

September 18 - October 1, 2026

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Re-Elect Derrick Gatlin For Limestone County Commissioner District 3

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

Tanner native and Limestone County District 3 Commissioner Derrick Gatlin was elected to office in 2022, and is seeking to serve us for another term. As a teenager, Derrick began his career as a public servant when he joined the Tanner Volunteer Fire Department. A WWII/Pearl Harbor survivor by the name of Gilbert Crutchfield served as a mentor for

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The Saint Paul's Catholic Women's Annual Yard Sale: *Bargains And Blessings*

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

On Friday and Saturday, October 2 and 3, the Saint Paul Catholic Women (SPCW), with help from the Knights of Columbus, are once again hosting their annual yard sale, held at the St. Paul Catholic Church on US 72 West. Expect a large selection of merchandise, low prices, and joyful volunteers. Treasures await everyone from young to old! -- from people looking for bargains, to

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Publisher's Point

Up From Slavery - An American And Alabama Classic

I feel like I am in the midst of a continual Christmas morning. For the last 10 days or so, I have been slowly and blissfully partaking of an ongoing feast in the form of Booker T. Washington's *Up From Slavery*. I had known about the book from my 6th grade social studies class, was aware that it is the autobiography of one of America's (and Alabama's) great men, but had no idea how profoundly I would be affected by its pages.

Booker T. Washington

(who, by the way chose his own name as a kid) was nine years old when the Emancipation Proclamation was issued in 1865. He had no idea who his father was; was illiterate and within 40 years had finished college himself; created an institution of higher learning that had produced more self-made millionaires than Harvard, Yale, and Princeton combined; had visited Presidents McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt; had been visited in Tuskegee by Presidents McKinley

and Roosevelt; and was given an honorary doctorate by Harvard that made national news, appearing on the front page of the New York Times.

Now, consider that *all* of the above-mentioned accomplishments happened smack dab in the blight that was Jim Crow. Let's talk about Tuskegee itself. When *Up From Slavery* was published, Tuskegee Institute was debt free and worth about 1.75 million. There was a million-dollar endowment and 750 acres of land. The students built the buildings, and the school schedule was from 5 a.m. until 9:30 p.m. Booker insisted that graduates be masters of two trades before they finished school. This was so when they left school they could start businesses and not have to work for anyone else.

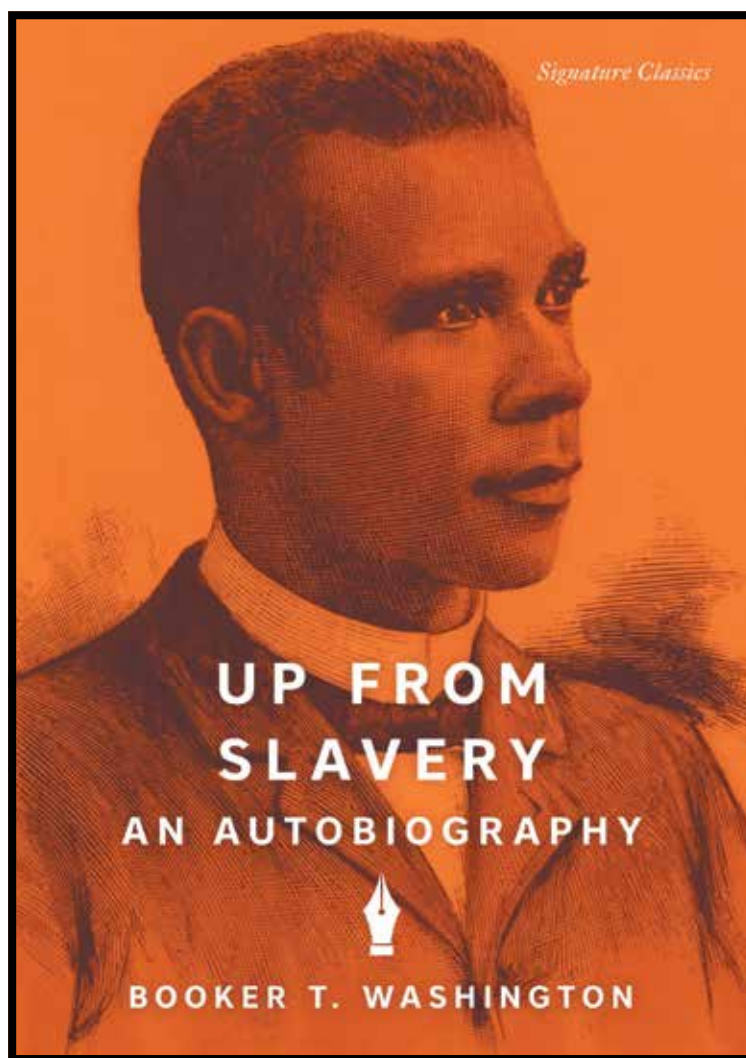
We need to take a moment to mention the concurrent accomplishments of Booker T.'s colleague George Washington Carver. He arrived at Tuskegee in 1896 and taught there for the next 47 years until his death. He was an accomplished pianist and painter, and exhibited at the 1904 World's Fair held in St. Louis. He had more than 300 inventions, did extensive research on sweet potatoes and peanuts, and when he died, he donated his savings of \$60,000 to seed the George Washington

Carver Foundation to assist students in their education.

No discussion of Booker T. Washington would be complete without an understanding of his progeny. Booker T. had three children, two grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. They were accomplished, and the story of his great-granddaughter, Sarah Washington O'Neal Rush, is fascinating. Dr. Rush was the child of a single mother in Oakland, and became a teen mother herself. Her mom never mentioned anything about her great-grandfather, and it was Sarah's trip to Tuskegee that served to function like an epiphany. It was there that she got in touch with her heritage, and she has gone on to get her Ph.D., has written a book entitled *Up From The Blood*, which talks about her heritage, and she is a strong believer. I do believe Booker T. would be proud of his great-grandgirl. And, for my part, I want to absorb everything I can about Tuskegee, visit it soon, and let its amazing story make me stronger and better.

Ali Elizabeth Turner

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News From The Vets' Museum

Save The Date -- September 24

by Yvonne Dempsey



Many of you might have heard about Alabama's second state veterans' cemetery which is to be built on a 150-acre site along the eastern side of Maysville Road in Madison County. The cemetery's official name will be Alabama State Veterans Memorial Cemetery-North Alabama. The state's only other veterans' cemetery is located in Spanish Fort, Baldwin County in South Alabama.

At 6 p.m. on Thursday, September 24, an informational event will be held at the Alabama Veterans Museum, 114 W. Pryor St, Athens, AL. There will be a presentation on the cemetery with visuals, and information on securing veterans burial sites. Attendees will have the opportunity to preregister for burial sites, which is necessary to be assured of placement. Veterans who are currently interred in other cemeteries and graveyards may be able to be reinterred in this veterans' cemetery.

The North Alabama cemetery will provide burial benefits at no

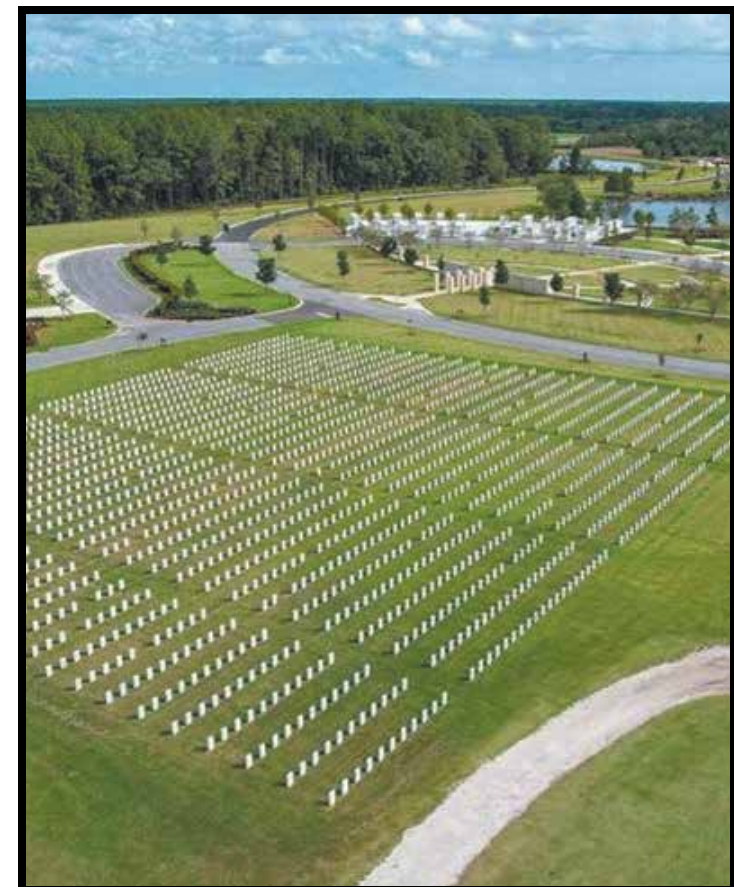


cost for honorably discharged veterans, their spouses, and eligible dependents. National Guard and Reserve veterans and their spouses – who are not otherwise eligible for burial at national cemeteries – are also eligible for burial benefits at no charge. We have many veterans and their families who have waited decades years for an accessible veterans' cemetery for North Alabama.

Representative Dale Strong worked tirelessly to secure funding for the project. "Veterans serve the country with courage and sacrifice, and they deserve to be honored with dignity close

to the communities that they helped build," said Strong. The project is backed by \$25 million in state funding and a \$13.5 million federal grant from the U. S. Department of Veteran Affairs.

The cemetery, which will have 150,000 burial sites, will include a visitor center with a neo-classical design, committal shelter, memorial walk, amphitheater, bell tower, and a flag plaza with an American flag dominating the feature surrounded by Alabama State flag and service flags. Options that will be available at the cemetery are in-ground, pre-positioned concrete



vaults built for two caskets and for cremated remains, columbarium niches, a scatter garden, and in-ground burial. The features at the site will be large enough to accommodate ceremonies and memorial events but are also suited for a single visitor seeking a quiet place for reflection.

A groundbreaking ceremony is planned for October 15. Construction is

estimated to take 12 to 14 months with first interments around the end of 2027 or the very beginning of 2028.

We sincerely hope that all area veterans, spouses, or interested family members will join us for this special informative presentation. You will see what a beautiful cemetery this will be, have all your questions answered, and be among the first veterans in North Alabama to secure your final resting place among other veterans deserving of this honor. We thank all of you for your sacrifice and look forward to seeing you on Thursday, September 24 at 6 p.m. in the museum's event venue.



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Calendar of Events

13th Annual Sporting Clay Tournament September 18

It's time for the Athens-Limestone Chamber's 13th Annual Sporting Clay Tournament Presented by Ridgeline Construction! Join us for a morning of friendly competition and great shooting at one of the Chamber's favorite traditions. 8:00 AM. Old South Clays. 27246 Wooley Springs Rd, Athens, AL.

Little Lambs Consignment Sale September 18-19

It's almost time for one of the BIGGEST children's clothing consignment sales in Athens, AL. Proceeds benefit Moms of Many Strengths, a local 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to helping mothers and families in the community. Friday, Sept. 18, 9 AM - 7 PM, and Saturday, Sept. 19, 9 AM - 2 PM. Saturday is half-price day and select items will be marked 50% off. Located at Family Life Center behind Lindsay Lane Baptist Church, 1300 Lindsay Lane, Athens, AL. <https://llbcconsignment.home.blog/>

Tennessee Valley Old Time Fiddlers Concert Series September 24

Please join us for a special performance by Wyatt Ellis Band on Thursday, September 24 at 7:00 PM in historic McCandless Hall at Athens State University. 7:00 PM. 300 N. Beaty St., Athens. Purchase your tickets today! <https://athensstate.ticketspice.com/wyatt-ellis-band-fiddlers-concert-series>

Fiddlers 5K Fun Day September 26

The Athens State University Alumni Association is hosting the annual Fiddlers 5k Race, Kids Fun Run, and Family Fun Day event. Proceeds from this event will provide scholarship benefits for new and current students and the Nazaretian Scholarship in honor of Dr. Angeline Nazaretian. This fun day will feature a kids' fun zone with inflatables, face painting, and hot dogs. A paid race entry is required to access the fun zone. Our USATF-certified race route will begin and end at Athens State University and will showcase the historical district in Athens. Our Kids' fun run will start and end on the Athens State Campus and will be highlighted by an appearance from Hebrew the Bear. Our goal is to have 250 runners, showcase the history and beauty of Athens, and provide our community

with a family-friendly event that everyone can participate in. 7AM - 10AM

Limited Edition 24k Gold-Plated Christmas Ornament Sale

Celebrate Limestone County's heritage with the Historical Society's annual Christmas ornament. This year's beautiful collectible honors *America 250*, marking our nation's historic milestone, and will be available in October. Where to buy & details: Collectors, this will be our only ornament sale this year and the 250 numbered supply will sell out quickly. \$35 each. Exclusive retailer: Osborne's Jewelers, Athens. During October only. Benefits the Limestone County Historical Society.

Cakes & Quilts October 3

Athens Arts League is calling on the area's most talented bakers and quilters to showcase their creativity and skills! Compete for the title of Best Cake at Big Spring Memorial Park and compete for the title of Best Quilt at The Scout House. All Day. Big Spring Memorial Park & Scout House. 313 E. Washington St, Athens, AL.

Swamp John's October 29

4pm-7pm. Sheriff's Rodeo Arena, Athens. The Sons of Confederate Veterans is having a Swamp John's supper to raise funds to purchase a new historical marker. Plates are \$15 and include fried fish, shrimp, or chicken, (or any combination) along with slaw, french fries, hush puppies, and tea. Carry out or eat in. Presale tickets are available. Walkups are encouraged and welcome! Cash, check, or credit cards. Call Daveen Stanford at 256-777-2199 with any questions. camp768@alscv.org for more info.

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.



Tennessee Valley Spotlight

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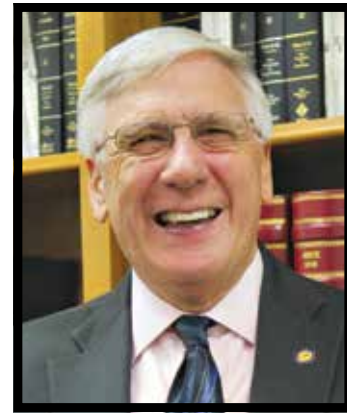
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Balance

by Ali Elizabeth Turner



Over the 15 years that have passed since we started doing the *Ronnie* column, almost always we are able to meet on Monday mornings. This has worked well. Sermons are fresh from the day before, the week is new, and the inevitable adventures that go with being a public servant have not stacked up...yet. There are times when there are schedule conflicts, and we have to go later in the day. Those seem to be the times when things might be a bit more philosophical and perhaps curious as to next steps, the who, what, when, where, and most importantly, the why of city government. Such was this meeting. We had both been at the Women's Resource Center annual luncheon and had heard the excellent presentation of chemical abortion survivor Rebekah Hagan. It was well attended, informative, sobering, and inspiring.

Surviving seemed to be the theme of the day, and Mayor Ronnie, had just attended Mrs. Dorothy Duke's 100th birthday celebration at Limestone Manor. "She's as sharp as a tack," he said, and laughed as he told me that Miss Dorothy apparently sweetly set him straight with regard to some local



Mayor Ronnie and Dorothy Dukes celebrating her 100th Birthday at Limestone Manor

history. She functions as an ambassador for Limestone Manor, and was involved in the canned food drive at the facility that was to celebrate National Assisted Living Week.

Another "National" week was tougher. It has been National Meningitis

Awareness Week, and in our area, the death of Jessica Elkins, even though it was in 2007 still serves to inspire people to be aware and to work toward a cure.

The Airfest night time fireworks held at Pryor Field had been stunning. For more detail on that particular Limestone County "first," please see Stephanie Reynold's Tourism article on page....

Monday night, Athens City Council voted to earmark \$2.1 million for paving roads as well as for infrastructure. This is what actually led to the discussion of "Balance."

Mayor Marks gestured with his hands the way you do when you are trying to illustrate the word. We talked about "revenue vs expenses." We talked about the convenience of ordering online balanced out with a deep commitment to shopping local, and the economic impact of both. Trying to know the role of city government when wanting to build a local economy can be dicey. City Council had also earmarked funds to give a boost to businesses in District 3 and District 5, respectively, and there will be other grants forthcoming.

Finally, Mayor Ronnie told me of his days when he made several trips to Tuskegee when he worked for DHR, and once again expressed his respect for the Tuskegee Airmen, better known as Red Tails. This discussion had started by my mentioning that I was slowly reading and thoroughly enjoying Booker T. Washington's *Up From Slavery*. We remarked that what had been accomplished there continues to amaze. It was late in the day and we both had more appointments. So, we prayed like we always do, and then it was time for Ronnie to roll.

Ali Elizabeth Turner
Publisher

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Protecting Your Story

Telling It Well



Cooking with Anna

Maybe You're In An Elijah Season...

by Anna Hamilton

When God's answer isn't "Try harder," but "Come rest with Me." There are seasons in life when you are still praying. Still believing. Still showing up. Still doing everything you know to do. But deep down, you're tired. Not just physically tired. Soul tired. Tired of waiting for the answer. Tired of fighting battles that seem to have no end. Tired of being strong for everyone else. Tired of saying, "I'm okay," when you really aren't. And sometimes, we feel guilty for being tired.

We think that if our faith were stronger, we wouldn't feel this way. If we prayed harder, trusted more, or tried a little harder, perhaps we wouldn't be so exhausted. But then we look at Elijah. And we discover something beautiful, even a man of great faith reached his limit.

Elijah was exhausted. In 1 Kings 18, Elijah experienced one of the greatest victories of his ministry. He stood boldly before the prophets of Baal and watched God answer with fire. What an incredible moment! Yet immediately afterward, Elijah found himself running for his life. He became afraid. He became discouraged. And eventually, he sat beneath a broom tree and essentially said, "I've had enough."

And do you know what God did? He didn't condemn him. He didn't tell him he wasn't faithful enough. He didn't say, "Get up and try harder." God let him rest. An angel brought him food and water. Elijah slept. Then he ate again. And he rested again. Sometimes the most spiritual thing you can do is admit, "God, I am tired."

God cares about your weariness. We often think God is only interested in what we can accomplish for Him. But Elijah's story reminds us that God cares about the person doing the work. God knew Elijah needed restoration before he needed another assignment. And perhaps you need to hear that today.

You don't have to constantly prove your strength. You don't have to pretend you're okay. You don't have to carry tomorrow before you've even finished today. There is no shame in needing rest. There is no shame in saying, "Lord, I don't have anything left." Sometimes that's exactly where God wants you to meet Him.

Rest isn't giving up. This is important to realize. Rest is not the same thing as quitting. Elijah rested, but his story wasn't over. God still had purpose for him. God still had

continued on page 22

French Onion Chicken

Ingredients:

- 2 lbs. boneless skinless chicken breasts*
- 1 package French onion soup mix*
- 1 can, 10.5 oz, condensed French onion soup*
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese*
- 4 Tbsp. butter, cut into pats*

Directions:

Place chicken breasts in the bottom of your slow cooker. Sprinkle the dry French onion soup mix evenly over the chicken.

Pour the condensed French onion soup over the top, then place butter pats on top.

Cover and cook on LOW for 6 hours or HIGH for 3-4 hours, until chicken is tender and cooked through.

About 10 minutes before serving, sprinkle mozzarella cheese on top, cover, and let melt. Serve over rice, noodles, or with crusty bread.



A Fire-Painted Sky

by Stephanie Reynolds, Athens-Limestone Tourism Association



Y'all! If you didn't come to the Pryor Airfield Airfest this weekend, boy did you miss out! I truly feel sorry for those who missed it!

I don't even know where to begin, to be honest.

Do I start with the biplane that does a "just off the runway" knife edge (side-ways!) flight? That maneuver always makes me hold my breath because he is so close to the runway that the motorcyclist, who is also on the runway, can touch his wing.

Oh, yes! The MOTORCYCLIST! This is not just an airshow. It is an air-and-ground-and-day-and-night show! Planes racing Very Fast Cars™. A jet-powered semi with flames shooting everywhere that needed a drag chute to slow down. Helicopters (my kids, who were not allowed to cuss, used to call them "heckicopters" just to be safe) you can ride in and more.



We had F-35s on the first day, which is always cool. Now, I grew up in the Air Force, and my dad and brother flew bombers and tankers not fighters, so my loyalties lie with the heavies and not the "zipper-suited sun gods and their lawn darts (KIDDING, guys, I'm just kidding...kinda), but the F-35s are unmistakably impressive. Their roar is a sound you feel in your sternum, not just hear in your ears. The raw power is an awesome spectacle.

And I loved the acrobatics planes and teams. I don't know the names of the specific stunts, but the two that makes me sit on the edge of my seat are when they go straight up then seem to stall, and another when they tumble but not in any discernable pattern. There is a half-second where I think, "This is part of the program right? Like, we aren't watching him lose control,

right? Like, he is going to pull out of this any second, right?...RIGHT?"

I loved the experimental plane and the mini-jet, but the part I always wait for is the MiG-17. Being a Cold War kid with a dad in the military, raised on Red Dawn; Alas, Babylon; and Sun Tzu, the MiG just triggers core memories of life on base—a young girl who felt both pride in her family and fear of loss of them, who spent several Sundays in a playground surrounded by a high fence and concertina wire near a windswept runway when that families could visit the pilots who were pulling alert, having a red phone in the kitchen that we were never allowed to answer and were never allowed to use unless there was an emergency. I think Cold War military kids learned early that life was both brief and eternal, that there was no comfort bubble, but that was okay because we learned to walk just fine without one. There is something poignant about knowing the streets were safe but the world wasn't, that life was both precarious and precious. It is scary to look life and death in the face every day, and most people refuse to, but when one does in faith, neither life nor death are scary anymore. I am thankful that my childhood was formed with gravitas.

But there was something even more fabulous than my walk down memory lane, and that was the night air show. This was their first year and it was amazing! Fireworks and airplanes were the collab



I didn't know I needed in my life, yet here we are a couple of days later, and I am still overwhelmed with the experience. Truly, fireworks in Tokyo or NYC will never top watching planes weaving through ground-launched pyrotechnics while trailing beautiful sparks of their own.

You know how you take videos of fireworks shows but never get around to watching them again? I absolutely watched my videos of this show; it was just that good. And I will watch them again and again because glowing planes diving and soaring through the fire-painted sky was beyond fabulous, it was glorious.

I have planned more than my fair share of events through the years, and I cannot even imagine how heavy a lift this was for the Pryor Field crew. A special thanks goes out to Adam, the visionary, and Denise, the executor, and all the

staff, crew, volunteers, first responders, aviators, sponsors, and everyone else that made this event happen. I cannot WAIT 'til next time, and y'all who are reading this need to follow us and Pryor Field on Facebook so you can come watch the next one with me.

In other news...Don't forget that Storytelling, Fiddlers, and Cemetery Stroll are coming up, check our Facebook or come to the office for more details. Also be watching because soon we will open the applications for the Tinsel Trail trees! If you are a family looking for a new tradition; a business wanting to get some inexpensive, over a month-long advertising; a non-profit who wants people to see your heart; or a group that wants to remember a lost loved one, sponsoring a Tinsel Trail tree is a great way to do it.

Have a blessed day!

Re-Elect Derrick Gatlin For Limestone County Commissioner District 3

by Ali Elizabeth Turner

continued from page 1

Derrick teaching him not only how to fight fires, but how and why to serve other people. “I love helping people,” he said simply, and that is why he chose to let a stable, predictable career go, and made the choice to be an elected public servant. It is also why he is running again -- there is still a lot to do, and he wants to help. It is said that firefighters are hard-wired to run into a burning building, and anyone in the public sector will tell you that sometimes it feels like several buildings are on fire at the same time.

Each district in Limestone County has its own “flavor” and set of challenges. Some are largely rural; some work concurrently with the City of Athens and are more focused on classic urban concerns. Derrick has Calhoun College, Mazda-Toyota, Eli Lily, the Technical Center, and Pryor Field as part of his purview. Additionally, Derrick is the one that has to deal with the literal crazy growth that is part of East Limestone County, and the wild ride that goes along with potential annexation attempts along the county line.

There are several things that have been accomplished in District 3 and throughout Limestone County that make Derrick glad he took the plunge and got out into the “deep end” of being a commissioner. Here are some of them:

- Eli Lily Plant
- Improving the Technical Center

- Calhoun College improvements
- 10,000 sq. foot Animal Shelter
- Purchase of the Soule plant on Hwy 99 -- will house the county engineering and sanitation departments
- Added 50 beds to the Limestone County Jail
- New Athens-Limestone Career Center

Here are some more details as well as plans for the future: “District 3 has some of the most traveled roads in Limestone County, and the-

re are roads we have fixed that hadn’t been repaired in 25 years. We’ve gotten 103 miles of that taken care of,” said Derrick. District 3 was also in great need of new road equipment, as a lot of it was worn out, and that was one of the reasons roads hadn’t been kept in repair.

Derrick knows that with added growth there is going to be a need for an expansion of the jail, and possibly its replacement. One of the projects that is coming is the expansion of Mooresville Road. The days of a

“skinny road” being able to handle county traffic flow are clearly over, and with Mazda-Toyota along with Eli Lily, people need to be able to get to and from work efficiently.

Due to be completed in early 2027 is the Aleut Hanger at Pryor Field, which is a project of Strata-G Solutions. Pryor Field is in District 3, and its upgrade is an important part of helping Limestone County grow well. The Aleut Hanger is a maintenance, repair and overhaul facility known as an MRO. It will

be able to handle large fixed-wing aircraft such as a Lockheed C-130, and up to four Chinook helicopters at once, including their blades. There will be 50 added jobs associated with the Aleut, and it will be a place that will provide support service for the Department of Defense, all the military branches, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and commercial aviation.

I asked Derrick what have been some of his favorite projects as the District 3 commissioner, and I figured that seeing as his grandparents had a dairy farm, and Derrick also had a successful career in the commercial ice cream business, it would be some of the things mentioned above. Nope. There are two annual events that mean the most to Derrick Gatlin. One is the Limestone County Sheriff’s Special Needs Rodeo, and the other is the Birdie Thornton Center Valentine’s Day Ball. “People are what this is all about, and someone once said, ‘If you’re not growing, you’re dying.’ To see the kids enjoy the rodeo and the adults enjoy Valentine’s Day is the fulfillment of that statement. It is true growth and quality of life.”

I asked Derrick why I should vote for him, and he said, “I have always wanted to help people, and I want to take it to the next level.” If this is what you are looking for in a District 3 commissioner, then Derrick Gatlin would appreciate your vote on November 3.

DERRICK GATLIN
LIMESTONE COUNTY COMMISSION, DISTRICT 3

DERRICK GATLIN IS A PROVEN LEADER WHO GETS RESULTS FOR DISTRICT 3.

Under Derrick’s leadership, District 3 has seen:

- 103 miles of roads paved and resurfaced, nearly \$11 MILLION invested
- \$32.7 MILLION Strata-G Solutions facility at Pryor Field
- \$6 BILLION Eli Lilly Investment
- 16 new industry projects
- \$6.6 BILLION in capital investment
- 858 NEW LOCAL JOBS
- A new Athens-Limestone Career Center helping prepare our workforce for the future

Derrick believes Limestone County’s growth must be matched with responsible investment in roads, infrastructure, jobs, and workforce development.



ELECTION DAY: NOV. 3RD

PROVEN LEADERSHIP. PROVEN RESULTS. A STRONGER LIMESTONE COUNTY.

www.voteatgatin.com

DERRICK GATLIN
LIMESTONE COUNTY COMMISSION, DISTRICT 3

A PROVEN RECORD. A STRONGER LIMESTONE COUNTY.

“For more than 30 years, I’ve had the privilege of serving the people of Limestone County as a volunteer firefighter, and it has been my honor to serve as your commissioner for the past 4 years. I’m running for Commissioner because I believe District 3 deserves a leader who will keep delivering results, improving our roads and infrastructure, creating good-paying jobs, and protecting the community we’re proud to call home.”

-Derrick Gatlin



ELECTION DAY: NOVEMBER. 3RD

PAID FOR BY FRIENDS OF DERRICK GATLIN | P.O. BOX 41 TANNER, AL 35671

All Aboard: *Recognizing The Warning Signs*

by Jackie Warner

Career Development Facilitator

"Impact, Engage, Grow" Community Matters



Imagine boarding a train. At first, the ride is smooth and manageable. Gradually, the speed picks up. It increases again, and then again, until the engine is racing uncontrollably toward a clear derailment.

You see the crash coming. In that moment, you face a critical decision: Do you stay on board out of obligation, fear, or habit? Or do you jump?

Jump!

Taking that leap of faith is not an act of recklessness; it is an act of preservation. Allowing yourself to derail serves no one—not your family, not your workplace, and not your calling. Jumping means choosing your health, your sanity, and your future before the collapse forces a stop for you.

Five Essential Commitments To Protect Your Well-Being

Protecting your peace requires intentionality. To keep your mind, body, and spirit available for what truly matters, integrate these five

daily practices:

- Put yourself on the schedule:

Build 5 minute gap time into your day. Pause, breathe, and reset.

"He restoreth my soul" (Psalm 23:3).

- Establish boundaries:

Boundaries protect your peace, your energy, and your purpose.

"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Proverbs 4:23).

- Use "No" and "Maybe":

"Yes" is not the only answer. "No" is holy. "Maybe" is wise.

"Let your 'Yes' be yes and your 'No,' no" (Matthew 5:37).

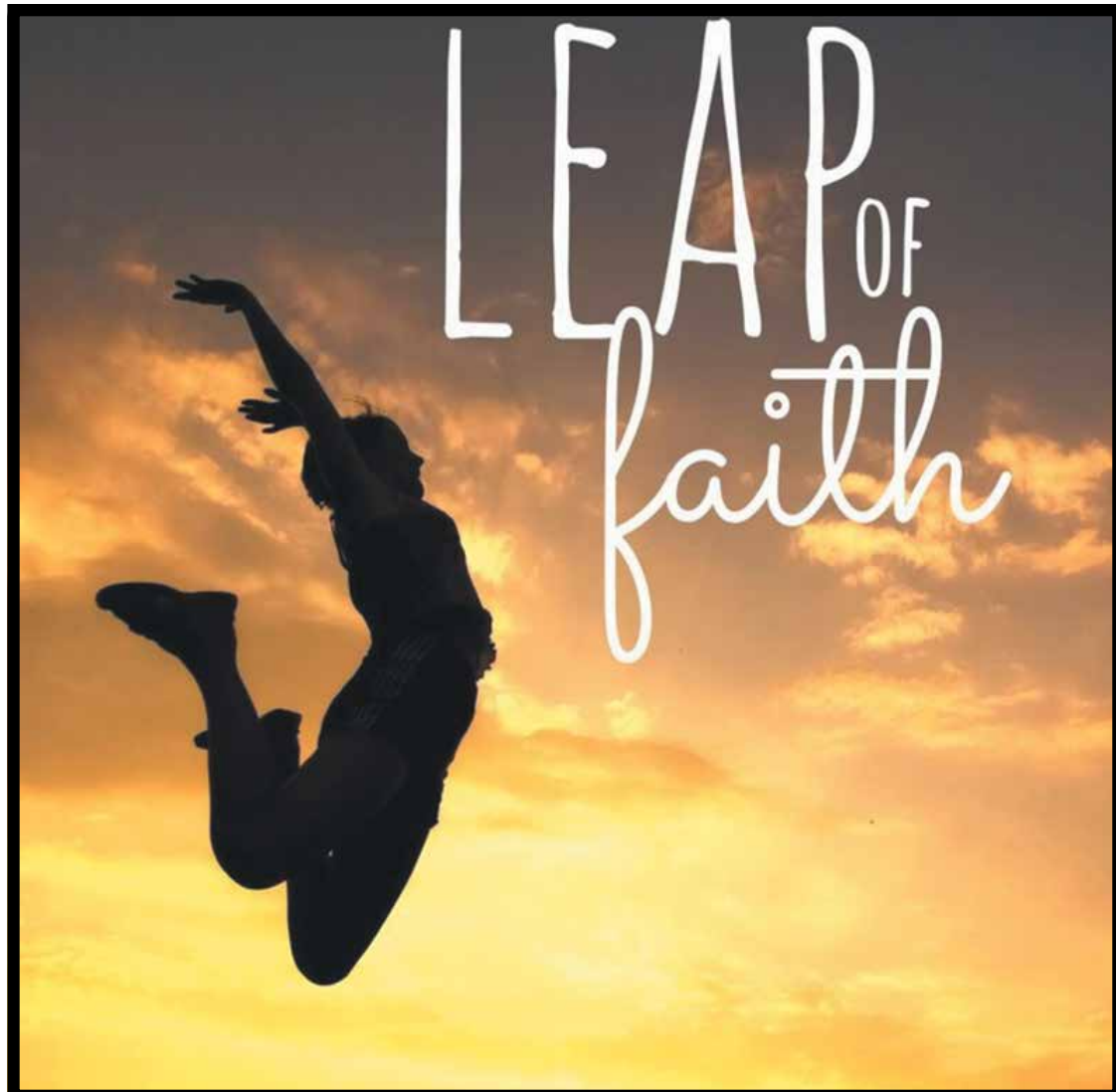
- Take time off:

Use your vacation and personal days. Rest is not optional.

"For so he giveth his beloved sleep" (Psalm 127:2).

- Leave your desk for lunch:

Step outside. Change your scenery. Give your



mind room to breathe.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters" (Psalm 23:2).

The Leap Is Not Reckless—It Is Responsible

Culturally, we are often conditioned to believe that rest is selfish and that busyness equals worth. We must reframe this mindset:

Choosing yourself is not selfish—it is necessary.

Protecting your health is not weakness—it is discipline.

Slowing down is not quitting—it is strategic longevity.

Taking care of your mind, body, and spirit is an act of stewardship and wisdom. Life is far too precious to remain passenger on a train you know is headed for a crash. Honor your calling by honoring your capacity. Choose balance, choose peace, and make the leap to protect your well-being.



The Saint Paul's Catholic Women's Annual Yard Sale: *Bargains And Blessings*

By Ali Elizabeth Turner

continued from page 1

savvy ones looking to update their homes to those looking for tools, appliances, and gadgets. There are also toys and books for children and clothes galore!

The annual event year after year proves to have bargains, blessings, and finds for the shoppers looking to get great stuff at low prices! This year there will be a variety of items from which to choose. They include gently used quality furniture, gorgeous crystal and china dishes, accessories and home décor of all kinds, clothing, toys, electronics, books and magazines, housewares, photo frames, and much more.

This yard sale is a must-

stop among all the yard sales hosted throughout Athens on Fiddlers Convention weekend! This event is well worth your time.

The SPCW Yard Sale is a popular event for the church, the community, and visitors to the Tennessee Valley Old Time Fiddlers Convention. The underlying spirit of the yard sale is helping others. Church members generously donate merchandise. St. Paul church members volunteer countless hours to sort, clean, and organize material. All customers get great products at low prices. Any left-over items are donated to other charities that help those in need.

This yard sale is the only fundraiser for St. Paul Ca-



tholic Women. The funds support parish and community needs and good works throughout the year. Over the past year, the group has provided local support for to the Women's Resource



Center which is our local crisis pregnancy center in Athens. Last year the SPCW-hosted Christmas Giving program touched over 25 families in the community who were especially in need for Christmas. Other projects include Christmas gifts for those who are sick or homebound and support to youth programs. SPCW also supports church needs by creating a beautiful space to worship and hosting special activities to deepen faith and fellowship. St. Paul Catholic Women meet monthly and welcome all for fellowship and faith enrichment.

Background of St. Paul Catholic Church in Athens:

St. Paul Catholic Church has been an on-going church community since the early 20th century. Initially, there were approximately 18 Catholic families in Athens who worshipped in a small chapel that was located on the corner of Coleman and Brown's Ferry. Eventually the chapel closed, and the

congregation traveled by ferry to St. Ann's in Decatur. In the 1940s, Mr. and Mrs. Carl Hatchett opened up their home on South Clinton Street to the families, and on Saturdays, they would gather there for Mass. After the service, the Hatchetts would serve breakfast.

Eventually, in 1959, the small brick building on Hwy 72 was built on land that had been sold to the St. Paul's congregation by the Spencer family. In 1992, the larger church was built followed by the parish hall, rectory, religious education building, and an on-site columbarium. Since its inception, the church has become a loving foundation and home to its members in Athens and Limestone County. The breakfast tradition continues on select Sunday mornings and is enjoyed by all.



Papa's Perspective

Chores

by Bob Felgar

Every youngster born on the farm soon learns what chores are. By age 3, the young one may be sitting on big brother's shoulders with their hands holding desperately onto the mop of hair at their fingertips.

By that time, the little one already knows how to sound like a chicken, a horse, and a cow. On our farm in rural Illinois, you could add pigs and rabbits to that list.

When I realized as a 6-year-old that not everyone lived on a farm and had all these chores, I was envious. Some of my city classmates didn't even have to take out the trash let alone be up and in the barn by 0530 to milk cows... no automatic milkers, just 2 strong hands. The pigs, chickens, and four pens of rabbits had to be fed and watered all before breakfast close to 0700. The bus I rode to Elvaston School was parked on our property close to the windmill. The Hancock county school bus drivers were responsible for the overnight care of the buses they were assigned. My dad, Lynn E. Sr. drove a school bus route for about 30 years. I rode faithfully one full year before I could enroll in that small elementary school. My job was to operate the interior lever that caused the exterior stop sign to signal oncoming traffic to stop while young passengers boarded Ol' Yeller." That may have qualified as a chore because it was a routine, but having the power to stop oncoming cars with one simple lever was my first feeling of power.

During high school when my classmates were practicing basketball or baseball after school, I was headed home for that day's assigned list. There

were no options.

My bus route from school to my house was not a drive-way stop. It stopped 3/4 of a mile and my "shanks ponies" brought me home, rain or shine.

Did I resent all those chores that kept me from playing on the Cardinals teams? Yes. I would be lying if I said otherwise. Did I feel cheated when my city classmates never made any reference to doing anything around their house? I'm guessing that over 65% of our graduating class of '59 were farm teens. Even when I bought my first car as a junior at HHS, I still swapped my '49 Chev steering wheel for a larger tractor steering wheel to plow, disc, or harrow in the South 40.

I was not able to discern any notable, personal advantage for doing all those chores all those years.

Yes. I remember the commercial milk truck driver give Dad a check for the 10-gallon stainless-steel cans full of Bert's, Star's, and four other cows' milk, hand-squeezed and ready to be placed in the large Ford truck. I was beginning to realize that the milk check bought groceries that were not produced on that 90-acre farm.

It wasn't 'til much later that I realized that one reward for all that lost sleep, for the loss of not playing school sports was not measured in accolades or in a shared team trophy but in something intangible and far more valuable -- discipline. The ability to do something twice daily for a lot of years when I didn't want to do it and with no immediate reward in my hand was a principle that I

have come to appreciate.

The next principle I learned was a strong work ethic. Most if not all my first employment outside the farm were jobs requiring focused and disciplined work habits. I was rewarded with promotions and an increase in pay. Other employees my age were not recognized; they were not promoted and became negative; they "sluffed off" at work, always looking for ways to get out of fulfilling their agreed-upon job role.

Another present tense benefit of growing up on the farm is creativity. I did look for ways to do my job better or more efficient whether pumping gasoline at 19 cents a gallon earning \$1.15 an hour or working on an assembly line of a lawn mower manufacturing plant not a 1/2 block from my city home. We had left the farm and moved into town the summer before my senior year.

You have no doubt heard the old sage expression that states: "You can take the boy out of the country but you sure can't take the country out of the boy."

Were those years on the farm between 1946 until 1958 rough? Absolutely. Could I have learned so many life principles if I lived in town all those years? I want to avoid negativity, but I can't think of a single household task that would demand real early hours even on weekends, any activity that had to be completed routinely every day without fail... even Christmas.

1947-1959

Am I glad that those days are in my past even with all the character-building hours feeding animals, breaking ice



to provide water before it froze, and struggling to follow my older brother's long deep boot prints through the 9" snow that occurred between 10 p.m. and before the alarm went off at 0415?

2026 Yes I am.

Then maybe you can explain to me why in the world (85 this October) would I have my friend Speckles and seven of her egg-laying friends and three hair sheep (Sunshine, Lily, and Freckles) in the backyard of my 1/2 acre lot on a quiet cul-de-sac snuggled in a peaceful subdivision in Madison, AL?

I am in urgent search of a way that we can collectively teach the generations to follow that:

#1. Work is not always fun but it produces creativity, a strong work ethic, a habit of discipline needed for the remainder of their short life here on earth.

#2. It provides the truth that work or labor brings rewards in terms of recognition, promotion, leadership skills, and even attracting a similar-minded mate when that time comes.

Now what? Every life lesson I learned has its foundation in the Book that Jesus left for us. Where do you get your encouragement, direction, and wisdom in making tough decisions? Passed on by parents, grandparents, and you great grandparents. If you have young children, give

them some chores but include an appropriate reward for neatness or cleaning up their space. And don't forget bedtime prayers.

If you have grandchildren, invest valuable time with them. Use your own unique way to give them something to read or to remember after you are no longer here to teach them yourself. Meal-time prayers. Night time prayers. Emergency time prayers whether it's an actual emergency or a disappointed little girl or boy who doesn't understand that life can be cruel.

If you are blessed with great grandchildren, give them a large portion of your life lessons on their level.

Encourage them to respect others, read Bible stories to them and hold and hug them 'til the cows come home.

This isn't just a nice-sounding platitude but a serious level of encouragement. Whatever life stage you find yourself in today, consider this your chore. Not a one-n-done task but a specific everyday routine. A chore.

Changing our culture to be more loving, more concerned and more caring is my chore and your chore.

May the Lord grant us wisdom, creativity and the tenacity to do this chore 'til the cows come home. If you prefer, 'til Jesus comes!

~Bob



McGhee On Management

Control

by Detri McGhee - CLU, ChFC

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE is about developing the smartest, most beneficial ways to live life to its fullest. It's about controlling what we CAN control and responding appropriately to those things we CANNOT control: Responding in ways that benefit us best.

Have you ever found yourself frustrated with EVERYTHING?

Oh, not the regular irritations of trying to get a real person on the line to fix a problem or getting a rock out of your sandal when you simply *can't* stop walking. I mean when you looked at people around you and thought "How in the WORLD can they be so oblivious of all their blessings???"

The more I pour gratitude into my life and heart, the more frustrated I get with myself when I start to complain. And, frankly, the harder it is for me to be around ungrateful, complaining, negative, fussy, judgmental folks. Then, I have to remind myself that I may be being judgmental of THEM! (Oops!)

No matter who you know, how well you think you know them, or how long you have known them, none of us truly knows the deepest, darkest, or most hidden parts of anyone else. Before you disagree with me, let me go one step further. You don't even *really* know what you, yourself are capable



of. If you disagree with that, you are either very young, very sheltered, or deceiving yourself. Well, that is my opinion, and you are free to totally disagree. Isn't that good news!

There is so much more I would like to say about ingratitude, but time doesn't allow. Let me just share this: Choices are important. Finding out who you are, and deciding who you want to be and how to get there is YOUR choice, providing you have the tools to make proper choices. But the one thing I want to emphasize today is this: There are things that you *cannot* control, and things that you *can* control. Wasting time, energy, resources, and attitudes on things you cannot control is futile and unwise.

Choose to focus on things you *CAN* control

and focus on addressing them with wisdom and excellence. Rebuke things you cannot control, things that try to take your focus off the truly important things that you can work on.

You CANNOT control other people's attitudes, how other people feel, outcomes, the weather, other's opinions, the past, the news, God's timing, or other people's words.

You CAN control your attitude, how you spend your time, your words, how you respond to others, your actions and reactions, and, yes, even your thoughts!

You CANNOT change other people.

You CAN change yourself.

You CANNOT make others accept your spiritual choices, but you CAN choose to follow

the Lord God Who created you and gives to everyone who will receive His gifts the power and right and ability to become a child of God with all the God-given blessings that He provides. God Himself gives you the right to love Him or reject Him. But the CONSEQUENCES are set in stone and are NOT yours to choose.

If you have chosen Life in God through Jesus Christ, please let me encourage you to decide to refine or become a person of praise and joy and

gratitude. Cast all grumbling, fussing, worthless talking aside and live fully in a life of praise and thanksgiving. This is the highest and best use of emotional intelligence available here on earth.

*Detri would love to hear from you. Email: detrimcghee@gmail.com
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Free outline for Criticism Management available at www.criticism-management.com

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Clean, Green And Beautiful

Bloom With Us

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

Do you enjoy gardening, beautifying your community, or simply seeing the difference a little volunteer work can make? The Keep Athens-Limestone Beautification Committee is looking for community-minded volunteers who want to help make Athens and Limestone County even more beautiful—without the commitment of monthly meetings.

The Beautification Committee is a hands-on group that works on special projects throughout the community. Volunteers have the opportunity to roll up their sleeves, work alongside others, and see the results of their efforts firsthand.

One of our favorite projects is the seasonal planting of the flower pots throughout downtown Athens. Committee volunteers work alongside the **Limestone County Career Technical Cen-**

ter Advanced Agriculture students to plant and maintain seasonal flowers. These students bring their knowledge, enthusiasm, and gardening skills to the project while volunteers provide an opportunity for community members to work alongside the next generation of agricultural and environmental leaders. Together, we help keep downtown Athens colorful and welcoming throughout the year.

The committee also takes on special beautification projects that enhance community spaces. One recent project has focused on the patio area at **Athens-Limestone Tourism**, where volunteers and students have helped create a more attractive and inviting outdoor space. Projects like this allow volunteers to contribute their ideas, talents, and time to improvements that can be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.

Another important re-

sponsibility of the Beautification Committee is recognizing businesses that make an extra effort to improve the appearance of our community. Through our **Beautification Awards**, we celebrate local businesses that demonstrate pride in their properties and contribute to a cleaner, more attractive Athens and Limestone County. Recognizing these efforts encourages others to take pride in their own businesses and neighborhoods.

Perhaps one of the best things about joining the Beautification Committee is the flexibility. **There are no monthly meetings.** Instead, volunteers participate when special projects are scheduled and when their time allows. Whether you have a green thumb, enjoy working outdoors, have creative ideas, or simply want to give back to your community, there is a place for you.



Because Keep Athens-Limestone Beautiful is a nonprofit organization, volunteer service with the committee may also count toward required volunteer hours for other organizations and programs, including **Master Gardeners**, depending on their individual requirements.

You don't have to be an expert gardener or have a lot of free time to make a difference. Sometimes, a few hours spent planting flowers, helping with a community project, or recognizing a deserving

local business can have a lasting impact.

If you love Athens and Limestone County and want to help make it a more beautiful place to live, work, and visit, **we invite you to join the Keep Athens-Limestone Beautification Committee.**

Come plant with us, create with us, and help us grow a more beautiful community—one project at a time!



Become a Fan



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



Slinkard On Scriptural Success

One Thing At A Time

by D. A. Slinkard

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

I had someone email me about my last article, and there were things this person would like for me to address in another article. So, I wanted to follow-up my last article with this one and go ahead and state I believe one of the biggest reasons people never accomplish their goals is not because they are lazy or because they lack ambition. Sometimes the problem is much simpler in that the goal just feels too big to handle.

We hear people talk about setting goals, creating plans, establishing milestones, and holding ourselves accountable. All of those things can be helpful. But if we are not careful, we can make goal-setting so complicated that we become overwhelmed before we ever get started.

Sometimes, we just need a good old-fashioned to-do list, and sadly, we live in the most technologically advanced society the world has ever known – but many times we become paralyzed because of things being too much overwhelming.

I want you to think about this – a to-do list is really nothing more than a big goal broken down into smaller, manageable pieces. Suppose you decide that you want to clean out your garage. You walk out, raise the garage door, look at everything that has accumulated over the years, and immediately think, “There is no way I am getting all of this done today.” What happens is that you decide to close the door and try to push the previous thoughts out of our mind.

The problem wasn't nec-

essarily your willingness to work. The problem was that you were looking at the entire garage instead of the first box. What if, instead, you made a list? Sort the tools. Clean off the workbench. Throw away the trash. Go through the boxes in the corner. Sweep the floor. Suddenly, “clean the garage” doesn't seem nearly as intimidating. Instead of one enormous project staring you in the face, you have several smaller jobs that you can actually accomplish. And there is something satisfying about putting a checkmark beside something you have completed. To me, there is nothing more satisfying than being able to mark something or multiple things off my list. I live daily by the to-do list, and there are days where a lot is accomplished and there are days where not

much is accomplished – but I have an end goal in mind.

Then you move to the next thing. That same principle works with almost anything we want to accomplish in life. Maybe you want to get your finances in better shape. Don't start by worrying about where you need to be five years from now. Start by writing down your monthly expenses. Maybe you want to read more. Don't stare at a 300-page book and wonder when you will ever finish it. Put “Read 10 pages” on today's list.

Maybe there is a project you have been putting off for months. Stop thinking about finishing the entire project and ask yourself a much simpler question, what is the next thing I can do? This is where progress begins, and I have found that sometimes we spend

so much time thinking about the finish line that we become intimidated by the distance between where we are and where we want to be. We need to remember that we don't have to cover the entire distance today. We just need to take the next step.

There is an old saying: “How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time.” It's simple, but there is a lot of truth in it. Take that big goal and break it down. Take those smaller goals and break them down again until you have something you can actually put on today's to-do list. Then start checking boxes. Success isn't always one huge decision or one incredible accomplishment. More often, it is a series of small things done consistently over time.

One phone call. One page written. One application. One conversation. One task. One checkmark, and then another. We cannot allow the size of the goal to keep us from starting the next task. Besides, you don't have to accomplish everything today. You just need to accomplish the next thing. So grab a piece of paper. Write down that goal that has been intimidating you. Underneath it, write down three things you can do to move toward it. Then quit staring at the goal. Pick the first thing on the list—and get started. Sometimes success really is that simple: **One thing at a time.**

~~i~~mpossible
~~u~~nattainable



Learning As A Lifestyle

Servant Leadership Beyond Cliché

by Eric Betts

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

"Servant leadership" has become one of those phrases almost everyone can affirm. Businesses include it in mission statements, churches teach it, and leadership seminars encourage it. Yet whenever a good idea becomes familiar enough, there is a danger that we can repeat the language without wrestling with what it actually requires. Servant leadership is more than being nice, approachable, or willing to lend a helping hand. It asks a much harder question: What happens to other people because I have been given the opportunity to lead

them? If leadership consistently enlarges the leader while diminishing everyone else, calling it servant leadership does not make it so.

True service becomes most visible in the way we use power. A supervisor who listens but never advocates for employees when it costs something has only practiced part of service. A community leader who speaks warmly about people but excludes them from meaningful decisions has confused friendliness with servant leadership. Even generosity can become self-serving when it keeps others de-

pendent upon the generosity of the leader. The purpose of servant leadership is not to make people more dependent upon the leader, but to help people become more capable of flourishing without the leader. That means sharing knowledge, developing others, creating opportunities, giving credit, correcting with dignity, and sometimes opening doors through which someone else may eventually walk farther than we have.

There is a deeply spiritual idea beneath this understanding of leadership. Whatever gifts, opportunities, knowl-

edge, resources, or authority we possess have been entrusted to us for more than our own advancement. Leadership is stewardship. Yet stewardship requires more than protecting what has been placed in our hands; it asks what becomes possible for others because it passed through our hands. Service is not measured by how low the leader appears willing to bend, but by how many people are able to stand because the leader served. That moves servant leadership beyond performance and into formation.

The servant leader is

continually learning to govern ego, listen more carefully, exercise power responsibly, and recognize the dignity and potential of those who may never carry the same title.

This is also why servant leadership and vocational success belong together. True success cannot be measured only by how far we travel in our careers, how much authority we accumulate, or how many people know our names. Eventually, every position will be occupied by someone else. The better question is what remains in the people and institutions after we are gone. Did people become wiser, stronger, more confident, and better prepared because we led them? Did the organization become healthier? Did someone discover possibilities that might otherwise have remained closed? Perhaps the highest evidence of successful leadership is not that people cannot imagine succeeding without us, but that our service helped prepare them to succeed after us. That is servant leadership beyond cliché, and it is the kind of success that can outlive a title.

Eric M. Betts, PhD

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



Servant Leadership

[ˈsər-vənt ˈlē-dər-ship]

A leadership style and
philosophy that prioritizes
the growth and well-being
of others.



The Alternative Approach

Our Story

by Roy P. Williams

There is something attractive about a person who is truly alive. Clear eyes. Strong posture. A steady voice. Energy that enters the room before they say a word. A man or woman who can think clearly, move freely, work hard, love deeply, and still possess the strength to serve others does not have to announce their health. You can see it. That condition is not created inside a hospital room or by taking prescription drugs. It is built daily.

The human body requires raw materials. It needs protein to build tissue. Minerals to conduct electricity and maintain structure. Vitamins and minerals to activate enzymes. Essential fats to construct cell membranes and hormones. Water to transport everything. Movement to tell the body that strength is still required. Rest to give it time to rebuild. That is not a medical opinion. That is the nature of the organism. If the materials are missing, the body cannot produce the intended result.

You cannot build strong tissue from materials you don't have. You cannot neglect the body for twenty years, wait until something fails, and then pretend the prescription written afterward was the original health plan. That is not health care. That is health repair.

The United States spent approximately \$5.3 trillion on health care in 2024. That was about \$15,474 for every person in the country. It consumed approximately 18 percent of the entire American economy. The CDC reports that 90 percent of health-care spending is associated with people who have chronic and mental health conditions. That does not mean every dollar is preventable. It means chronic dysfunction is where the largest financial burden lives.

In 2024, approximately 16 percent of American households carried medical debt. Among households with *medical debt*, the median balance was approximately \$2,000. The Federal Reserve reported that about 26 percent of adults skipped some form of medical care

because of cost. Think about what that means. Americans are paying enormous amounts into the medical system, yet millions remain afraid to use it because using it may damage them financially. That is not merely expensive. That is a system capable of converting physical weakness into financial weakness.

NEWtritional Health Care LLC, established right here in Alabama, June 1, 1999, was built around one goal, "To Make America Healthy One Person at A Time." Hear we are, 27 years later and recognized as one of the leading brands of nutritional supplements in America. We formulated over 40 products of which 38 fall under a patent. That means that no other company can copy our formulas, which has made all the difference. Our product line is superior to almost any thing else on the market.

We are the new, true health care. We have always believed that God designed the human body to heal, and we believed it would as long as we provided the raw materials it needed to do so. By the time we had our first ten patented supplements on the market, we knew we were right. Almost everyone that began taking our foundational product called **MSM+C**, along with another product we developed called **Ultimate Fruit & Veggie**, reported back that after 3 or 4 weeks their life



began to change. Most common reports were softer, smother, prettier skin; fingernails and hair growing faster and stronger; better range of motion with way less pain; and so much more energy.

At that point, we began to tell everyone that we are the **New, True Health Care System**. We coined that phrase because we refused to treat the symptoms and targeted the root cause of the problem. Over time we added more products to our inventory so we could support each individual system of the human body. Today we have a **Healthy Combo** that supports the health of each system. To date we also have the Healthy Heart Combo, Joint Combo, Bone Combo, Skin Combo, Sugar Combo, Pain Combo, Immune Combo, Auto Immune Combo, Male Combo, Female Combo, and the Healthy Cell Combo.

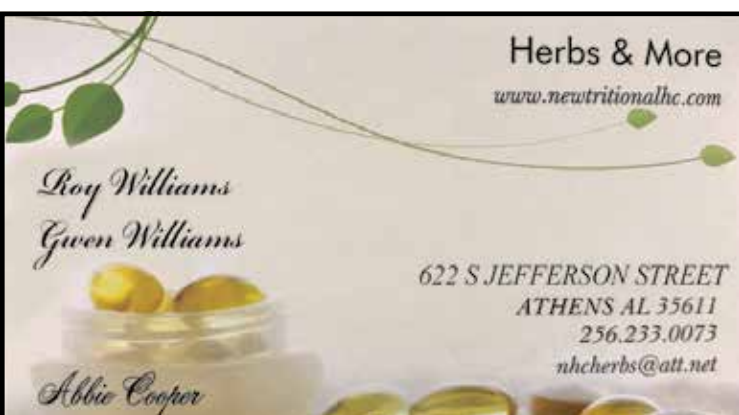
We have had steady growth throughout the years, and one of the most exciting things we have experienced is that most of that growth is due to word-of-mouth advertising. There is an old saying, "When the blind can see and the lame can walk, people talk." Now remember, we are not saying that we can help with blindness or that

we can fix someone that cannot walk. We are just impressed with how many people come in to ask us to help them like we helped their Uncle Ben or Sister Sue.

Going back to where this article started. The human body can heal, in most cases, when we supply it with the raw materials, in the right amounts to make the repairs. Not one cell in the human body is dependent on synthetic, pharmaceutical drugs to heal; however, every system of the human body needs the right nutrients to stay healthy and make repairs throughout life. All cells have a life span. They grow old, become damaged, wear out, and must be replaced. We are here to provide the highest quality, raw materials it needs to do the job.

To learn more, go by Herbs & More in Athens, NHC Herb Shop in Killen, call us at 256-757-5660 or check us out at www.nhcherbs.com. And now we are proud to say that you can listen to Roy on social media by using the Rumble app. When it opens just type today-shealthupdate (all one word) in the search bar.

*Your Friend in Health,
Roy P. Williams*



Shift Happens

by Deb Kitchenmaster

Have you ever been under the impression that you had the best interest of someone or something in mind only to discover that it wasn't? Really, who hasn't? That's part of our journey of discovery and awakening.

While in Colorado Springs, CO I noticed a clever bumper sticker; "SHIFT HAPPENS." I liked it!

I thought of Edward Lorenz, who presented a hypothesis to the New York Academy of Science in 1963. He simply stated his theory that a *butterfly* could flap its wings and set molecules of air in motion, which would move other molecules of air, in turn moving more molecules of air that eventually was

capable of starting a hurricane on the other side of the planet. Of course, he was considered crazy, he was mocked, and the conference thought his proposal was ridiculous. However, more than thirty years later, physics professors working from colleges and universities worldwide concluded that the butterfly effect was authentic, accurate, and viable. How interesting! Now known as **The Law of Sensitive Dependence Upon Initial Conditions**, this principal has proven to be a force enveloping more than butterfly wings. Shift Happens.

I would like to share two shifts I have had in my thinking with our horses here at Corral Connections.

The first one has to do with minerals and salt; the second with worming.

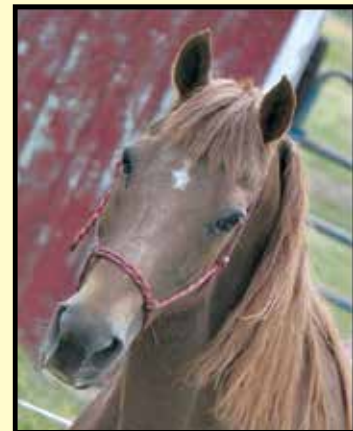
I came across a quote from a man known as Dr. Dan the Natural Vet. He says, "Did you know that most commercial salt and minerals are either 'man made' or some other industry's waste product? Did you know that blocks for horses, and others for that matter, are almost useless and potentially dangerous! They just can't get what they need, when they need it, fast enough, by trying to lick or *chew from a block*! When the weather changes sudden imbalances in the grass can occur. Horses must be able to get what they need when they need it! Period!"

The "shift" I made was

to remove all salt and mineral blocks from our ranch. I am using *Red Cal*, a brand that has a prized ingredient, montmorillonite clay – a rich source of trace and other minerals. It is referred to as "living clay" because it consists of minerals that enhance the production of enzymes in all living organisms. Perhaps this "shift" (a decision to feed loose salt/minerals) could be the "single-most healthy thing you can do for your horse."

Let's talk about worming. All horses don't have worms no matter what type of fear tactics you might be presented with. Now, bear with me, please.

Is it possible we are over worming our horses?



How do I know when to worm and what wormer to use? What if I, as a steward over horses, considered each individual horse and wormed as needed, rather than worm as programmed or scheduled? Would this "shift" benefit my horse? Is it possible to save some money and have a 'safe' worming awareness? Yes! It is. The "shift" is to simply check a fecal sample before you deworm. Your vet can do this. I work with a vet that is 'natural solutions' minded. For twelve dollars, I send fecal matter to be checked for worm count. Depending on these results/facts I decide whether to deworm or not. If there is a need to deworm, I will re-check that horse two to three weeks after deworming for effectiveness. For more information on either *Red Cal* or naturally timed deworming, contact me at www.corralconnections.com.

I realize that mindsets and traditions die hard. I simply hope that I have made you thirsty enough to drink from the fountain of meaning and purpose, knowing your actions have value far greater than "we've always done it that way."

Pass the salt, please.

Your NEIGHbor,
Deb Kitchenmaster
Corral Connections
256-426-7947

Animal B.E.S.T. practitioner
horsinaround188@gmail.com





GenZ With JP

One Year Later, We Have Not Forgotten

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

One year ago last week, a shot rang out in Orem, Utah, on the campus of Utah Valley University. Hundreds of students flocked to campus to watch Charlie Kirk spar with opponents, and instead got a front-row seat to one of the more graphic assassinations recorded. A father was taken from his young children, a husband taken from his wife, and a political titan taken from our movement. At the time, this event hit home to millions. We were motivated to carry on Charlie's legacy, and we were appalled at the current state of the left who resorted to violence while celebrating. As a year has passed, this

monumental moment has been hijacked by grifters and leftists to vilify a widow and tarnish the legacy of Charlie. As we analyze who is responsible for this shift, let's be clear about their goal. They seek to bury Charlie's movement and declare victory over him. If these evildoers can murder an innocent man in cold blood simply because of his traditional Christian views, and then dance on his grave as his memory fades away, Charlie's mission would be in vain. This will not happen. Gen-Z conservatives will not allow it, even if it seems as though they're winning.

First, let's set the record straight on why Charlie

was murdered. Charlie's life was taken from him solely because he spoke the truth. He preached the Gospel. He stood firm against radical wokeism, but most importantly, he did it respectfully. Even though the left will say otherwise, he gave his opponents a microphone and an opportunity to present their views. Is this how a fascist acts? On the contrary, the real fascist is Tyler Robinson, who shot Charlie simply because he disagreed with him. "Hey fascist, catch!" on the bullet casings was mere projection by a sick individual. The takeaway from Charlie's death is this: Charlie's belief in Christ and exercise of his First Amendment right was too much for a radical leftist to handle; therefore, he shot him in the throat. However, the narrative has changed.

Candace Owens is chief among those who are responsible for letting the left off the hook and completely taking the wind out of the sails of the conservative movement, all in the name of greed. For someone who claimed to be so close to Charlie, she has propped herself up on his grave in such a vicious and evil manner. At first, it was in the name of "avenging Charlie" while attacking his wife and everyone he was closest to. Now, even that facade has faded. Despite her profound lack of evidence to back her countless claims surrounding Egyptian planes, Israel, and Erika Kirk's involvement, she continues down the path of sabotaging Charlie's own organization simply to rake in cash. Her

podcast soared to the top of the charts in the months after his death as she garnered thousands of supporters to attack Charlie's widow. Candace Owens is a narcissist. She cares only about herself and took advantage of Charlie's assassination to direct attention away from him and solely upon her.

The primary beneficiary of Candace's tirade is the same group who took Charlie's life. The radical left. Just a couple of weeks ago, leftist streamer Hasan Piker mocked Charlie in front of his supporters with glee. The same Hasan Piker who debated Charlie and met him several times had no remorse over his death, while his supporters laughed. You can thank the tremendous work of those like Candace Owens for this. In the immediate aftermath of Charlie's death, we were all united. It was a wake-up call to how extreme and violent our opponent had become. We were solely focused on defeating them politically, and doing so quickly. However, that momentum and unification were blunted by a constant barrage of conspiracy theories and mocking of Erika. Charlie then became a meme on social media, with his face being plastered on every post imaginable. Songs were used to mock him and his cause, and the left has been given new life. They no longer have to face the consequences of their actions; they've been given free air cover to dance on his grave. But hey, at least the conspiracy podcasters are making dough.

This may all seem devastating. By the current landscape, one would think that Charlie's life and death were in vain. Has he been forgotten? Has his cause been squandered? I would answer with a resounding no! Young conservatives remember. We remember how we felt on that day, and we will not forget. We might be quieter, but we will not let them win. We know that Charlie's faith is what got him killed. This was an attack on everything we hold so dear, by those who hate us. Psalm 37:13 says, "The Lord laughs at the wicked, for he knows their day is coming." We will march forward and proclaim the Gospel just as Charlie did. We'll stand firm against radical leftists seeking to silence us, and we will not be scared. Charlie's reward is in heaven. As for those of us who seek to carry Charlie's mission forward, we've got a lot of work to do.

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.



NEVER FORGET
CHARLIE KIRK
ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARY



ONE YEAR LATER
HIS LIGHT STILL SHINES
FAITH, FAMILY, FREEDOM.
FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS.



Cooking with Anna (continued from page 9)

Maybe You're In An Elijah Season...

by Anna Hamilton

another assignment. God still had a future waiting for him.

The season of exhaustion was not the end of Elijah's calling. And your exhaustion isn't the end of yours either. Maybe you've been interpreting your weariness as a sign that you've failed. Maybe you've wondered why you don't have the strength you used to have. Maybe you've even questioned whether God is still using you. But perhaps God isn't asking you to do more. Perhaps He's asking you to come closer.

Sometimes God says, "Come rest with Me." We live in a world that constantly tells us to push harder. Do more. Be more. Keep going. Don't slow down. But God sometimes speaks a very different message. Come rest. Come sit with Me. Come breathe. Come lay down the burden you've been carrying. Come stop trying to control what only I can control. Come remember that you are My child—not My machine.

Jesus Himself said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." In Matthew 11:28, notice that Jesus doesn't say, "Come to Me when you've gotten yourself together." He says, Come to Me when you're weary. Come when you're overwhelmed. Come when you're exhausted. Come when you don't know what to do next. Come when your faith feels small. Just come.

Maybe you're in an Elijah season. Maybe you're not losing your faith. Maybe you're simply tired. Maybe you've

been fighting for so long that you forgot what it feels like to be at peace. Maybe you've been waiting so long that you've started wondering if God even heard you. Maybe you've been carrying responsibilities, disappointments, heartbreak, uncertainty, and battles that nobody else can see.

If that's you, please hear this, "You are not weak because you're tired. You are human." And God already knows. He sees the tears you don't talk about. He knows the prayers you've prayed over and over. He knows how hard you've tried. He knows how long you've been waiting. And He isn't standing over you demanding that you try harder. He's inviting you closer.

So today, give yourself permission to rest. Rest your mind. Rest your heart. Rest your expectations. Rest from trying to figure everything out. Rest in the presence of the One who already knows the beginning, the middle, and the end. Because sometimes God's answer to our exhaustion isn't, "Try harder." Sometimes His answer is simply, "Come rest with Me." And maybe, just maybe, that's exactly what your soul has been needing all along.

This week's recipe is a delicious and easy crockpot meal that is sure to please your entire family. It is perfect for those cool, autumn nights that are just around the corner. I hope you enjoy it as much as my family does.

"He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak" (Isaiah 40:29).

Join Anna and Jon for . . .



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Convenience Can Save Us Time, But Discomfort Develops Us

by Nick Niedzwiecki - Owner, CrossFit Athens

We live in the most convenient time in human history. We can have food delivered without leaving the couch, order groceries from our phones, and work, shop, communicate, and entertain ourselves without ever leaving the house. If we don't know something, we can find the answer in seconds. If something takes too long, there is probably an app promising to make it faster.

Most of that is great. Convenience saves us time and makes many parts of life easier. But I think there is a hidden cost to all of it: we are becoming less willing to do difficult things.

Human beings naturally look for the path of least resistance. Given two options, we tend to choose the easier one. The problem is that the easier option rarely leads us toward the person we actually want to become. Getting stronger isn't convenient. Losing weight isn't convenient. Learning a new skill isn't convenient. Building a business, improving a marriage, raising a family, changing your habits, or becoming better at anything requires effort and discomfort.

Almost everything worthwhile asks something of us.

That's why I think we need to intentionally put difficult things back into our lives. Think about the last time you chose to do something sim-

ply because you knew it would challenge you. When was the last time you tried something you weren't sure you could do? When was the last time you allowed yourself to be a beginner—to struggle, fail, learn, and try again?

Those experiences are becoming easier to avoid. We can fill our lives with conveniences that protect us from frustration, uncertainty, and discomfort. But when we avoid every difficult experience, we also avoid many of the opportunities that help us grow.

We can see this clearly with exercise. There are endless products promising easier workouts, faster results, shortcuts, hacks, and ways to get

fit without being uncomfortable. But your body doesn't work that way. If you want to become stronger, at some point you have to lift something that feels heavy. If you want better endurance, at some point you have to breathe hard. If you want to become more capable, you have to attempt things that are currently outside your capabilities.

The resistance is the point.

And I don't think that lesson stops when the workout ends. One of my favorite things about CrossFit is watching people willingly choose something difficult. Every day at CrossFit Athens, regular people walk through the door knowing that sometime dur-

ing the next hour they're probably going to be uncomfortable. They could choose something easier. Instead, they show up.

They attempt movements they've never done and lift weights that once intimidated them. They struggle through workouts, and sometimes they fail. Then they come back and try again. Over time, something interesting happens: the difficult thing becomes easier. Then they choose something difficult again.

That's growth.

We should be careful about creating lives where everything is easy. Convenience can save us time, but discomfort develops us. It teaches us patience, builds confidence, and reminds us

that we are capable of more than we initially believed.

So use the grocery delivery. Order something from your phone. Enjoy the air conditioning. There is nothing wrong with making life more convenient. But don't eliminate struggle from your life entirely. Find something difficult and voluntarily walk toward it.

The easiest path might make today more comfortable. It probably won't make tomorrow's version of you better.

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