers. Especially interested in educating her peers about the War, she has worked with the Alabama Veteran's Museum to gather information for her presentation. Refreshments will be served at 2:30, and the program will begin at 3:00. Everyone interested in the history of our area is encouraged to attend.

## 2026 Fridays After Five Concert Series

**April 24**

Athens Main Street's highly-anticipated Fridays After Five Concert Series will return in 2026 for another year. Don't forget your lawn chairs. East Side of the Courthouse.

## 2026 APD Sporting Clay Shoot

**May 8**

Calling all sharpshooters and supporters of law enforcement! We're gearing up for our 2026 Sporting Clay Shoot, and we already know it's going to be a blast. Get your teams ready now and join us at Old South Clays. Every registration and sponsorship supports our APD Tactical Team! 8AM. Old South Clays. 27246 Wooley Springs Rd Athens.

## DMAC Fest

**May 9**

Live music, food trucks, free admission. All proceeds benefit the DMAC Foundation Trade School Scholarship fund. 5:00PM-9:30PM. Limestone County Courthouse Square.

## Carissa's Corner

# A Leap Of Faith

by Carissa Lovvorn



Over spring break, my family and I spent a few days in Pigeon Forge, TN. We enjoyed a fun but tiring day at Dollywood, walked along the strip in Gatlinburg, and even found ourselves lost in one of the tourist trap mirrors mazes. We each got to do a little something that we wanted to do. My only requests on the trip were to eat a piece of taffy from one of the candy stores, ride the train at Dollywood, and stop along the river so we could put our feet in.

We managed almost everything, but the morning we headed home, we still hadn't made it to the river. We decided to take

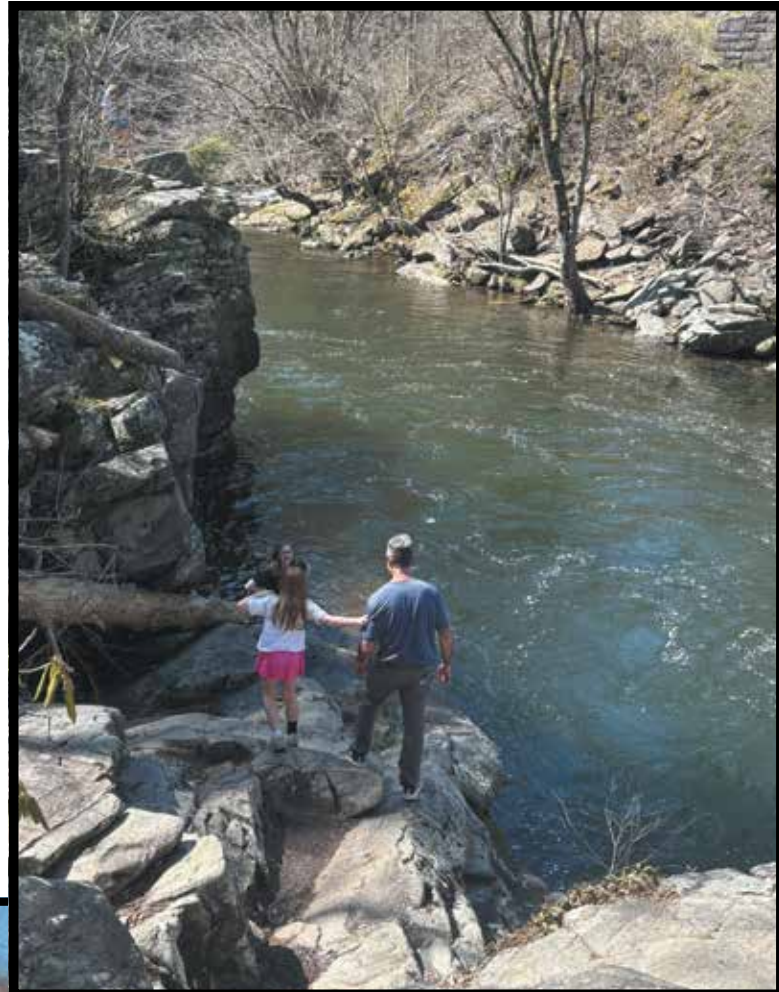
the scenic route, hoping to find a place to stop. At one turn, my husband remembered a spot from his college days called "The Sinks," a beautiful place along the river with a bluff and a deep area perfect for jumping.

Being the fun dad that he is, Garth wanted to show the girls how "cool" he used to be. He climbed the rocks, stepped to the edge, and waited for their countdown. The girls cheered as he jumped, then burst into laughter at his shocked reaction to the ice-cold water.

You'd think after witnessing his sheer look of panic, it would deter our girls from wanting to do

the same. For some reason, it did the exact opposite. While I wasn't about to let our 9-year-old try, our oldest, Isabelle, was determined. I reluctantly agreed, as long as Garth stayed in the water ready to help her.

Isabelle followed him up, listening closely as he explained where to jump and how to swim against the current toward calmer water. He went first and called to her. I held my phone, ready to record. "One... two... three..." She didn't move. Fear kept her feet firmly planted in place. She let other swimmers go ahead and tried several times but



just couldn't take the leap.

Eventually, Garth climbed back up and told Isabelle it was okay—she could try again when she was ready. They started down, but she paused, turned around, and said it was time. Once again, Garth went first. To my surprise, this time, she actually jumped.

Isabelle swam hard against the current toward her father, but she didn't have to go far, because he was there, just as promised, waiting to help her through.

That moment felt like a reflection of our walk with Christ. How often do we linger at the edge,

afraid to trust what we cannot see? And yet, our Heavenly Father goes before us. He waits, with open arms, ready to help us through the rushing waters of life.

During this Easter season, I invite you to seek the Lord in prayer about what He is calling you to do. Whether it's a new beginning, growing your family, offering forgiveness, or accepting Him as your Savior. Don't be scared to take the leap. He is there, ready to provide comfort, guidance, and strength. Get ready, get set, jump!

*Blessings,  
Carissa Lovvorn*

# What Makes Ronnie Roll

## Bittersweet And Blessings

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



It had been a whirlwind weekend, and frankly, most of them are. March Madness was in full swing, and a number of things had occurred in the city-- ball games, gatherings, hellos and good-byes. On Friday, March 27, there were two significant retirement parties. The first was for Sandy Thompson, who had been the director of the Alabama Veterans Museum & Archives for the last 17 years. Sandy and a team of dedicated volunteers had taken the museum from a local collection of military memorabilia to an award-winning tourist destination with beautifully arranged and displayed Smithsonian-quality artifacts. The museum had also navigated moving across the street into the event center, and under Sandy's leadership, learned how to be a wonderful place to host all kinds of things for "all kinda folk." That was "Bittersweet, Part

One." Blessing, Part One is that Sandy, who honorably served in the USAF and retired as a master sergeant is going to get a chance to travel and enjoy her family.

Kim Glaze has "worked for us" for decades, and has been in the mayor's office in the new City Hall building for the last nine years. I first met her when City Hall was located on the second floor of the Utilities building on Wilkinson when the old City Hall was being torn down and the new one was being built. Unfailingly kind to me, Kim was the first person I would see on my way in to interview Mayor Ronnie two times a month for this column. Kim is a new grandma of a precious baby grandgirl, and is going to take care of her two days a week. She is also going to be working part time for Premier Structures, Inc. "Bittersweet, Part Two." Blessing, Part Two is that Kim



is going to be able to love on a beautiful bundle and have new adventures as PSI is involved in the wild growth spurt going on in Limestone County.

Brand-new Blessing has come in the form of Andrea Coburn, who is taking over for Kim. Andrea brings years of experience as a police dispatcher and a municipal court clerk. She is an Athens native and came to the City planning department three years ago. She is incredibly organized, and I jokingly asked if she could please donate part of her pre-frontal cortex to me so I could be organized, too, when I grow

up. Her husband is an Alabama State Trooper, and their daughter has her eye on going to Auburn and becoming a veterinarian. I am fully confident that Andrea will be a competent and gracious gatekeeper.

Singing River Smoke-o-Rama was a grand success, and one of the things Mayor Ronnie especially enjoyed is how kids as young as two get involved in the cooking process. There are carefully supervised grilling contests for older kids, along with the competition for adults that brings people from Chicago and Mississippi. The purpose

is to raise awareness and funds for the Special Needs Rodeo that is part of the upcoming Sheriff's Rodeo in May. And, the mayor did not mind at all that as a judge he got to eat a whole lotta steak.

Lastly, there was Love for the City, on Saturday. "Love" is a celebration of praise, music, testimonies, and a community declaration that includes the mayor. It culminates in participants publicly renewing our commitment to making Athens, Alabama, a city that truly shows forth the Jn 17-type or the love of God irrespective of skin color. This year, Love for the City was held in Swan Creek Park, and honored a number of people who have served our city faithfully with no thought of being recognized for it.

There was just one thing left to do, and that was to pray, and then it was time once again for Ronnie to roll.

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## Combating Anxiety As A Christian Woman

by Anna Hamilton

*Anxiety has a way of creeping into our hearts quietly, often disguising itself as worry, fear, or feeling overwhelmed. For many women, especially those balancing family, work, relationships, and faith, it can feel like a constant battle. But as Christian women, we are not left defenseless. God has given us truth, powerful, steady, unchanging truth that we can speak over our lives.*

*Declarations rooted in Scripture are more than positive thinking; they are reminders of God's promises. When we declare His Word, we shift our focus from fear to faith.*

*God did not give me a spirit of fear. "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and love and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7). Fear does not come from God. He has given you power, love, and a sound mind. When anxiety rises, remind yourself that it is not your identity. You are equipped with strength and clarity through Him.*

*Jesus came to give me peace. "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it to the full" (John 10:10). Jesus didn't just come to save—you were also given access to a full, abundant life filled with*

*continued on page 22*

## Walnut Celery Salad with Feta

### Ingredients:

12 celery stalks, thinly sliced  
3/4 cup walnuts  
6 dates, pitted and sliced into thin slivers  
1/2 cup feta cheese  
1 shallot  
2 Tbsps. fresh mint, chopped  
For the dressing:  
4 Tbsps. lemon juice  
1 Tbsp. white wine vinegar  
2 Tbsps. honey  
1/3 cup olive oil  
1/8 tsp. red pepper flakes  
Salt and pepper to taste



*Heat a dry skillet over medium heat and add the walnuts. Toast them for 2-4 minutes, stirring frequently, until they become fragrant and lightly golden. Be careful not to let them burn.*

*In a small bowl, whisk together the freshly squeezed lemon juice, white wine vinegar, honey, and minced shallot. Let this sit for 30 seconds to allow the shallot to soften slightly. While whisking constantly, slowly drizzle in the olive oil to create an emulsified dressing. Add the red pepper flakes, then taste and season with salt and pepper to your preference.*

### Directions:

*Slice the celery stalks thinly. Chop the celery leaves and set aside. Mince the shallot finely. Pit the dates and slice them into thin slivers. Chop the fresh mint and crumble or cube the feta cheese into bite-sized pieces.*

# An Object At Rest... Is Probably Me

by Stephanie Reynolds, Athens-Limestone Tourism Association



Let's talk Tourism Physics... WAIT, WAIT, WAIT, I promise it'll be painless.

First, let's look at potential energy. Potential energy is a fancy physics term meaning energy that is stored -- it isn't doing anything. Think of a rubber band that is stretched but not released. Or a ball that is held up off the ground but not dropped yet. Or me when it's a Saturday and I am snuggled on the couch and don't want to go anywhere. Those things have energy inside (even if it doesn't feel like it), but they aren't using it.

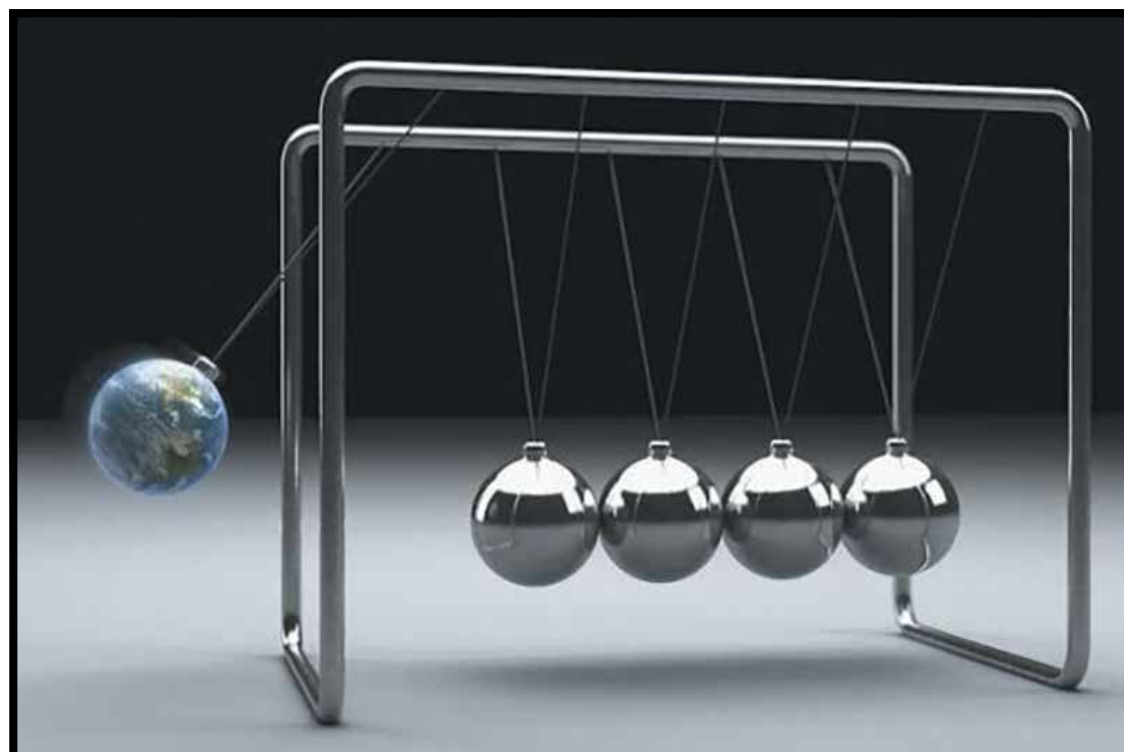
Now let's look at kinetic energy, which is another fancy physics term meaning energy that is moving. It is doing something. The rubber band is bouncing back into shape. The ball is falling to the ground. I actually got myself up off the couch and am hefting my pack (or my purse, which

weighs about as much) to hit the trail. Those things are energy that is being (more or less) productive.

This brings me to Isaac Newton and his #1 smash (physics) hit, "The Law Of Inertia." The lyrics go something like this: "An object at rest tends to stay at rest, and an object in motion tends to stay in motion." Classic.

You still with me? Okay, so an object that is not moving AND is full of potential energy is just... sitting there. It's doom scrolling in its little "cocoon of meh." But it's also not experiencing its best life, and it's stressed out to boot. That stretched rubber band is not actually resting by being stretched, it's just taut and "tired-wired." That ball is just suspended waiting for its life to begin, neither bouncing nor resting. Just...waiting.

But the stretched rubber band, once it MOVES,



returns to a more relaxed state. That ball, as soon as it BOUNCES and delights itself by landing and bouncing again, rolls to a resting stop in the sun-soaked grass.

And for me (and you too?), when I get off the couch and do fabulous things around the county, I end the day feeling more

at rest and incredibly content (and probably full because if I was on the trail, I know I ate a ridiculous amount of gummies).

"Land the plane, Steph, where are you going with this metaphor?"

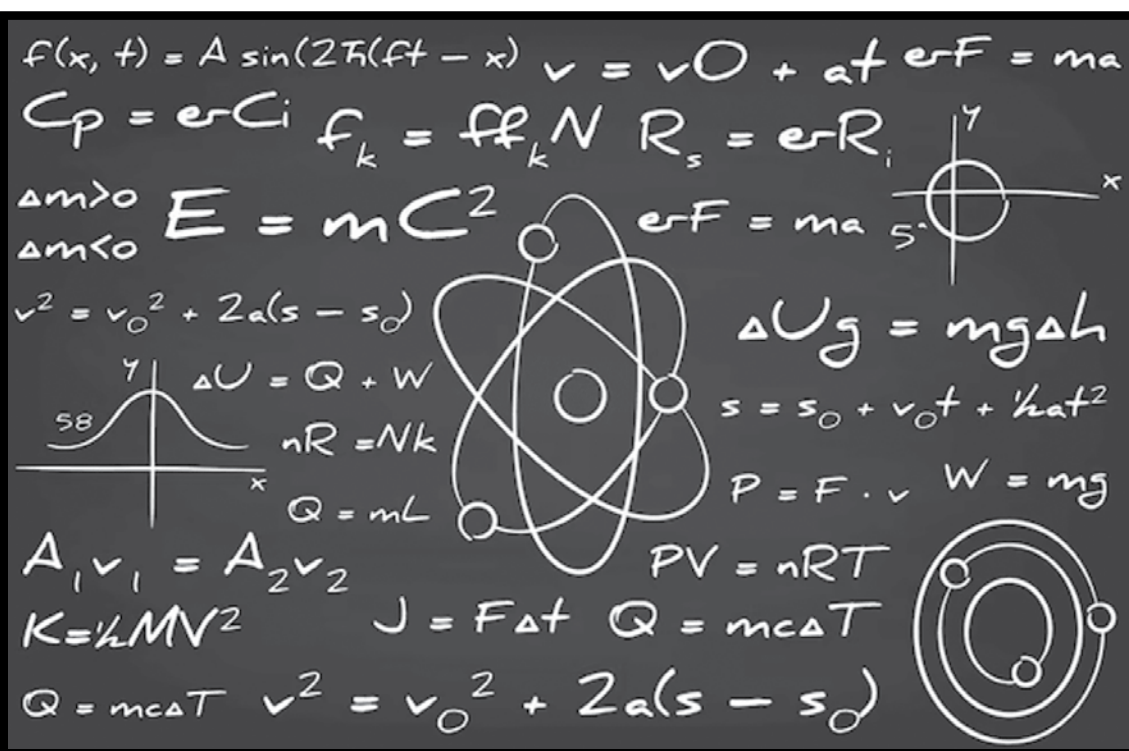
Ah, yes, ahem. My point is this: Ironically enough, doom scrolling is so much more exhausting than going to see a car show or listening to music in the night air or even going on a hike. It's not rest, it's restlessness, and this time of year there are so many things to do in Athens-Limestone County, so let's take that fabulous potential energy in us for a spin!

A few ideas to get that potential-energy-filled-ball rolling: Good Friday On The Square, NAACP Good Friday Fish Fry, Cruise In On The Square, Spectrum Family Fun Fest, LCEDA's Inaugural Sporting Clay Tournament, Taste of Athens-

Limestone, LCMGA Spring Plant Sale, Fridays After Five, Merchants Alley Happy Hour Music, Cars On The Square, and even more. And that is just in April.

And of course, every Saturday in April is a historic walking tour in Athens! Meet here at my office at 10 a.m. (100 North Beaty St., the red brick building by the duck pond). It's a free walking tour, and every Saturday is a different historic district. We won't have the tour if there is thunder/lightning, but we will if it is just raining, so bring an umbrella!

The most exhausting part of getting the fullest kinetic out of your potential is putting on your shoes. After that it's nothing but food, fun, and friends. So, mark your calendars, set your shoes by the couch, and put your phone in the car so you have to go out of the house to get it. Let's make this our most fun spring ever!



HAZEL GREEN  
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# Hang On To The Old Or Grab On To The New

by Steve Garner

*continued from page 1*

Limestone County. I have traveled all over the world and seen how the rest of the world is. That experience only strengthens my belief in Limestone County.

I am running for the office of Commissioner of Limestone County, District 1. Not for the reasons that many others run or the reasons that I may get labeled with. I am running because I love Limestone County, its people, my grandchildren and great grandchildren, and yours. Unfortunately, those children will grow up never seeing the county that we "old folks" grew up in.

Our county is growing and soon it will be bursting at the seams. We know this by looking at our friends in Madison County. I

grew up with the first red light in Huntsville being at the Parkway. Highway 72 was a long and lonely road with very little traffic. Now we spend an hour trying to go five miles. Huntsville is expanding. It has already annexed land in Limestone County and will continue to do so. It has no choice. It is blocked to the south by the river, to the east by the mountains and to the north by Tennessee. Meridianville was once a small community, but it has been assimilated and made almost as crowded as Huntsville. If you talk to the longtime residents, they do not like it. We are next.

With Space Command, Eli Lilly, and many others coming to Madison County (and the annexed land of Limestone County), employment opportunities abound.

Many of those positions are presently filled by the influx of families already working for them. Those families and many of the current residents of Madison and Huntsville want to work there but they do not want to live there. They want the relaxed peaceful atmosphere offered by Limestone County. They want to work in Huntsville, but they want to raise their families here. And there is absolutely nothing wrong with that. What is wrong is that our current infrastructure and county government mindset does not support that growth.

Our county government is like a multimillion-dollar corporation with the owners being the citizens of Limestone County. The county (our corporation) is led by four commissioners and a chairman. We have al-



ways elected those commissioners based upon the friends and family mindset. We cannot afford to do that any longer. This election is critical for the future of Limestone County. If we keep doing what we have been doing and expecting a different outcome, we will be sadly mistaken, (the definition of insanity). Four more years on the current path will put Limestone County at

the point of failure. We will be so far behind, we will not have the time or the money to recover.

There are seven Republicans and a couple of Democrats seeking office this time. As far as I know, they are all wonderful people. A few I have known all their lives. The sad part is that only a couple have the life experience and insight to run a corpo-



ration like Limestone County. The others are friends and family. If you need heart surgery, you do not get a plumber. You research and find the best heart surgeon available. You look at their credentials and their experience. An informed voter will do the same. Do we want four more years of the exact same that we have had for the last fifty?

Transparency is a vital part of any relationship. Yes, I said relationship. The county government and the citizens of Limestone County need to have a "one-team" and "one-mindset" relationship. Unfortunately, transparency seems to not be a part of the commission's vocabulary. This statement is based on the facts that have surfaced during this election. Funds suddenly appear that were never mentioned before. Roads are being widened that really do not need widening. I travel Bethel Road at least twice daily. It is one of the better roads in the county. Why not use that money to repair pig trails like Slate Road and many others? Is it that this road gets a lot of traffic and can "show" county progress?

At this point, I would like to take time to explain what I can bring to the table. I have over 40 years' experience in engineering, construction management, corporate management, site selection and negotiation, road and rail construction, community outreach, and foreign missions work. I could list

more but will stop there. I do not want to bore you too much. I managed the construction of the Orion Amphitheater. I have interfaced with state and local governments across this nation as well as abroad. Sitting across the table from leaders of major corporations and million-dollar lawyers takes experience when negotiating deals with them. They already know what you know, and they know what you do not know. You can get taken advantage of very quickly. An example would be the Toyota Mazda Plant and all their suppliers. Limestone County lost big on that deal.

I want your vote on May 19, but what I want even more is for you to be an informed voter and make your decision based on what is best for the county and who can contribute the most to achieving our goals. I said "our goals" because your voice needs to be heard and included in the decisions that our government makes.



Transparency needs to become the norm, and sidebar meetings need to be publicized.

As I have referenced before from one of my favorite movies, "If you build it, they will come." Even if we do not build it, they are coming and our county will continue to grow. They want to live

here in Limestone County where they can raise a family and relax from the hustle and bustle of Huntsville and Madison County. They will live here, and if we do not prepare for them, they will simply stop on the way home in Madison or Huntsville and get all they need there and bring it home with them. That

provides Madison and Huntsville with more tax dollars but leaves Limestone County with only property taxes.

You as the voter will make the decision on May 19.

You will decide whether to "hang on to the old or grab on to the new." Choose wisely.....

**STEVE**  
**GARNER**  
For Limestone Co. - District 1 Commissioner  
**LEADERSHIP - EXPERIENCE - INTERGRITY**



## Captain's Log

# "When You Go To Heaven, Does Your Mom Become Your Sister?"

by Brenda Wilkerson

The inquisitive mind of the elementary age is so refreshing. We get to explore the different opinions and options of a question brought to the captain. So far this week, I have been presented the following: "Is Santa real?" and "When you go to Heaven, does your mom become your sister?"

Whew, this girl had to think on her seat for these! We talked through what the world says, what your friends say, what is truth, fact, fiction, etc.

I was pleased to hear Paige pipe up and give the definition of what a fact is because they had just learned that in school. We delicately walked through

the first question with no conclusion, just options to think about and the final statement, "Well, I hear that the moment you stop believing, Santa stops coming to your house." You gotta give enough room for both beliefs to continue after such a heavy question!

The second question was presented by the wisdom of somebody's beloved grandma. We talked through what we didn't know, and we all agreed they would go home, research facts, and bring what they found to the "end-of-the-route" group discussion.

Sure enough, the subject was brought up and the



kids presented what information they had found. The conclusion? Grandma was right! We are all

God's children in Heaven. Not sure if that makes us all brothers and sisters, but that seemed to make the most sense after some discussion using elementary wisdom. With a bit of discussion about Heaven, with wiggle room for thoughts and reflection, we ended the route as the last few inquisitive kids walked down the steep steps of my big yellow

friend, turned to look me in the eye, and waved a warm goodbye.

Lord, I can clearly see the work before me. It is not to preach or be the one with all the answers, but to guide these kids to find the truth before them.

#onceuponaschoolbus2

~Brenda



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## Plan Your Comeback

by Detri L. McGhee - CLU, ChFC, B.Min

Being prepared is a great feeling. Whether at work, home, school, play, vacation, or vocation, preparation gives us a sense of control and peace. But, how do you prepare for the unexpected curves life often throws?

Remember the story of the safari photographer? He wanted to get so close to the bull elephant that his pictures showed the tiny hairs on the huge mammoth. Against his guide's constant warnings, he inched closer and closer until finally the elephant felt threatened and turned to charge. Just as the huge animal reached the photographer, he slung his camera aside, grabbed the huge tusks, and was flung to the ground. However, the tusks prevented the elephant from crushing the man and merely knocked him unconscious. Now, all the elephant wanted was to protect his space. So, he ambled off. As the guide reached the man, he was coming to. "HOW did you know to do that?" the guide asked astonished.

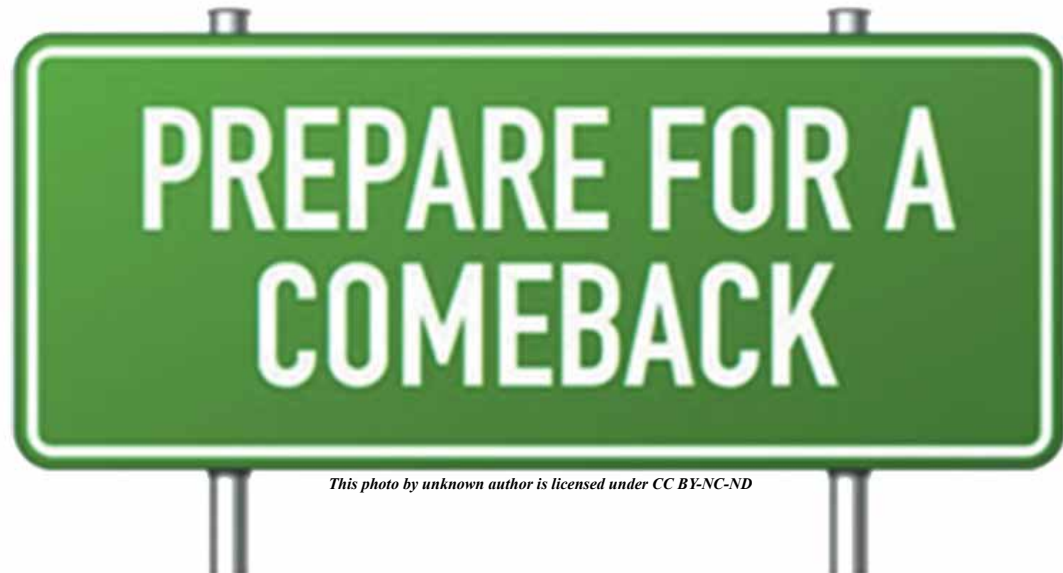
When he could finally speak, the photographer explained: "Because I have been charged by bull elephants a thousand times... in my mind." Preparation must begin well before the event that requires it. The more important the event, generally the longer the preparation takes. We plan for the "WHAT IFs." What

then?

Back to my pet topics: Criticism Management and EI (Emotional Intelligence). How do we prepare to meet those surprises of life when we don't know when or how they will come... nor do we know who will bring them, or why? Watch other people. When seeing unpleasant things, ask yourself, "What would be MY best response if that happened to me?"

Think of past problems and decide how to better respond in the future. Examples help. This is a key reason it is so wise to spend time with people with attributes, attitudes, and actions you admire and would like to see in yourself. Hear their stories. Learn from their mistakes and their successes. Then formulate the best reaction for you.

Example: How to respond to a nosy question that you don't want to answer? Answer with another question. Throw the uncomfortableness back to the intruder. "Why are you asking ME?" "Why do you want to know?" How you deliver the question, the tone you use, the facial expressions, all are determined by who is asking, their relationship to you, and what you think might be their motives. You can be gentle, stunned, caring, or even hyper-critical with your response, using basically the same words. Non-verbal is so



This photo by unknown author is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND

strong.

What if you are hit with surprise criticism by your boss in front of your fellow workers? This happened to me once. I merely sat there. I thought about what I should have done, or what I should do next. I decided right then and there that I did the right thing. BUT... should that ever happen again, I would give the same response while in the group, then follow him to his office, close the door behind myself, and ask him, "Do you want my resignation?" What I decided I WILL NOT do is act like him. Neither will I allow him to act that way toward me publicly again without response. If you want to criticize me, do it privately first. If that doesn't work, then it becomes my fault that I didn't pay close attention to the problem.

Now, I recognize that everyone cannot afford to quit their job at a moment's notice. But I had the advantage of

sales training where I had previously lived on commission earned, so I knew there would always be something else I could do for income. If that weren't the case, I would use another approach. Thankfully that never happened again. (A fellow officer said that my facial expression during the criticism said enough. OOPS! I have never had a poker face.)

Divert negativity, seek to understand the real issue/problem, and engage in productive activity designed to solve the problem, or at the very least to understand what the real problem is. A common issue: How do I respond so that I am not letting oth-

ers control my response and my attitude while at the same time work toward a solution that benefits as many people as possible? We can't take words back. Apologies are important and valuable, but they do not totally remove the damage done. THINK! Plan. Re-think. Plan again. Imagine. Act vs React. Carry every situation to its logical conclusion, and choose the wisest path for you.

**Detri would love to hear from you. Send your comebacks to: Email: [detrimghee@gmail.com](mailto:detrimghee@gmail.com) Facebook: Detri Atkinson McGhee. [www.criticismmanagement.com](http://www.criticismmanagement.com)**

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# Clean, Green And Beautiful

## Spring Fever

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

Spring is here and we are jumping into action! We have a busy few months planned, and we hope to see everyone more than once. Save the dates below!

Free Dump Day, a service provided by the Limestone County Commission, is open to all Limestone County residents. Residents may take a trailer or pickup truck load of debris to the Republic Services Transfer Station, 16100 BFI Lane (off Hwy. 72, just east of 7 Mile Post Rd). Times will be 7 a.m. – noon.

There are a few guidelines and restrictions -- a maximum of 4 automobile tires, any appliance with Freon must have the compressor removed or be accompanied by a certificate stating that the Freon has been professionally removed. No hazardous household or medical waste. Contractors may NOT dump for free. Must provide **PROOF RESIDENCY (EX. CURRENT UTILITY BILL)**.

The Earth Day Expo will be April 25, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. at the Athens State University Sandridge

Student Center. We will have free shows from Steve Trash and Rise Raptors, ASU Historic Tree Tours, Wild Adventures Spider Monkeys, Lash Laroux Caricatures and Forest Bathing writing workshops. We have an amazing lineup of vendors as well and still adding every day! And our educational booths are top notch this year! And there will be some amazing artwork on display with the TBAKI art contest! Don't miss this free, family event -- we will have something for everyone.

The Tennessee River Trash Attack will be May 16, from 8 a.m. - noon. We will start out at Cowford Campground (8700 Cowford Road). Volunteers will meet for supplies and instructions and then spread out to the area they would like to work. We'll hit the usual areas, the campground, Dairy Road, and Hatchett Ridge Road.

Let There Be Cake We'll be back at the Athens State University LaunchBox on May 29 to cure your sweet tooth! We will have a wide variety of delicious cakes from different bakers in Limestone County at \$5 per person for 3 samples, and we will have silent auction cakes too! Last year, our Limestone County bakers really



showed out, every cake was wonderful.

The Household Hazardous Waste Collection will be June 13 from 8 a.m. - noon. This year, things will be a little different. The event will be held at the Limestone County Recycling Facility, entering through the south gate at 1301 North Jefferson Street. We will have people, signs, and cones so you won't miss us! Recycling will be open, so feel free to bring it all -- paper, plastic, cardboard, aluminum cans, steel cans, motor

oil, and electronics. We just ask that everyone remain in their vehicles at all times to keep the lines flowing. You will be directed through with volunteers to help unload at all points! You will drive through the Recycling building where most of your chemicals will be unloaded. Again, PLEASE DO NOT GET OUT OF YOUR VEHICLE!

Save the dates, and watch for new things to pop up; we are still adding things every day!

**Household Hazardous Waste Collection**

**JUNE 13, 2026 8AM-12PM**

**Accepted:**  
Lawn Chemicals, Paint, Paint Products, Household Chemicals, Automotive Chemicals, Fluorescent Bulbs, Electronics, Motor Oil, Tube TVs, Medication

**Not Accepted:**  
Medical Waste, Mercury

Household recycling will be accepted at this event.

Limestone County Recycling  
1301 North Jefferson Street  
Athens, Alabama 35611

Enter through the south gate on Jefferson Street.



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# *Don't Abandon Your Dreams*

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)*



Recently, I was asked, “What separates those who have success versus those who seem to draw the short end of the stick in business?” My immediate knee-jerk reaction was to answer the individual by giving a short statement about hard work and a positive attitude. However, the more I thought about this question, the more I realized what it is that is prevalent in someone who is successful. This one ingredient can be used in various aspects of life and it comes down to the word “self-discipline.”

The definition of self-discipline is: “The ability to control one’s feelings and overcome one’s weaknesses; the ability to pursue what one thinks is right despite temptations to abandon it.” The more I reflected upon this definition, it

became apparent to me that what separates someone from success and failure boils down to the amount of self-discipline a person has. Think about the number of New Year’s resolutions that people write down at the beginning of the year. Yet, by this time of year, you find most people have already “abandoned” the resolutions they were so ambitious about months earlier.

Take someone who is focusing on their health and someone who lacks self-discipline; life is much easier for someone who sits back on the couch compared to someone getting their body in motion. I’ve written in the past about people waiting to go after their dreams. Why? Self-discipline, or rather a lack thereof, is what becomes the downfall of many people.

In the world of business, it is not easy to have the ability to keep fighting when the odds are stacked against you. When the world has your back against the wall, one of the hardest feats known to man is picking yourself back up when life has beat you down. This proverbial “beat-down” could be a job from which you were fired, a promotion for which you were overlooked, or even a person turning you down for a date. It took me asking my wife out thirteen times before she reluctantly agreed to a first date! We all face obstacles and struggles in our lives. If you have a heartbeat, you’re going to have problems. The answer to these problems lies in how we respond to these struggles.

This is where having self-discipline comes into play. Having the ability to be in

control of your feelings and your actions make the disappointing times a lot easier to handle, as opposed to when you feel out-of-balance with life. You may be asking yourself, “How does a person find self-discipline?” I narrow this response down to three things.

The first is “Goal Setting” and making sure you are writing out your goals on a daily basis. Who has a better shot of hitting their goal – the person who writes their goal once in a New Year’s resolution or the person who writes their goal down every day? The obvious answer is the person continuously writing out their goals. If you’re not doing this, start today.

The second is “Time Management” and your ability to control the hours you have. Everyone has 168

hours per week. No one can create more time or less time, as we are all guaranteed the same hours. What’s important is what we do with the time we have. The biggest lie people repeat is they do not have enough time. If it’s important to you, you’ll find a way. If it’s not, then you’ll find an excuse. I am a believer in the written to-do list. I learned this special skill set from my wife who has helped educate and domesticate me in so many ways! This list is simple to do and takes what you want to get accomplished and assigns an importance to the tasks you want to complete. There will be days you hit it out of the park with your to-do list, and other days it will look like you barely touched it. Regardless of the good or bad, keep making your daily list of what you want to get done.

The final word is “Persistence.” You must be obsessed or persistent in achieving self-discipline. In life, you’re going to face obstacles, but you’ve got to build self-discipline in your life to find success. There’s a quote I love that states, “Persistence beats resistance,” and I point this out because if I wouldn’t have been persistent with my wife, we wouldn’t be married today. I urge you to work on your self-discipline and create the life you’ve always wanted. Don’t abandon your dreams.





Learning As A Lifestyle

# Weathering The Storms In Leadership

by Eric Betts

Assistant Director, Curtis Coleman Center for Religion Leadership and Culture at Athens State University

Spring always reminds us that leadership is not forged in calm weather. This season brings its own soundtrack—sirens in the distance, wind rattling windows, clouds gathering faster than we can track. Storms have a way of exposing what's loose, what's fragile, and what's been neglected. But they also reveal what's been built with intention.

Leadership works the same way. Anyone can appear strong when the sky is clear. It's only when the winds rise that we discover who has anchored their character, their convictions, and their community in something deeper than convenience.

Weathering storms requires a steady build-

er's mindset. The leaders who endure aren't the ones who chase every trend or react to every gust. They're the ones who, like the great strategic builders of our history, understand that preparation is not panic—it's stewardship. They reinforce relationships before the rain comes. They cultivate trust long before the lightning strikes. They invest in people, systems, and spiritual grounding so that when the pressure hits, they don't have to scramble to find stability; they've already built it.

Storms also teach leaders to listen. When thunder rolls and the wind shifts, creation itself becomes a classroom. Storms remind us that we are not in



control, but we are responsible. We can't stop the weather, but we can strengthen the structures under our care. We can't predict every crisis, but we can cultivate the wisdom, humility, and courage to respond well.

Leaders who listen—to God, to their teams, to the changing conditions around them—are the ones who navigate uncertainty without losing their center.

And finally, storms reveal the power of connection. A single beam can't hold up a house in a tornado, but a network of beams can. In the same way, isolated leaders collapse un-



der pressure, but connected leaders—those who build community, empower others, and share the load—stand firm. Spring storms will come, both in the sky and in our lives.

But leaders who build steadily, listen deeply, and stay connected will not only survive the season; they'll help others find shelter, strength, and hope in the midst of it.

# Tennessee Valley Spotlight

## Mondays at 10am 1080 AM WKAC



## The Alternative Approach

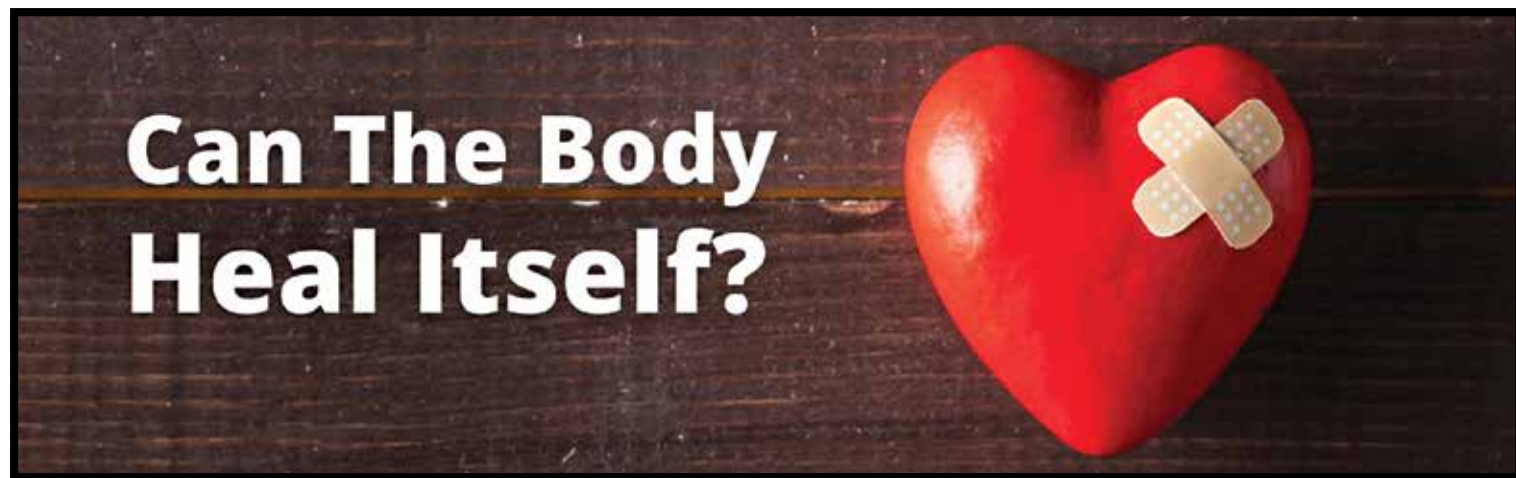
# Healing From Within

by Roy Williams

Healing is part of what the human body was designed to do. You don't have to tell your body to heal, it is as automatic as breathing. When damage occurs due to disease or trauma, messages are sent instantly via the central nervous to the brain, which immediately begins the process of healing.

At the moment the miracle of healing begins, an amazing number of processes go into action. Your immune system is activated sending killer T-cells and microphages, or white blood cells, to the source of the disease or the area of damage. Heart rate goes up, blood flow increases, inflammation begins, and even hormones such as cortisol and dopamine are activated. Even something as small as a splinter in your finger can cause histamine production.

Yes, your body is an amazing creation with some of the most incredible response mechanisms ready at a moment's notice. Once the healing process begins, your body will immediately send nutrients to the damaged area to make repairs. If you are bleeding, it will begin another amazing process of clotting your blood to decrease blood loss. If you are attacked by a pathogen, the killer T-cells and white blood cells will begin to hunt down the foreign proteins or other contaminants so they can destroy and remove them from your body.



## Can The Body Heal Itself?

The question is *Are you ready when a disease or trauma happens?* Do you have a reserve of the most important nutrients such as vitamins A, B, C, D, and E? Just as important are the minerals that are absolutely necessary to repair the damage, minerals such as calcium, magnesium, potassium, iron, and copper in your reserves. Overall, in order to heal, your body needs a supply of 16 vitamins, 74 minerals and trace elements, 12 amino acids, 3 essential fatty acid, and a lot of protein.

Ever wonder why two people can be injured or catch a virus and one will heal very quickly without complications and the other may have to be hospitalized or die? According to Dr. Joel Wallach, the difference can be as simple as one having a surplus of all the nutrients necessary for healing and the other a deficiency of those same nutrients. Some people develop cancer and others, even though they are exposed to the same environment, never develop cancer.

Healing is something

your body knows how to do, but without the raw materials that are necessary to make the repairs or fight the infestation, the healing process will fail. If part of your home is destroyed by a tornado and you call a contractor to make the repairs, what will they need to restore your home? Once they assess the damage, they will make a list of the materials that are necessary to make the repairs. Without the materials, your home cannot be made whole again. Your body is no different.

Another thing you need to be aware of is that your body is organic. It requires organic material to make the necessary repairs. Not one cell of your body is synthetic; therefore, the drugs your doctor may prescribe when you are injured or become diseased can only treat the symptoms. Drugs cannot be used by your body to make the repairs. Drugs can ease your pain, stop nausea, decrease bleeding, and even calm you down, but they cannot be used to patch you up or complete the healing process.

Yes, God designed your body to heal. It is, however, your responsibility to make sure you are getting the appropriate organic materials to repair at a cellular level. My wife and our children have been supplementing our diets with the highest quality all-natural supplements for most of our lives. Even in our sixties, we are not dependent on the medical profession. Our energy is great, aches and pains are minimal, we don't suffer from allergies or sinus problems; we run five businesses and really love life because our overall health for our age is great.

Now that you understand that all healing is dependent on nutrients, doesn't it make sense to start a nutritional program that supports your overall

health? As we age it becomes even more necessary. As we age our ability to maintain a youthful appearance, stamina, and overall health will decline if we are nutritionally deficient.

If you are one of those people who are not supplementing your diet, please consider starting a basic support program called, **Overall-Health Combo**. It is a combination of two easy to take supplements, **MSM+C** and **Ultimate Fruit & Veggie**. A daily serving of each will naturally help with energy, pain, focus, concentration, and quality of life. To learn more, go by Herbs & More in Athens or NHC Herbs in Killen.

*Your friend in health,*  
Roy P. Williams



# A “Secondhand” Emotion

by Lisa Philippart,  
Licensed Professional Counselor

**“Where there is anger, there is always pain underneath.”**

- Eckhart Tolle

trigger anger include our own personal assumptions and interpretations of situations that makes us think that pain will follow. Anger is definitely a complex social emotion. It seems that we always have a target for our anger, including ourselves. When something “bad” happens, we feel pain, combined with those anger-triggering thoughts, which then motivates us to take action. Anger is also second-handed in that it can be a substitute emotion. Have you ever changed your feelings of pain into anger? For some of us, it feels better to be angry than it does to be hurting. This changing of emotions from hurting into anger may be

done consciously or unconsciously. The advantage of this substitution is primarily for distraction. If you are in pain, you generally think about the pain. But if you are angry, you tend to think about hurting whomever or whatever has caused the pain. The shift of your attention goes from focusing on yourself to focusing on someone or something else.

The feeling of anger does have its advantages. Anger temporarily protects us from having to recognize and deal with painful real feelings. Instead of focusing on the hurting, you get to think about getting back at the people or situations that created

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the discomfort. Or maybe your anger helps to hide a frightening situation and/or your vulnerability. Sometimes, becoming angry creates a feeling of righteousness and justice. You may be telling yourself that the people who hurt you are wrong and should be corrected or even punished. You train yourself to become angry with cause. If you can

believe that your anger is justified and therefore so are your actions, you can better explain why you felt, thought, and acted a certain way. The problem becomes that the social judgment of our actions of anger creates real consequences for the angry person. You may believe that your anger “justifies” retaliation. The false feeling of righteousness, whether acceptable or not, offers a fleeting boost to self-esteem. I can attest to the fact that I find it more satisfying to acknowledge painful feelings through anger than to accept feelings of vulnerability. The bottom line here is that anger generally does not resolve or address the problems that make you feel afraid or exposed or hurting in the first place.

Next time, we will take a look at the ways anger may be harming your overall health.

*Lisa Philippart is a Licensed Professional Counselor, who divides her time between her own private practice in Huntsville and providing personal counseling services at Athens State University.*



I am admitting that I have struggled with recognizing my own anger. I often don't understand it when I feel it, and I sometimes don't know what to do with it when it happens. So, I have become a master at talking myself out of whatever this feeling of anger is. But the more I counsel others, the more I discover the challenges of this emotion. The anger isn't usually the problem, it's often what is buried underneath and/or the action taken. Anger is a natural and mostly automatic response to pain, either physical or emotional. The dictionary definition is “a strong feeling of annoyance, displeasure, or hostility.” Anger tends to occur when we don't feel well, we feel rejected, we feel threatened, or we experience a loss. The type of pain we feel is unpleasant, and because anger does not occur in isolation, it is often characterized as a “secondhand” emotion. The pain alone is not enough to cause the anger. Anger develops when pain and an anger-triggering thought combine.

As a cognitive-behavior therapist, I believe that our patterns of thought about the world and ourselves control our moods and our behaviors. Therefore, the thoughts that can



GenZ With JP

# Gen Z Conservatism Will Save The GOP

by JP Plott, Co-host of *Rightside Radio*

*Editors note: This article was first published by Yellowhammer News*

The future of any nation lies squarely on the shoulders of its younger generation. This may seem rather self-explanatory. Obviously, the generation that will be around the longest is, by definition, the future. However, it goes much deeper than that. It goes beyond just birth rates to determine the future of a nation.

The values of the next generation are what America depends upon. Whether the future will be led by those who value self-indulgence or by those who value living a life honorable to Christ. By those who mutilate their bodies and murder their unborn children simply because of inconvenience, or those who lead lives of discipline and virtue. By those who practice evil, or those who fight for good. This is the battle that rages on in Gen Z.

In my opinion, my generation is the most polar-

ized on Earth. We lived an upbringing surrounded by constant evil and confusion, growing up alongside the boom of modern technology. This gave evil an unprecedented entry point to corrupt the young minds of the world, and lead them astray into a world of pain. Sin was allowed to come barging into our souls at an age at which previous generations were never introduced to it. This set the stage for a spiritual war, and one that continues to rage on day after day. This is why the future of American politics will not be fought over tax policy or other trivial matters. It will be fought between Good and Evil.

This fight has already begun, but it will only intensify. Abortion, mutilation of children, wide-open borders, and the attempted eradication of Christianity from America are the fights Gen Z has on its hands. It's becoming evidently clear to me that the current state of the GOP does not recognize

this threat nearly enough. The Trump administration appealed heavily to the concerns of Gen Z in 2024 and benefited from it tremendously. According to the Harvard Kennedy School, Gen Z shifted to the right by 21 points between 2020 and 2024. What was the appeal? Was it the economy? Absolutely, it's becoming more and more difficult to own a home in America as a young person. Was it cutting waste and fraud out of the government with DOGE? Sure. But fundamentally speaking, I believe it's much deeper than this.

I believe the reason we saw such a tremendous shift to the right from Gen Z in 2024 was that we recognized the true threat of evil bubbling up in America. We've seen our birthright get snatched away from us via wide-open borders. We've seen our society get overrun by tremendously gross individuals who want to turn everything gay. We've seen the oversexualization of our generation from pornography and casual sex. And most importantly, we've seen the demonization of Christ and Christian values. Gen Z is currently leading the charge to become the most Christian generation alive. A new study from Barna Group and Gloop reveals that churchgoers between the ages of 18 and 28 attend church more frequently than their older siblings, parents, or grandparents. Gen Z recognizes the evil

at hand and is increasingly returning to the truth of Christ. These are the true reasons why so many young people showed up to vote for Trump. Unfortunately, though, I don't believe the Trump administration quite understood the assignment. What Gen Z is seeing right now is just a repeat of the Republican presidencies of old. We're seeing no mass deportations while ICE is being run out of cities by Antifa. The housing market is being intentionally inflated for homeowners. And to top it all off, we're now in yet another Middle Eastern war.

A recent poll by *The Economist/YouGov*, conducted from March 13 to 16, showed that Gen Z had an overall net approval rating of -39 for the Trump administration, with a swing of -11 points in just over a week. This is not because Gen Z is becoming less conservative; it's because the current GOP just isn't getting it. However, this is not a pessimistic column. This is one of great optimism. Gen Z conservatives understand the threat at hand. Our opposition is much different than that of our predecessors. Our opponent across the aisle no longer believes in the same foundations as we do. They don't "want the same things, but just have a different way of achieving them." The young left seek to wipe away America's identity, and it's up to young patriots to stand in their way.

I feel strongly optimistic that the future of the GOP is filled with Christ-like warriors who will do whatever it takes to save this nation and protect it from those who seek to destroy it. Christ-less conservatism will have no place in this revival of the Republican Party. We showed up loud and proud in 2024 in what we thought was the most important election of our lifetime. But, just as loud as we were then, we will be just as loud when you don't meet the standard. I see this as a massive positive sign. Gen Z conservatives will not take no for an answer. We have a high standard, because we understand the time we're living in. Our heart is for Christ and America, and we will not keep the two separate... because the current battle for the future of America is not a political one, but a spiritual one.

*Justin "JP" Plott is the production manager for Rightside Media, and Producer for Rightside Radio. JP joined the Rightside team in late 2024 after working at WVNN in Huntsville, Alabama. He quickly became a top-notch, multi-media producer and a voice of Gen-Z conservatism.*





Cooking with Anna (continued from page 9)

# Combating Anxiety As A Christian Woman

by Anna Hamilton

*peace. His presence is calm in the middle of chaos, and His peace is always available to you.*

*I will think about good, because I become what I think. “For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. Eat and drink he says to you, but his heart is not with you” (Proverbs 23:7). Your thoughts matter. What you dwell on shapes your perspective and your emotions. Choosing to focus on what is good, true, and uplifting helps quiet anxious thinking and renew your mind.*

*I will be anxious for nothing. “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6–7). This isn’t a command meant to burden you—it’s an invitation. God calls you to bring everything to Him in prayer. In exchange, He offers a peace that surpasses understanding, guarding your heart and mind.*

*Jesus gives me peace the world cannot give. “Peace, I leave with you, my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27). The world offers temporary relief—distractions, control, reassurance—but only Jesus gives lasting peace. His peace is deeper than circumstances and stronger than fear.*

*God is my refuge and present help in trouble. “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear, even though the earth be removed, and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though its waters roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with its swelling” (Psalm 46:1-3). You are never alone in your struggles. God is not distant! He is present,*

*steady, and strong. In moments of anxiety, you can run to Him as your safe place.*

*Worry and anxiety will not steal my life. “Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?” (Matthew 6:27). Worry cannot add anything to your life, it only takes away your joy. Jesus reminds us that our lives are in God’s hands. You can release the burden of trying to control everything.*

*In the name of Jesus, anxiety cannot stay! “I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you” (Luke 10:19). There is authority in the name of Jesus. You are not powerless against anxiety. Through Him, you have the strength to resist fear and stand in truth.*

*Anxiety may visit, but it does not have to stay. As you speak these declarations daily, let them sink deep into your heart. Over time, they will begin to shape how you think, how you respond, and how you live.*

*You are not alone. You are not powerless. And most importantly, you are deeply loved by a God who cares about every anxious thought you carry. Hold onto His promises, they are your peace.*

*This week’s recipe is a yummy springtime salad. It uses a very underrated vegetable, in my opinion, the humble celery stalk. It is a great way to eat all of those yummy, green springtime veggies. I hope your family enjoys it as much as mine does.*

*“Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it” (John 14:12-14)*

# Eat Whole Foods For Health

by Nick Niedzwiecki - Owner, CrossFit Athens



In a world filled with fast food, packaged snacks, and convenience meals, it's easy to overlook one of the most powerful tools for improving your health: eating whole foods. Whole foods are foods that are as close to their natural state as possible—think lean meats, vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, and whole grains. These foods are minimally processed, free from unnecessary additives, and packed with the nutrients your body actually needs to function, recover, and thrive.

When you consistently eat whole food meals, you're giving your body high-quality fuel. Protein from sources like chicken, beef, and eggs helps build and maintain muscle, which becomes increasingly important as we age. Vegetables and fruits provide essential vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that support your immune system, reduce inflammation, and promote long-term health. Healthy fats from foods like olive oil, avocados, and nuts support brain function and hormone balance.

On the flip side, heavily processed foods are often loaded with added sugars, unhealthy fats, and artificial ingredients. These foods are designed to be hyperpalatable, making it easy to overeat while still leaving your body undernourished. Over time, a diet high in processed foods can lead to

weight gain, low energy levels, and an increased risk of chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease.

One of the biggest misconceptions about eating healthy is that it takes too much time. In reality, simple whole food meals can be prepared quickly and in bulk, making it easier to stay consistent throughout the week. Meal prepping is one of the best strategies to ensure you always have healthy options available, even on your busiest days.

Here's a simple, no-stress, crock pot chicken recipe you can throw together in under 10 minutes:

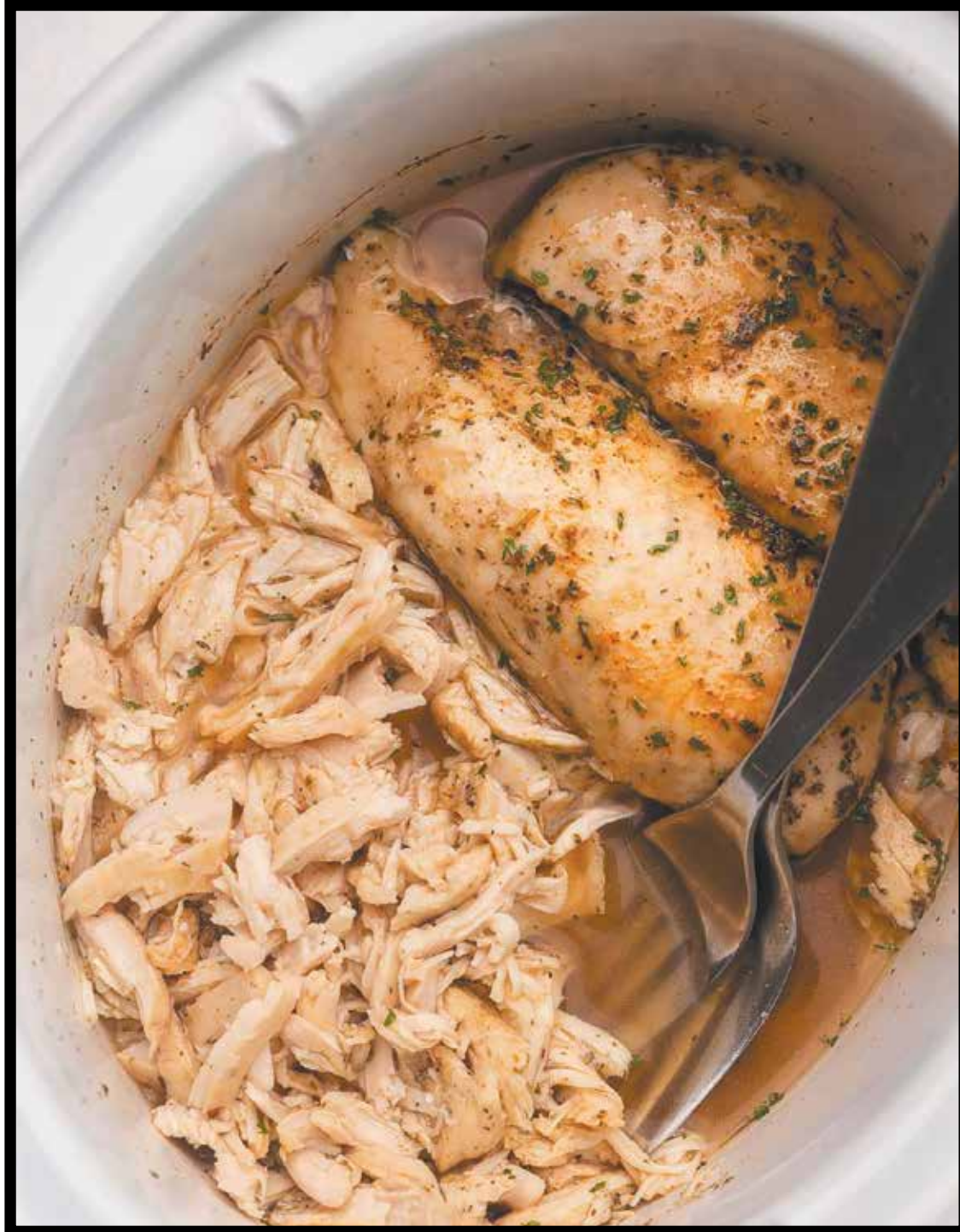
## Simple Crock Pot Chicken Meal Prep

### Ingredients:

- 2–3 lbs. boneless, skinless chicken breast
- 1 packet taco seasoning (or homemade blend of chili powder, garlic powder, cumin, salt, and pepper)
- 1 jar salsa (look for one with simple ingredients)
- 1 bell pepper, sliced
- 1 onion, sliced

### Instructions:

1. Place the chicken breasts in the crock pot.
2. Sprinkle the seasoning evenly over the chicken.
3. Pour the salsa on top.
4. Add the sliced pep-



pers and onions.

5. Cover and cook on low for 6–7 hours or high for 3–4 hours.

6. Once cooked, shred the chicken with a fork and mix everything together.

That's it. You now have a flavorful, protein-packed meal you can use all

week. Serve it over rice, in a bowl with veggies, or in tortillas for quick tacos.

Eating whole foods doesn't have to be complicated. It's about making better choices more often and setting yourself up for success. When you prioritize real, nutrient-dense foods and keep things simple, you'll notice better energy, im-

proved performance, and a stronger, healthier body. And most importantly, you'll be building habits that support long-term health—not just quick, temporary results.

- Coach Nick  
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