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By Ali Elizabeth Turner

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By Ali Elizabeth Turner

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**Copy Editor**  
Yvonne Dempsey

**Graphic Design**  
Jonathan Hamilton

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**Contributing Writers**

- D. A. Slinkard
- Anna Hamilton
- JP Plott
- Claire Tribble
- Roy Williams
- Brenda Wilkerson
- Detri McGhee
- Nick Niedzwiecki
- Eric Betts
- Stephanie Reynolds
- Jackie Warner
- Deb Kitchenmaster

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**Publisher's Point**

**Fresh Friendship  
And FIFA**

Besides getting ready for our 250th birthday bash, we are smack dab in the middle of FIFA fever, the glorious, joyful response to America expressed by those invading from all over the world to watch and play what we call soccer here in the States, and everyone else calls "football." Rather than having the games all in one city as is the case with the Olympics, the venues are spread out from coast to coast, Canada and Mexico. And the viral videos showing people straight up saying, "I feel like I have been lied to about America all my life" are more than telling.

When I write, I try really hard to imagine what someone has gone through or is currently going through, and see

things from their perspective. So, using that formula, it occurs to me that soccer fans that get their news from outlets that range from BBC to Al-Jazeera went through some consternation about coming here in the first place to see their favorite teams play. "Will I get mugged?" "Will I get killed?" "Will I get raped?" "Will I be hated because my skin is a different color?" I would think on some level that they got their affairs in order before they got on the plane, kissed their families good-bye like they were going off to war, and perhaps prayed for the first time in a long time that they would return home safely.

And then, the shock and awe of the *true American spirit* is literally blow-

ing their minds as they travel to different cities for different matches and record and post their experiences. Who knew that being able to shoot indoors at a Pro Bass Shop would be such a big deal? How about the Aussie who was on a Florida beach and was so impressed that all he could say was, "This is insane" (the context being a positive one) as he took a selfie vid of the beach behind him.

Here in Athens, we zip by Buc-ee's, or we stop, depending on our mood, and we really have no idea how remarkable that chain of stores actually is. A Scot says through his brogue, "Buc-ee's is America in a box; a very, very large box." The looks and sounds of delicious delight as peo-

ple sample all kinds of food that they've never heard of. I gotta tell ya', I have never waxed nearly euphoric over mac-n-cheese.

Grown men oohing and ahing over the size of 18-wheeler trucks, remind me of little boys that want my husband, an over-the-road truck driver to pull the air horn as he goes barreling by. Whole groups of fans in a pub in Boston singing John Denver's *Country Road*. That is dear enough, but what put a lump in my throat was also listening to *them* singing "The Star Spangled Banner" from start to finish.

The friendship, the welcome, the hospitality, and not just in the South, has made an immeasurable impact, and the truth of who we were made to be has been on global display with no editorial team present to sully or stop it.

"I feel like I have been lied to about America all my life." Yes, yes you have. And may those responsible take note.

*Ali Elizabeth Turner*

**Ali Elizabeth Turner**  
Athens Now  
Information & Inspiration  
256-468-9425  
ali@athensnowal.com  
Website:  
www.athensnowal.com



**athensnowal.com**



# Meet Greatest Generation Heroes Douglas Munro And His Mom, Edith

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



This time of year is full of reasons and ways to honor those that have made the ultimate sacrifice so that Americans could be free. Beginning with Memorial Day, we solemnly gather and remember those of every branch of service who have, from the beginning of this nation fallen while serving.

As it pertains to WWII, often we remember the day that in our culture is referred to as The Longest Day, or D-Day. That is June 6, when we consider that fifty miles of the beaches of Normandy were invaded by 160,000 Allied soldiers, and against all odds with an unbelievably high casualty rate, the tide of the war was turned. On June 14, we celebrate Flag Day, which commemorates the adoption of our symbol of freedom, the Stars and Stripes.

Then comes the 4th of July, which will be especially remarkable this year as we have our 250th birthday in just a few days. So, as I was considering what to write for *Soldier* in this somewhat in-between time, I was so glad to come across a Greatest Generation story of the only member of the Coast Guard to ever receive the Medal of Honor, along



with his memorable mom.

Douglas Munro was born in Vancouver, Canada, in 1919, and enlisted in the United States Coast Guard. His father was British, his mother was an American, and he grew up in the town of Cle Elum in Washington State. In that era, most of the time, "Coasties" stayed closer to the actual coasts of the U.S., but WWII was a different animal. In 1942, the U.S. had to face down the Japanese in the Solomon

Islands in what was another epic battle of WWII—Guadalcanal.

Douglas Munro had a "battle buddy" that was the epitome of what we think of as brothers-in-arms. His name was Raymond Evans, and they volunteered to go rescue 500 Marines that were overrun by the Japanese. In a wooden boat under heavy fire, they managed to rescue all 500. At the moment they had gotten the last one to safety, Douglas Munro

took a fatal shot to the neck. There was nothing that could be done, and he bled out. He regained consciousness long enough to ask if all the Marines were okay, found out that miraculously they were, smiled his last, and passed.

For his bravery, he was awarded the Medal of Freedom, which was given by FDR and accepted by his mother Edith. To this day he is the only Coast Guard member to have received

it. When you consider that over 3500 other service members from the rest of the branches have received this award, you'll understand how remarkable it is.

For all the buildings named after him, his honor with Marines, the Munro Day that is celebrated annually in Cle Elum, Washington, and more, what stuns me is that Edith, at the age of 48, and after having lost her son, enlisted in the SPARS, the women's Coast Guard unit in order to serve her country and continue her son's legacy. She served with distinction, received several awards herself, and is buried next to her son. This is what was done for us, by those who would never meet us on this side, for reasons that are becoming rarer and rarer. Let us never forget it.



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# Calendar of Events

## **Traveling Exhibit “My Wild Backyard” at EarlyWorks Children’s Museum**

**Through August 31**

404 Madison Street in historic Downtown Huntsville. The popular exhibit helps children get up close and personal with nature living in their own backyards this summer. A.A. Milne, creator of the cuddly teddy bear Winnie the Poo once quipped, "Weeds are flowers too, once you get to know them." Children will have the opportunity to get to know the secret lives of critters, bugs, and plants found just outside their own backdoor this summer as the “My Wild Backyard” interactive traveling nature exhibit has arrived at EarlyWorks Children’s Museum. “My Wild Backyard” features hands-on, immersive experiences for children to "peer inside wildlife dens, crawl along the forest floor and swim along the pond bottom” all with a focus on the hidden world of insects, spiders, and creatures that live in yards, gardens, and urban spaces. Not only is “My Wild Backyard” an exciting living adventure, but it is an educational experience as well, aimed at teaching families about ecological changes that take place across seasons. The exhibit is included in general admission with prices ranging from \$10 to \$12.

## **NO VVA/AVVA Chapter 511 meeting**

There will be NO VVA/AVVA Chapter 511 meeting in July. The next meeting will be Monday, August 3.

## **Coffee Call July 4**

The next Coffee Call, free breakfast for veterans and their families, will be on July 4, at 8am at the Alabama Veterans Museum, 114 W. Pryor St., Athens.

## **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.

## **Athens Lions Club Annual Summer Kiddie Carnival Through July 25**

309 E. Forrest Street Athens, AL. Thursday-Saturday nights, 6:30-9:30 pm from June 11th-July 25th. This year we will be closed July 2nd-4th weekend. Free Admission. Tickets: 50 cents per ride, cash only. Concessions available.

## **Limestone County Master Gardeners present Exploring Beautiful Northern Alabama June 20**

10 AM at the Limestone County Extension Office, 1109 W. Market Street, Athens. Discover the natural wonders that are found in Northern Alabama including beautiful waterfalls, natural springs, and massive rock formations. Instructor for this class is Bob Goodwin, Master Gardener, Tennessee Naturalist and Alabama Master Naturalist. He has explored the area’s trails and byways for over 20 years and will share his knowledge and photos with you. No registration necessary. Free and open to the public.

## **3rd Annual Downtown Athens Culinary Month Entire month of August**

Athens Main Street is thrilled to host the 3rd Annual Downtown Athens, Alabama Culinary Month. Calling all foodies and local food enthusiasts! It’s that time when Downtown Athens comes alive with flavors and culinary delights during the highly anticipated week. During August, you’ll have the chance to indulge in a delectable array of dishes and explore downtown Athens’s diverse culinary offerings. Downtown Athens Culinary Month isn’t just about delicious food; it also celebrates the local community and the hardworking chefs, restaurateurs, and staff who make dining in downtown Athens an unforgettable experience. So, please support the local restaurants that bring flavor and creativity to our town’s vibrant dining scene. Invite your friends and family to join you on this culinary adventure. It’s the perfect opportunity to try out new restaurants or revisit old favorites.

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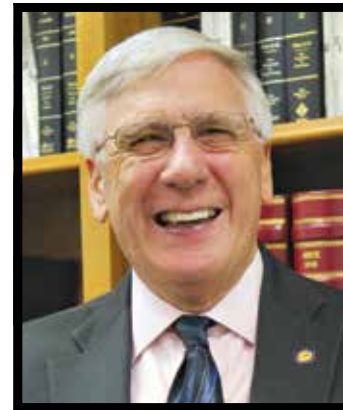
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## A Veteran's View On Voting

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



Mayor Ronnie and I were back to being able to meet at our usual time and place, which was a day before the Alabama State run-off primary elections held on Tuesday, June 16, and by the time we went to print and distribution, it was June 19. What do they have to do with each other? The process of securing, maintaining, and improving this experiment in democracy and a constitutional republic we call the United States of America. Voting is what made Juneteenth and the emancipation of the slaves a part of our complicated history, and Juneteenth began to be celebrated in the early part of the 20th century. (See Eric Betts's *Learning As A Lifestyle*) article on page 18.

For Mayor Ronnie, voting has been a sacred charge, especially since he spent two years in the jungles of Vietnam where, let's just say, voting wasn't anywhere on the radar of the Viet Cong, nor was the commitment to defend anyone's right to vote. As we chatted about candidates and issues, gratitude flowed regarding



our ongoing and protected right to vote and choose our candidates, and for those who continue to protect our right to do so. "We need to get behind the country, and never lose sight of the importance of voting," said the mayor. He also added that without coming together and maintaining teamwork in our city, state, or country, simply stated, we'll be

in trouble. "We've got to walk in our purpose, and walk as godly people," he said.

The mayor played a video that had been produced by Athens Police Department underscoring their commitment to our personal and public safety. And although this may not have been the specific intent for this entry, it reminded us that APD is making sure that no one tries to stand in the way of our going to the polls, now or in November. This one was a serious one, and there are humorous ones in the works. The Chamber is releasing videos every Friday up until the 4th of July and the 250th celebration that is known as

Red, White and Boom. Athens-Limestone citizens, local businesses, and city departments have been invited to create reels and shorts that illustrate their patriotism and community spirit. Each week a new winner will be selected, and the final winner will be announced as part of the celebration.

Mayor Ronnie briefly brought in Justin Travis, who is a Communications Specialist for the City of Athens, and KaTrina Wiggins, who is a Mayor's Youth Commission graduate and is interning for the city this summer. KaTrina is attending Howard University and is majoring in political science. She

is planning on becoming a lawyer, but not sure yet what type of law she wants to practice. When Justin and KaTrina went back to work, we laughed as we commented that with "young people like these guys, our future is in good shape." By the way, when KaTrina is in school, she loves to go to the National Botanical Gardens to decompress. If you are ever in Washington, D.C., you need to discover why!

We had laughed and teased a lot with "the kids," and we also knew we seriously needed to pray for Tuesday's outcomes. So, once again, we did, and once again, it was time for Ronnie to roll.

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## Bear-Hugging A Pot-Belly Stove

by Anna Hamilton

*Sunday morning, our preacher told the story of a bear. A group of hunters were staying in a cabin in the woods. When they left out to hunt for the day, they left a fire burning in the pot-belly stove in the cabin. Shortly after the hunters left, a bear broke into the cabin. The bear saw the glowing fire coming from the stove and immediately thought it was a predator and attacked the stove. It wrapped its arms around the stove and was burned badly, but the bear did not let go. The bear thought the stove was fighting back, so he held on tighter and tighter until it there was no way the bear would ever recover. The bear was unable to recognize that the stove was actually hurting him. He didn't realize that if he just let go, he would be okay.*

*This little story made me take a hard look at my pot-belly stoves. What am I holding on to that*

*continues to hurt me, but I am too stubborn to let go? The safety of the things that hurt me is sometimes easier to process than letting go for the unknown. As Christians, we are not promised an easy life. We are promised, however, that God will always take care of us and he will take our burdens from us.*

*God knows every fiber of our being. He knows what our troubles are and what we are holding on to, so why doesn't he just take them from us without us asking for help? Asking God for help letting go of the stove will help you develop a deeper faith. It also will help others see the wonderful grace of God. Seeing someone find their strength in Christ is a wonderful way to give others the confidence to trust completely in God. In order to obtain the peace that we all want so much, we have to bring*

*continued on page 22*

## Tomato Bisque

### Ingredients:

*½ onion, chopped  
1 Tbsp. garlic, minced  
1 Tbsp. olive oil  
1 (28 oz.) can whole, peeled tomatoes  
½ tsp. paprika  
3 cups low sodium chicken broth  
1 ¼ cup heavy cream, or milk, or half-and-half  
Salt and pepper to taste  
Optional Toppings:  
Fresh basil, chopped  
Shaved Parmesan*

### Directions:

*In a large stock pot, add oil, onions, and garlic. Sauté for 10 minutes or until tender.  
Stir in tomatoes, paprika, broth, salt and pepper, and cream. Bring to a boil and then reduce heat to a simmer for 45 minutes.*



*Cool for 10 minutes. Puree soup using a blender or immersion blender to your desired smoothness.  
Sprinkle each serving with your toppings of choice.*

# Red, White, & BOOM!

by Stephanie Reynolds, Athens-Limestone Tourism Association



Our amazing partners and Y'ALL!

We are so close to Red, White & BOOM! In just a few weeks I will be with you, my fabulous Athens-Limestoneians, to celebrate the 250th in good, old-fashioned, down-home, American-as-apple-pie style!

Our amazing partners and I have a whole itinerary arranged:

**Friday Night:**

**Art After Hours Summer Concert Series!** -- A GREAT night of live music on the square! 5 p.m.

**Saturday:**

**Red, White & ZOOM Rocket Pop 5K!** -- Walk

or run on our certified course on Swan Creek and get a free Bomb Pop when you finish! Register at run signup! 7 a.m.

**Red, White & BLOOM at the Farmer's Market!**

-- We will be celebrating the 250th anniversary of the United States' Declaration of Independence the Athens Farmers at Market at Doug Gates Park! 8 a.m.-noon.

~ Free time with family and friends, noon to 4 p.m. ~

**Red, White & BOOM at the Sportsplex!**

-- We're bringin' the food, the music, the fun, and the fireworks. You just bring YOU and your chairs! Live music, storytellers,

vendors, kids fun zone, and FIREWORKS! 4-9pm

The Best Viewing for the Fireworks: They are still being launched at the middle school, but we highly recommend you come watch them with us at the Sportsplex. It will be so much cooler on the grass than in a

parking lot! Plus, we have the food trucks! Traffic is much better too. You will be able to see everything in style when you party with us at the Sportsplex! Can't wait to see you there!

Please note: The only pets allowed are service animals, and alcohol is not permitted. No glass

bottles are allowed at all. Handicapped parking only is available at the south entrance of the swimming pool parking lot at the Sportsplex. General parking is available at any other parking lot around the Sportsplex, so come early and grab your spot!

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# 4TH OF JULY WEEKEND EVENTS

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7PM ATHENS ARTS LEAGUE ART AFTER HOURS  
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**JULY 4TH**  
7AM RED WHITE AND ZOOM ROCKET POP 5K  
★ ATHENS SPORTSPLEX

8AM ATHENS MAIN STREET RED WHITE AND BLOOM MARKET  
★ ATHENS FARMERS MARKET

4PM RED WHITE AND BOOM CELEBRATION  
★ ATHENS SPORTSPLEX

9PM RED WHITE AND BOOM FIREWORKS SHOW  
★ VIEWING FROM SPORTSPLEX

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# Gathered Goods & Mercantile: *Where Pickers And Makers Gather*

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

*continued from page 1*

vendor booths at various local antique/collectible outlets. Being a part of the antiquing community is all he has ever done, and he has been successful. His ‘why’ for a career choice as a young man? “Antiquing connects people as a community,” he said. In his own family, he is the keeper of the photo albums as well as his great-grandmother’s bread box, and loves all of them. Kyle owns several stores, is always looking to expand, and in January of 2026, took over the former Serendipity Antiques. The 7,000-square-foot mainstay antique store in Athens-Limestone County is located at 22335 US-72 Ste. B, between Listerhill Credit Union and SportsMed on the north side of the highway.

An extensive “refreshing and restoring” project ensued after Gathered Goods opened, and when they were ready, Kyle

reached out to *Athens Now* to do a front cover article. Speaking for myself, I love antiques and worked in an antique store nearly 50 years ago, and Gathered Goods is just pure joy. Kyle told me, “I want people to understand that this is a family-owned store, and that’s what makes it so special. We all work together, and we are all doing what we love.”

Kyle grew up in a home that had several antiques, and always appreciated them, but it was his great-grandmother’s love for all things Victrola that first lit him up. As a kid, Kyle just about wore out Granny’s old wax records, and thinks with great fondness of the iconic RCA Victor dog alertly sitting with his head cocked and ear open to what was coming out of the “new-fangled contraption” of a century ago. “I know this sounds weird, but I love the scratchiness of the records, because they show that nothing is perfect,” Kyle said.

He has plans ultimately to bring Victrolas and maybe even a Victor-dog himself into the shop to re-introduce them to the next generation.

Continuing on with the “lit up” theme, Kyle also has a great love for lighting of all kinds. Hurricane lamps and Tiffany lamp reproductions are some of his favorites, and just like Victor/Victrola, he hopes that someday Gathered Goods will be able to feature an actual Tiffany. I asked, (hopefully innocently enough) “Will it be for sale?” His wise and smiling reply was, “I tell everyone that they need to have everything in the store be for sale. Until then, we’ll be fine with high-quality lighting replications.” Kyle is also totally opposed to having people try to pawn off replicas as the original. He has put his money where his mouth is with regard to this “original-vs-replica” standard on more than one occasion, and will not hesitate to lose a



sale if it means keeping his reputation and that of the store.

That being said, Kyle is deeply committed to having the store display high quality and inarguably beautiful items of all kinds from all eras, along with having them not being priced out of existence and accessibility for the average bear. “I want to empower people to be able to get beautiful stuff affordably,” he said. That is a tough balance to maintain, but Kyle and his crew are determined to do it.

Since Gathered Goods opened in January, they have added 20 vendors, and kept virtually every one of the previous vendors. “One retired, and was already on the way to retirement when we took over,” Kyle told me.

The store name reflects the store’s culture and commitment to the community. When Kyle refers to “makers,” what he means essentially is artisans. Gathered Goods is unusual in that for most

antique stores, local craftspeople don’t display the things they have made themselves. Kyle does not think this is a good idea at all because human creativity transcends era, and never stops. “Twenty seven of our eighty vendors are ‘makers,’ and produce pottery, quilts, crocheted items, and more,” he said. Kyle himself has designed some T-shirts that sport a small-town Athens theme and have the courthouse on the front. Gathered Goods also features what they refer to as “sweet treats.” There is a drink and candy display at the front of the shop that features nostalgic-themed items, dry mixes, and local honey.

I asked Kyle why, when antique stores are “on nearly every street corner” should I come to Gathered Goods & Mercantile? His answer was simple: “We are a local spot for antiques and artisan creations.” Come check them out and enjoy a family as they help you “find the perfect find.”



# Nurturing Your Body And Soul the Way It Was Designed

by Jackie Warner

Career Development Facilitator

"Impact, Engage, Grow" Community Matters



As we get a little older, it's so easy to fall into the habit of running to the pharmacy for a quick fix every time we feel a little off. While modern medicine has its place for crisis moments, there is something incredibly empowering about shifting our focus toward a holistic lifestyle and trusting how our bodies were actually designed to heal.

I had to learn this the hard way recently. I was dealing with some awful skin irritations and did exactly what we are "supposed" to do—I went to the doctor. But after a lot of time and money, I still couldn't find any relief, and the stress was overwhelming.

In the middle of that frustration, I decided to do my own research into natural, homeopathic solutions. That is when a whole new world opened up! I discovered the healing properties of grapeseed oil, the power of clove oil, and so many other plant-based options. I even planted my own oregano and started blending my own homemade pain oil. It completely blew my mind to realize that the most powerful remedies for safer, long-term healthiness were sitting right there in nature—and often right in our own kitchens.

The ultimate blueprint for our well-being isn't found in a synthetic pill; it's wo-

ven right into the fabric of creation. God literally covered the earth in a living, breathing pharmacy just for us. As Genesis 1:29 reminds us: "And God said, 'See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food.'"

If you're ready to take back authorship of your health and truly honor your body as a temple, here are a few beautiful, daily habits you can start leaning into right now:

- **Choose living, whole foods:** Feeding yourself fresh fruits and veggies puts pure, nutrient-dense fuel straight into your

system. Think of Daniel choosing a clean, plant-based diet over the heavy foods of the king's table and winding up far healthier (Daniel 1:12-15).

- **Cultivate your own herbs:** Herbs are concentrated packages of therapeutic power. Whether you are planting oregano for pain blends or using ginger for inflammation, growing remedies connects us to a long history of biblical care—just like when Isaiah used a natural fig poultice to heal King Hezekiah (Isaiah 38:21).

- **Flush your system with pure water:** Just like we need spiritual "living water" for our souls (John 4:14), our physical temples need constant hydration to flush out toxins and keep things running smoothly.

- **Move with gentle, peaceful walks:** A quiet walk outside in the fresh air keeps your circulation flowing and naturally melts away stress. It's the perfect time to clear your mind and connect with God's handiwork.

- **Pause for deep breathing and prayer:** Humanity first experienced life through the literal breath of God (Genesis 2:7). When health issues cause intense stress, pause, take slow, deep breaths, and hand your worries to Him to trigger physical peace and healing (Philippians 4:6-7).

- **Spice up your rem-**

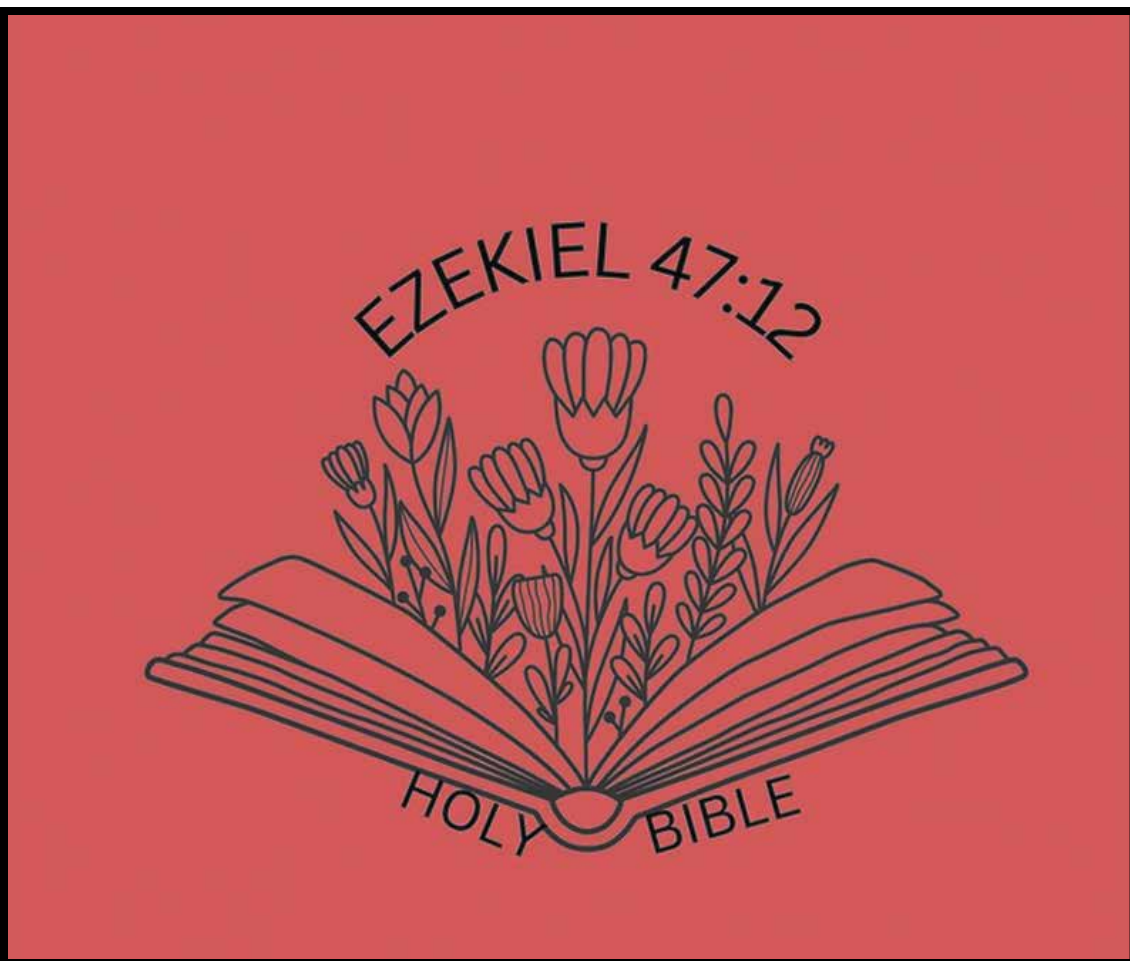
**edies:** Spices and oils like clove, turmeric, and cinnamon fight inflammation and protect your system. In biblical times, these natural treasures were prized like gold for their purifying and medicinal properties (Proverbs 7:17).

- **Soak up the sunshine:** Stepping outdoors naturally boosts your mood, balances your hormones, and reminds us that the heavens are constantly declaring the glory of God (Psalm 19:1).

- **Give yourself permission to rest:** You cannot heal if you are running on empty. God built the Sabbath into the rules of life because He knows our physical limits. Prioritizing deep sleep is a necessity for your body to repair itself, echoing Psalm 4:8: "I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety."

Choosing a holistic lifestyle is a beautiful act of faith. It's about listening to your body when it sends you a signal, rather than just trying to silence the symptom with a quick fix. It means treating your health as a connected system that just wants to be nourished, balanced, and aligned with nature.

Remember Ezekiel 47:12, which promises trees by the river banks whose "...fruit will be for food, and their leaves for medicine."



# Caylee Mankins Of Salon Le Jules: *Mentored By Granny Mankins*

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

*continued from page 1*

Mind you, this was back in the day when stylists and cosmetologists were called “beauticians,” and salons were referred to as “beauty shops.” Caylee smiles with love for her grandmother when she describes being allowed to experiment on her Granny’s face by applying makeup, all the while trimming the hair of her troll dolls and having to learn that the “cut” was permanent. Caylee also got good at “rolling” her grandmother’s hair, and spent time after school in Granny’s shop until she was 15.

Over time Caylee helped out a bit at the shop, doing shampoos and simple things. Once upon a time, Dan Mankins of Premier Structures Incorporated in Athens (and also Caylee’s dad) let her cut his hair. They both laughed when they spilled the beans that it was Granny who had to fix the haircut. Granny is now gone, and these are the memories that truly make life sweet for her son and granddaughter. I am quite sure she would be proud of her Caylee.

Caylee graduated from West Limestone High

School, and has always loved animals. As a devoted dog lover, Caylee thought about being a veterinarian, and she took some general classes at Calhoun. Maybe it was her Granny’s DNA, or fond memories of the shop, but Caylee found that between 2015 and 2016 she watched a ton of YouTube videos on everything that had to do with hair and makeup, and thought, “I could do that.” So, she did. She graduated from Paul Mitchell and works at Salon Le Jules, located at 26978 US Hwy 72, Suite B. She joined the Salon Le Jules crew in November of 2022.

It seems that every stylist has a particular thing that they enjoy doing, and for Caylee, it is color. Her Instagram account is called, Colors By Caylee, and she greatly prefers doing things that are subtle and more natural; more enhancing of beauty, rather than wilder stuff. The Colors By Caylee site has a large selection of photos that showcase her work. There is everything from cascades of waves that go down to the waist to precision chin-length pageboy cuts. There are a few blue, pink, or plum highlights here and there, but nothing dayg-low. Caylee enjoys adding

highlights when she can.

Caylee’s second most favorite thing to do is cuts. Everyone knows that stylists are “therapists in disguise,” and over time Caylee has found herself in the middle of finding good compromises between parents and kids. She told me, “I have to figure out what the mom wants, what the kid wants, and how to make it work.” In one situation where parents were locked in a battle with a daughter, Caylee suggested a low-maintenance perm with soft curls, and both the girl and parents were happy with that choice.

Speaking of “hair therapy,” Caylee has learned over the years to read her clients and offer a salon experience that matches their energy. “Some people when they come in just don’t want to talk. They want to be quiet and left alone,” Caylee says. She then added, “I understand that.” She also said, “I’ll talk if they want to talk.”

Caylee does facial waxing along with brow waxing, and enjoys creating a spa experience for her clients. From time to time she offers specials along with “thank yous” for those who give referrals.

Several of Caylee’s clients



are men, and most know exactly what they want, but not always. Teen-aged boys especially are still trying to “figure things out,” and Caylee enjoys the process of finding the perfect cut for a young gentleman and then making it happen. Sometimes dads and sons come in together, and Caylee has seen those times turn into special memories. It is true that “everyone feels good when everyone feels like they look good.”

I asked Caylee why I should choose her to care for my hair, and she said something that over the years and having conducted several interviews with cosmetologists I have never heard a stylist say: “I respect my clients.” In this day and age, having

someone respect you, meet you where you are, perhaps offer suggestions but never pressure, and do their very best to more than meet your needs is a welcome rarity. If this sounds like the type of hair stylist that would be a good fit for you or your family, then call Caylee directly or book an appointment online.

**Caylee Mankins at Salon Le Jules**

26978 US Hwy 72, Athens, AL 35613

(256) 232-1001 (work)

(931) 478-5080 cell

Cayleemankins.square.site

colorsbycaylee Instagram



*Caylee Mankins*

- 931-478-5070
- cayleemontana@gmail.com
- 26978 U.S. 72 E Ste B, Athens, AL
- cayleemankins.square.site



## Captain's Log

# God's Chicken On Bus 15-32

by Brenda Wilkers

Chick-fil-A day was a huge success! For some reason, I was very nervous as I executed the plan to go pick up the huge order in the mobile order line at CFA drive-thru and get to my bus early enough to load four bags of sandwiches and a heavy cooler of chilled drinks without too many raised eyebrows.

I securely placed the sandwiches in the underbelly storage compartment as to keep the glorious aroma from filling the entire bus during my first route of my elementary bus babies!

Once I made it to the high school, I only had about seven minutes to throw together a makeshift assembly line to put a sandwich, homemade cookie, and a little personal hand written note in each individual bag. I organized them in seat #2 for quick grab-n-go as they loaded onto the bus for their very last regular school day before the madness of half-days, exams, and graduation

kicked in.

I wish I could have somehow secretly recorded a video and let you experience the looks on their faces when they got to the top of my steps, took in a deep breath of God's chicken, and saw the feast prepared before them!

The giddy chatter and scramble for their brown paper bags was a relief as more human interaction was beautifully evident in place of the somber and quiet, airplane-type atmosphere. In the moments of treat distribution, I was asked several questions that I don't think I was ready for.

One girl didn't want her sandwich and wanted to give it to a friend. I said, "Yes." One of my riders had a brother that didn't ride in the afternoons but he wanted to take him a goody bag. I said, "Yes." My mind only hesitated for a second that one of my goody bags would go to somebody other than my bus sister, but in an



instance, God reminded me of his limitless grace. So the only thing that came out of my mouth to these kids was 'yes.' There was plenty to go around.

After they were all settled in and we were on the road, I announced over the radio that these

sandwiches were provided by a group of kind strangers from all over that loved them enough to gift them this special treat. I got several shouts of appreciation, thumbs up, and several big hearty "Thank You's."

At one point, I decided to turn down a street where one of my suspended students lived and delivered a goody bag to the front porch.

I was flooded and filled with the reminder and correlation of God's love and grace and eternity offered to all, for all. No hesitation. To anyone. Ever. No keeping score or reminders of how much we didn't deserve it.

I barely remember the drive back to the school after the last stop. I was

fully resting in God's promises. Resting after crossing the finish line well. Resting in the fact that I listened to the Holy Spirit when prompted.

I am joyfully exhausted! Exactly where I want to stay! I am deeply grateful for the monetary gifts and prayers for these kids!

Lord, I am in awe of your work. The coming together of strangers for a common good... Your good. Let these seeds of kindness in a cruel world be watered by others. You have orchestrated to come along in the days to come. I'm gonna be honest, I don't want this year to end, but I am confident that if You sent me, You can and will send others. Amen

~Brenda

**Ali Elizabeth Turner**  
**Publisher**

1(256) 468-9425  
 ali@aliturner.com  
 ali@athensnowal.com

Athens Now AL

Protecting Your Story  
 Telling It Well

# Is It Important? - Part 1 *Emotional Intelligence*

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

A STORY: An upcoming retirement meant that the position she had worked toward for years was now opening. She was definitely the most qualified, educated, and knowledgeable -- trained in every facet of the job. It was inconceivable that anyone else would be seriously considered. Everyone knew this. She could hardly contain her excitement when the day to announce the promotion arrived. Imagine her deep disappointment when a less trained employee was selected. Devastated. Crushed. Her manager was not surprised when she boldly asked to speak with him and practically demanded to know why she was passed over. Was it because they wanted a man? Was this person a relative of the owner? WHY? She was taken aback when the real reason was explained. "I'm sorry, but your relationship with your coworkers is not conducive to you being their leader. Your job performance is exemplary; your work is excellent... but you do not seem to relate to or understand your coworkers. You cannot take suggestions well, and when others make suggestions, you appear to be offended or just brush them off. We value you in the position you are in, but do not think you are ready for management. And, because we value you so much, we are giving you a nice raise."

Unfortunately, because of her lack of EI maturity, she left angry, bitter and thinking she might resign. She blamed it on their prejudice because she was a woman. She thought of reasons the lost promotion was because of the actions or desires of others. And, she vowed to do as little as possible to help her new boss succeed.

Upon arriving home, she shared with all who would listen about her mistreatment. She continued her bitter attitude allowing it to infect and affect other rela-

tionships. She became even more difficult to be around for family, friends, coworkers, and even strangers.

Thankfully for her, EI training had become the new hot topic among wise management teams. And, after taking her company's EI courses, she grew more mature in her thoughts, actions, and relationships. She caught on to what she was doing to sabotage her own success. Although it took several years for an appropriate advancement to become available, it was almost

immediately that she began enjoying her job, her coworkers, and even her family more. Obviously her family and friends were also thankful for her changes in attitude, focus, and mindset.

Wouldn't this have been a much happier story if she had been schooled on EI skills years earlier?

My special topic – the one I seek to consistently and thoroughly understand, seek solutions for, and apply is CRITICISM MANAGEMENT. CM tools and

training on application are perhaps the single most effective tools for developing measurable Emotional Intelligence growth. Want to know more? Look for PART II in this very issue!

*Detri would love to hear from you.*  
**Email:** [detrimcghee@gmail.com](mailto:detrimcghee@gmail.com)  
**Facebook:**  
**Detri Atkinson McGhee**  
*Free outline for Criticism Management available at [www.criticismmanagement.com](http://www.criticismmanagement.com)*





# Clean, Green And Beautiful

## Heat Wave

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

Last week was a whirlwind. It was hot and incredibly busy—just the way we like it. We tackled a wide variety of tasks, and no two were the same. If the weeks ahead are as productive as the last one, we'll be in great shape. We also have some exciting new projects in the works.

We kicked off the week with what has become an annual First Methodist Church 6th Grade Vacation Bible School Litter Cleanup! This is one of my favorite cleanups, it is part of their "Week of Service." These kids are always enthusiastic, and ready to serve. This year, we had 20 kids working with us for about an hour. We worked along Golden Eagle Drive, and collected 4 full bags of litter. Since we were all melting, we cooled off with a milkshake from Jack's before they headed back. It was truly a great day, and we hope it had a lasting impact on



the kids.

Then came Saturday... the Household Hazardous Waste Collection. Keri Chalmers with Limestone County Recycling and I stressed and planned for everything we could think of to make this event run as smoothly as we could. With the location moving to Limestone County Recycling, we had so many unknowns this year. We made signs, strategically placed volunteers and tried to account for any anomalies as we could. It went splendidly!

When we started at 8 a.m., cars were lined up three rows deep in the lot and backed up onto Jefferson Street. Once we worked through the initial rush, it felt like it should have been time to go. It only 8:44 a.m. I checked with Lynne Hart, who was working the final traffic merge, and we serviced almost 120 cars in 44 minutes. I overheard a volunteer say they didn't think Lowe's even had that much paint in the store. It was insane.

Like every year, Limestone County residents proved that the Household Hazardous Waste Collection is a much-needed service in Limestone County. With this being the only way to ethically dispose of harmful chemicals in Limestone County, we collected what seems like some of everything. Which leads me to motor oil, of which we received so much. You can



drop motor oil at Limestone County Recycling Monday-Friday, 6 a.m.-4p.m. There is a large white tank in the center of the lot. You may leave your container beside the tank. They also accept electronics daily.

We can't thank the 75 volunteers we've had over the last week enough. They made everything happen. From picking up litter to directing traffic and unloading chemicals, they did it all! The Limestone County Commission most definitely

deserves a special thank you. Because of their continued partnership, we have been able to host 7 Household Hazardous Waste Collections, servicing over 1,100 residents. Chairman Daly

and the commissioners continue to volunteer to work the event as well, and they deserve all our thanks... they bring the thunder!



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## Slinkard On Scriptural Success

# *This One Is For Mom*

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)*



I realized an important aspect of life in the year 2025 — it stops for no one. My mom passed away on December 10, 2025. And as I think back to my mom, I hold tight to the many memories of my youth, with the involvement of my mom and the role she played in my early years, I know that they are just that, memories. In fact, my mom's memory was robbed because of the devastating disease known as dementia, and I would not wish this on anyone. I understand now that I cannot get back today what I took for granted yesterday.

I wonder how many more of us are facing this cold, hard reality today. We never know what the future holds for us, and we know not what success and failures lie ahead in our lives as time unfolds before us. Seeing my mom living in the shell of who she was really tugged on an emotional string for me. It made me realize that I want to live my life to the fullest because there may come a day when the only thing to hold on to is the memories that others have of my past.

Though I write this article today, I will forever cherish the times I would tell my mom that I love her and I can still hear her echo the very words back to me. Instantly, the Latin words

“carpe diem” (seize the day) are prevalent to me as I understand the approach that is necessary for all of us to achieve success in our lives. How many times do we say, “I’ll do that tomorrow,” and it turns out that it was the biggest lie we told ourselves that day? Why continue the strings of lies? Tony Robbins once said, “If you do what you’ve always done, you’ll get what you’ve always gotten.”

Yet we, as humans, are creatures of habit who continue to do what we have always done before. This is where we must decide to go a different route, change the course our lives are headed, and set out in a new direction. We must seize the day and take a

full-blitz approach to the way we live life. There may come a time in which we will be unable to recall how things used to be, but we can impact how things are for us today. How do we make this impact? We must cut out the distractions that currently plague us.

I want you to think about the distractions you have on a daily basis. How many times have you thought to yourself, “I’m going to just check Facebook,” and the next thing you know, hours have passed by. Maybe you think you’re going to just check the news or see what email just came through, and now your entire day has been thrown off course because you allowed yourself to get distracted. Seize the day. What steps

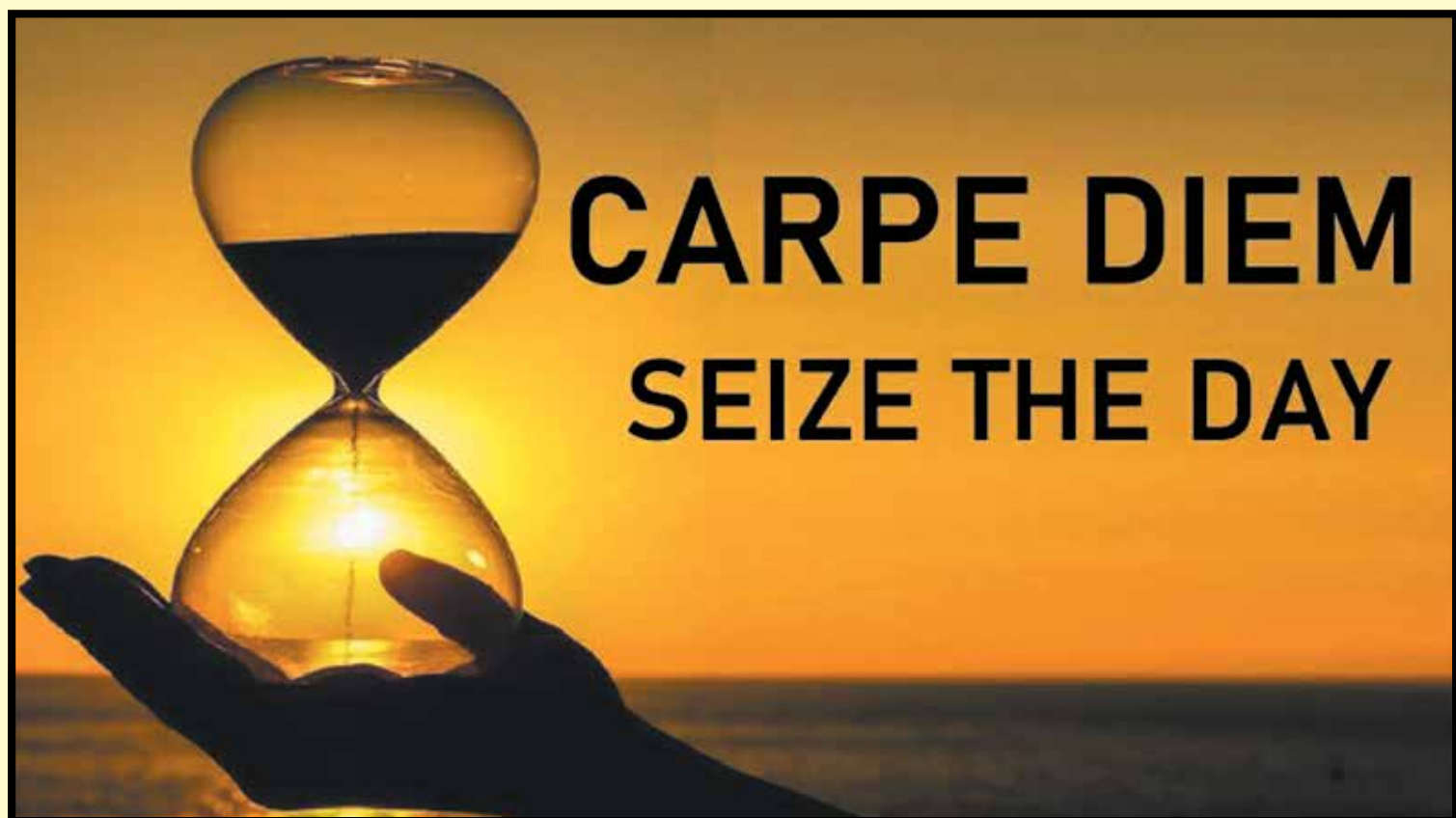
can you take to make the most of your life?

Another big lie that I hear is, “I just don’t have time.” We all have 168 hours in a week, and some do what others cannot do. Why? If it’s important to you, you’ll find a way to accomplish it. If it’s not, you’ll make an excuse. The difficulty comes into not making an excuse.

It goes back to the biggest lie of doing it tomorrow. Spoiler alert – Tomorrow never comes! How we overcome this pitfall that many people face is to set out each day with a purpose. We must live each day with the purpose that we will seize the day. We must know what it is we want to accomplish, and we must take action. We all know what we need to do, but

few of us actually take the necessary action to pursue our dreams and accomplish our goals. This proves that knowing is not enough. Life is about action.

Anyone who has ever done anything great before will tell you it required them to set their lives in motion. All it takes is knowing what needs to be done and then setting out on taking the necessary steps to put the knowing into motion. Making a point to seize the day will keep your life headed in the right direction. Go ahead and do today instead of putting off till tomorrow. Tomorrow may be too late. There is no reason to put off till tomorrow what can easily be done today.





## Learning As A Lifestyle

# The Truth Gap

by Eric Betts

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

Every June 19th, communities across the country pause to remember Juneteenth, which is the day in 1865 when news of freedom finally reached enslaved people in Texas. The Emancipation Proclamation had been signed more than two years earlier, but the truth of freedom had been delayed, resisted, and in some places intentionally hidden. Juneteenth marks the moment when the law finally acknowledged what had already been declared.

That delay teaches us something important about leadership. Sometimes the law is slow. Sometimes enforcement is uneven. Sometimes the rules on the books do not match the reality on the ground. And in those

moments, people have to decide whether they will wait for permission to do what is right, or whether they will live by a deeper truth that does not depend on anyone's approval.

For many people of faith, that deeper truth is God's truth, which the conviction that every person carries dignity, worth, and the right to be treated with fairness. Long before freedom was recognized on paper, God's truth had already spoken it. Long before families were legally protected, God's truth had already affirmed their value. Juneteenth reminds us that God's truth exists long before legal truth, and ethical leadership is found in the space between the two.

We see this kind of lead-



Juneteenth parade float, Houston ca. 1913

ership today in quiet, everyday ways. A teacher who stands up for a struggling student because it's the right thing to do. A business owner who treats

workers with respect because it honors their humanity. A neighbor who steps in to help long before anyone asks. These are not dramatic acts, but they are the choices that keep a community healthy and whole.

In that sense, Juneteenth is more than a celebration. It is a call to courage. It invites us to be the kind of people who live by God's truth even when it is delayed, unenforced, or ignored. It invites us to close the gap between what is enforceable truth and what is right. And it reminds us that when we do, freedom becomes

more than a moment in history, but it becomes a way of leading, a way of living, and a gift we pass on to others.

This truth is dramatically and impactfully spoken in the words of the great battle hymn of the republic:

*Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord:*

*He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;*

*He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword:*

*His truth is marching on.*

# Tennessee Valley Spotlight

Mondays at 10am  
1080 AM WKAC

New & Used Tires  
Wheel Alignments

All Size Tire Repair  
& Auto Repair



Athens Auto Tire  
&  
Wrecker Service

24 Hr. Road & Wrecker Service



306 Fifth Avenue  
Athens, Alabama 35611

Tommy Morris  
Office: 771-7537

## The Alternative Approach

# Are You At Your Tipping Point?

by Roy Williams



NEWtritional Health Care has been in business for almost 25 years, and God has blessed us in so many ways that I simply can't express them in this short article. Over 50 years ago I got turned on to nutrients and the value they offer the people who are willing to make a consistent effort to add them to their diet. We are designed to eat two or three times a day, not only to satisfy hunger, but to help meet the nutritional needs for cellular reproduction.

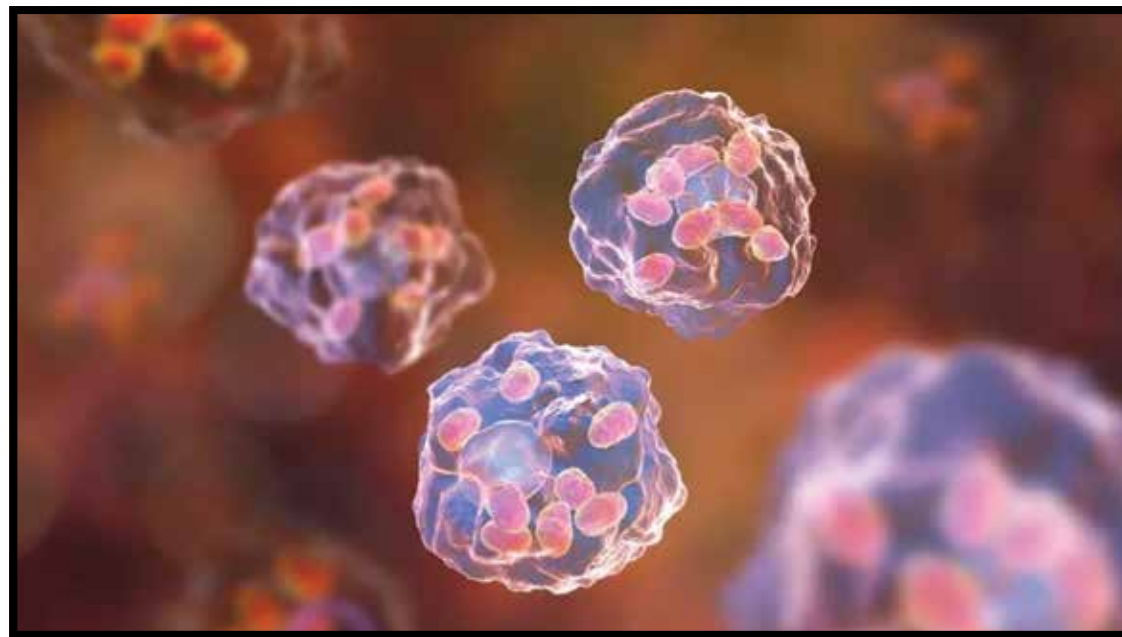
Humans lose a billion skin cells a day, over a million digestive cells each hour, and will replace all soft cell tissue every year. Cells have a life span. When a single cell divides, each of those cells begins its life cycle. Just like the individual, each individual cell becomes damaged, weakens, and then dies and is discarded. Your body is in a constant challenge to manufacture new cells and is either balanced, making new cells just as fast as those that are dying or regressing, or losing more cells than it is manufacturing.

Manufacturing is the

specific word I choose to use in this description of cellular health. You may ask, how does your body manufacture new cells? In order to answer that question, I must address another question. What are cells made from? There are hundreds of cell types that make up our bodies. Skin cells are different than muscle cells. Stomach cells are different than brain cells, and reproductive cells are not the same as bone cells.

So, that brings us back to the question, what are cells manufactured from? With over 50 years of research in this field, I have discovered that each type of cell in the human body has specific nutritional needs. (Note - the definition of nutrition is the raw material your body needs so it can manufacture new cells to replace the damaged and dying ones.) As we age, we all come to what I call the tipping point. That is the point when your body is no longer manufacturing new cells as fast as you are losing them.

As we reach the tipping point, the signs of aging become more and more apparent. Lower energy levels, weaker vision,



more aches and pains, reduced agility and range of motion, changes in hair color, less sexual energy, and skin damage. To one degree or another, all of this is due to our inability to manufacture new, healthy cells as fast as those dying. Osteo-arthritis is our inability to manufacture cartilage cells as fast as we are wearing the older cells out. Bone loss or osteoporosis is bone cells dying faster than you are manufacturing new, healthy bone cells. Thinning skin and weak fingernails happen when you are losing more skin cells than you are manufacturing.

All of those disorders and many others are simply nutritional deficiencies. This is due in large part to the foods we have been encouraged to eat, which do not contain even half the nutrients necessary to support the human body well enough to stop the regression. With a 50% deficiency of nutrients, we are slowly degenerating. Over time it begins to

show on the surface, but what may be even more devastating is what's going on internally -- weakening of the circulatory system, less bone mineral density, and even a shrinking of brain matter, just to name a few.

All the medical profession and pharmaceutical industry has to offer are drugs and surgeries to treat the symptoms. Ever had your doctor tell you that you need to start taking supplements to reverse the causes of your disease? Do any of your doctors explain that the cause of your disorders are nutritional deficiencies? No, but they will almost always prescribe a drug to treat the symptoms. Please remember, not one cell of your body is dependent on a drug for survival. However, every one of the billions of cells that make up the human body are totally dependent on nutrients necessary to manufacture healthy cells throughout your body.

Knowing that almost all disease is a result of nutritional deficiencies, don't you think that it is time to make supplementing a part of your everyday life? Most vitamins and minerals should be taken with food because when you eat, your body releases saliva and enzymes that help with absorption. For this reason, taking supplements when eating is ideal for maximum results.

To learn more, go by Herbs & More in Athens or NHC Herb Shop in Killen or go to our website at [nhcherbs.com](http://nhcherbs.com). It won't be long before everyone will notice the improvements. **WARNING: In a few weeks you may have more energy, look and feel younger, start getting better medical reports, need fewer meds, have less pain, and begin to get more done.**

Your Friend in Health,  
Roy P Williams

Herbs & More  
[www.newtritionalhc.com](http://www.newtritionalhc.com)

Roy Williams  
Gwen Williams  
Abbie Cooper

622 S. JEFFERSON STREET  
ATHENS AL 35611  
256.233.0073  
[nhcherbs@att.net](mailto:nhcherbs@att.net)

# “Happy Trails To You”

by Deb Kitchenmaster



**Editor's Note:**

*Below you will find the remarkable story of how this column came about. **Horse Whispering** has been one of our most-read and popular columns, and we shall continue to publish it. All of us at **Athens Now** give thanks for Deb's hard work and thoughtful content, and wish her the best in this next season of her life. Well done, dear friend!*

Over fifteen years ago, I had a specific dream where I am walking with someone to my left, in chin-high prairie grasses. All of a sudden, I turn to my right and begin

climbing a bluff to its top. This was not like me at all! First, I like closure. I say “good-byes.” I really don't like disappearing acts in my life. It seems so cold and, truly, it ushers ‘dishonor’ all around you. Second, I am an individual who simply has questions, and in this dream, I didn't ask if they knew what was over the bluff? Once I reach the top, I see a valley below. There are jagged boulders between the top and the valley; it would require courage and endurance, but it was there in sight. My perception was Athens, Greece, as I was taking a Greek language course at the time. As afternoon rolled around, and I had a

horse in the wash rack after a nice ride, the Holy Spirit gently mentioned to me, “The dream. It's not Athens, Greece... it is Athens, Alabama.” My response, “Oh.” Within a week of this dream, I was asked if I would write for Athens Now. I had two weeks to get back with my decision. At that moment I had no intention to say, “Yes.”

In the middle of the night, story after story of people being touched in their souls by the love of God through the world of horses would not stop. I got up from my bed and came downstairs and wrote my first article.

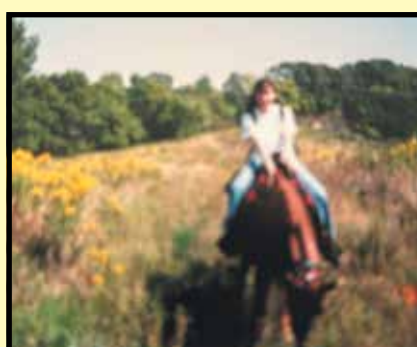
This was a stepping into the NOW of “noticing open windows” and the NOW of noticing one's worth. All you need is an opportunity! And a “YES” to the God-given opportunity in front of you.

The season of writing for Athens Now has come to an end for me. I want to thank those who have contacted me, for those who have enjoyed, and to those who have been challenged. “Thank you” to all the horses that were there for humanity: Watusi, Joshua, Caleb, Annie, Arianna, Big Sky, Praise, Ruhamah, Masako, and Mariah. Thank you, dogs: Jubilee, Flash Leroy, Jesse, Rhema, and Callie. Thank you, cats: Gideon Charles, McFly, Amos, and Neo. Thank you Athens Now for your friendship, a “good” voice in the communities, and the TEAMWORK it takes

to release a paper to our homes.

If I was allowed to speak but ONE WORD, that word would be “REMEMBER.” Remember, you are LOVED by Perfect, Unfailing LOVE who is your Holy Creator. Remember, when you call upon the NAME OF THE LORD, you shall be saved. Remember, when you are saved, “Greater is HE that IS IN YOU than he that is in the world.” Remember, “If God is for you, who can be against you?” Remember the healing resonance that flows through horses from the hand of God HIMSELF to our human souls.

*Your NEIGHbor,  
Deb Kitchenmaster  
horsinaround188@gmail.com*





GenZ With JP

# Alabama Democrats' Map Meltdown Is Manufactured Outrage

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

Few things are more in-sufferable in politics and in life than manufactured outrage. It is the endless screaming that the sky is falling, the claim that everything is the return of Jim Crow, that America's democracy is always at stake, and that everyone you do not like is a fascist.

We saw another example of this from Alabama Democrats two weeks ago when SCOTUS approved Alabama's new congressional map, erasing our state's racially gerrymandered 2nd Congressional District. This overturned the ruling of a three-judge panel, which claimed the map did not give African-Americans proper representation. Of course, this logic is inherently racist itself.

Arguing that Black Alabamians require special representation because they cannot have their voices heard on their own is insulting. The Democratic Party argues that African-Americans need them to have any chance; they cannot do it on their own. It is all because of those racist white Republicans, though.

"Those Republicans want to take your rights away, and we're here to stop them!"... Please. It is exhausting, and you sound ridiculous.

Let's discuss Congresswoman Terri Sewell's reaction first. Terri Sewell, who is only still in power because of the unwillingness of Alabama

Republicans to push for a full 7-0 map. She said, "The state of Alabama is trying to deny Black voters a seat at the table, and the Supreme Court just rewarded them for doing it."

Let me ask you this, Congresswoman. What exactly about this map denies Black Alabamians a seat at the table? Are you saying that if Black Alabamians can't have their own district to themselves, that their voices can't be heard? Are you claiming that Black Alabamians can only be properly represented if they have a Black representative? This is segregation. Purposefully dividing Black Alabamians from their neighbors, and sowing even more division.

Doug Jones, the Democratic nominee for governor, claimed that Alabama has just "re-joined the old Confederacy" with this new map. This hyperbolic nonsense is unserious and is only intended to drive up the temperature. Even for an Alabama Democrat, the obsession with the Confederacy is a bit much.

Then there's the liberal media in the state, who have nothing better to do than constantly claim Alabama is racist. They want their listeners to believe that Alabama is still like that of the 1960s, plagued by racism and racist White officials. Fear-mongering is how these outlets profit. In a state full of Christian conservatism, contrarian cynicism is bound to stand out. This is not in the pur-



suit of truth, however. It's simply to cause a commotion by extreme virtue signaling and a refusal to let go of the past.

How ironic is it that the same demographic they claim to be fighting for, they desire to stay on the ground. If Black Alabamians stopped listening to their drivel about them being disenfranchised, then they would have no viewership. Why then would they tell them the truth if it would stop the money flow?

Here's the kicker, and this is why it's manufactured outrage. Alabama Democrats know that they got lucky. Congresswoman Sewell knows she got thrown a bone with a 6-1 map. Alabama had every right and opportunity to draw a properly drawn 7-0 map, and they chose not to. Terri Sewell, Doug Jones, and every liberal talking head in the state

know this full well.

Yet, they choose to keep Alabamians divided. They choose to say these outrageous comments to stir up hatred. Black Alabamians are not being disenfranchised, and they're not misrepresented if they aren't guaranteed a Black representative. Is it impossible for Black Alabamians to be Republican? Who says a Black Republican can't win in a red district? This seems quite...racist.

No, Alabama's 6-1 map is not racist. The Supreme Court did not give Alabama free rein to join the old Confederacy, and there's no Jim Crow. This was all race-baiting charlatans doing what they do best, sow division. And ultimately, this was the pot calling the kettle black. The real racists are those who refuse to accept that African-Americans can speak for themselves.

As Attorney General Steve Marshall said, perhaps they would benefit from some new conservative leadership in their districts. Because the Terri Sewells of the state have done nothing for their district except prop themselves up and push their constituents down.

*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)

## *Bear-Hugging A Pot-Belly Stove*

by Anna Hamilton

*all of our troubles to the Lord in prayer. “Do not be anxious about anything, 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 your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7).*

*Letting go of what you know is hard. It feels sometimes easier to live with what is hurting you than to take that leap of faith and let go of what burdens are weighing you down. God wants us to trust in Him enough to take that leap. Letting go of everything that is keeping us from having full faith in God. As Christians we should have full confidence that God will take care of us. “Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:16).*

*I urge you to let go of the pot-belly stove that is*

*burning you. Let go of all that is harming you and keeping you from the love and grace of God. Letting go will bring you closer to God and will help others around you come to know Christ.*

*This week’s recipe is an easy tomato bisque. It is so much better than the condensed stuff in the can and everyone will love it! Serve it with a simple green salad or a gooey grilled cheese sandwich. Either way, you can’t go wrong!*

*“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!” (Matthew 7:7-11).*



# The Intersection Of Diet Control And Crossfit Methodology

by Nick Niedzwiecki - Owner, CrossFit Athens

In the pursuit of a healthier, more fulfilling life, the paths of diet control and CrossFit methodology intersect to create a powerful synergy that can transform not only your physical health but also your overall well-being. By embracing the principles of disciplined nutrition and high-intensity functional fitness, individuals can take control of their diet and their lives, unlocking their full potential in pursuit of their goals. Here's how the integration of diet control and CrossFit methodology can empower you to lead a more vibrant, resilient, and fulfilling life.

At the heart of both diet control and CrossFit methodology lies the concept of discipline and consistency. Whether it's adhering to a balanced macronutrient ratio or completing a challenging workout, success requires commitment, focus, and a willingness to push through obstacles. By cultivating discipline in one area of your life -- such as nutrition or fitness -- you inherently strengthen your ability to exert control over other aspects of your life, leading to a greater sense of self-mastery and empowerment.

Diet control forms the foundation of optimal health and performance, providing the essential nutrients and energy needed to fuel your body and mind. By adopting a mindful approach to eating -- choosing nutri-

ent-dense, whole foods and practicing portion control -- you can regulate blood sugar levels, optimize hormone production, and support metabolic function. Moreover, controlling your diet empowers you to make informed choices about what you put into your body, leading to improved energy levels, mental clarity, and overall well-being.

CrossFit methodology complements diet control by providing a dynamic and effective means of improving physical fitness and functional movement patterns. Through a combination of constantly varied, high-intensity workouts, CrossFit challenges individuals to push their limits, break through plateaus, and unlock their potential. By engaging in diverse movements such as weightlifting, gymnastics, and cardiovascular conditioning, CrossFit fosters strength, agility, and resilience -- qualities that carry over into every aspect of life.

Furthermore, CrossFit methodology emphasizes community, camaraderie, and accountability, creating a supportive environment in which individuals can thrive and grow. Whether you're a seasoned athlete or a beginner, the CrossFit community offers encouragement, mo-

tivation, and a sense of belonging that can inspire you to reach new heights. By surrounding yourself with like-minded individuals who share your commitment to excellence, you gain a powerful support system that empowers you to overcome obstacles, stay focused on your goals, and persevere in the face of adversity.

The integration of diet control and CrossFit methodology extends beyond physical health to encompass mental and emotional well-being as well. Regular exercise and balanced nutrition have been shown to reduce stress, improve mood, and enhance cognitive function, helping you to better cope with the demands of everyday life. By prioritizing self-care and holistic wellness, you can cultivate resilience, self-confidence, and a positive outlook that permeates every aspect of your life.

In conclusion, the combination of diet control and CrossFit methodology offers a holistic approach to health and wellness that empowers individuals to take control of their lives and unlock their full potential. By embracing discipline, consistency, and a commitment to excellence, you can cultivate a lifestyle that nourishes your body, strengthens your mind, and enriches your spirit. Whether you're striving for physical fitness, mental clarity, or personal growth, the integration of diet control and CrossFit methodology provides a roadmap for achieving your goals and living life to the fullest.



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