

THE Anchor NEWS

FREE! | JUNE 2026

VOLUME 23, NUMBER 11

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SONS: A FAMILY BUILT ON FAITH AND STRENGTH

Marvin Alexander Sr., at 52, stands as the rock of his family. A devoted father of five—four sons Marvin Alexander Junior, 26, Diarian Alexander, 24, Michael Alexander, 15, Jeremiah Alexander, 12, and one daughter Alana Alexander, 20—he's a guiding light in their lives. Married for 32 years, he's not only a hard-working provider but a God-fearing man who lives his values. Balancing two jobs, he serves both at the Army Air Force Exchange and behind the wheel of Waco Transit city buses. With a CDL in hand, he drives not just routes, but dreams.



MARVIN ALEXANDER, SR.

Marvin is a role model, showing his sons what it means to be men of integrity, work ethic, and compassion. Whether preparing family meals or stepping in when long shifts kept his wife away, he's been steadfast.

His two oldest sons are pursuing their dream as musicians, they're two youngest sons are still in school and his daughter, pursuing nursing in college, thrives under his encouragement. Marvin's presence is the gift that keeps giving—his family's pillar, raising tomorrow's leaders with love, faith, and unwavering support.

—MARVIN ALEXANDER JR.—

At 27 years old, Marvin Alexander Jr. is proving that passion, perseverance, and faith can open remarkable doors. Alongside his younger brother, Diarian Alexander, and their longtime friend Gerald Wilburn, Marvin has helped build a rising music group known as "Smooth Nature," a name that is steadily gaining attention across the country.

Although music became a serious pursuit after high school, Marvin's dedication quickly transformed a dream into a growing movement. Today, Smooth Nature is featured on major platforms including Spotify, Apple Music, YouTube, and TikTok, where listeners continue to connect with the group's sound and message.

Over the past year, Marvin and the group have toured and performed for audiences in multiple cities, winning hearts through their energy, authenticity, and musical talent. One of their biggest moments came in March 2026 when Smooth Nature was featured at South by Southwest in Austin, Texas, a milestone that reflects how far the group has come.

Now, with another tour on the horizon and a powerful new single titled Emotional, Marvin continues to help push the group forward. The song has been described as electrifying



MARVIN ALEXANDER JR.

and captivating, showcasing both creativity and emotional depth.

Beyond music, Marvin is deeply grounded in faith and family values. Inspired by the example set by his father, he believes in hard work, perseverance, and using his gifts to uplift others. His commitment to mental wellness and resilience is woven into both his personal life and artistic journey.

For Marvin, success is about more than entertainment. Through music, encouragement, and positive influence, he hopes to inspire others to become the best version of themselves. As his platform continues to grow, Marvin Alexander Jr. remains committed to honoring his family, strengthening his faith, and creating music that leaves a meaningful impact.

—DIARIAN ALEXANDER—

At just 24 years old, Diarian Alexander is emerging as one of the bright young talents helping shape the future of independent music. Alongside his older brother, Marvin Alexander Jr., and friend Gerald Wilburn, Diarian is part of the rising music group "Smooth Nature," a group whose journey has been both inspiring and impressive.

What began as a passion after high school has steadily evolved into a flourishing musical career. Through commitment, creativity, and consistency, Smooth Nature has earned a growing audience on platforms such as Spotify, Apple Music, YouTube, and TikTok.

Diarian's dedication to music has helped carry the group to new heights over the past year. Their performances and touring opportunities have allowed them to connect with audiences far beyond their home-



DIARIAN ALEXANDER

town roots. In March 2026, Smooth Nature reached another major milestone when the group was featured at South by Southwest in Austin, Texas, one of the nation's premier entertainment festivals.

The group's latest single, Emotional, continues to at-

tract attention with its captivating sound and emotional intensity. As Smooth Nature prepares for another upcoming tour, Diarian remains focused on growth, excellence, and using music as a positive force.

Rooted in faith and inspired by the example of his father, Diarian believes strongly in perseverance, discipline, and encouraging others through his platform. He also values conversations surrounding mental well-being and resilience, topics that continue to influence both his music and outlook on life.

For Diarian, music is not simply about fame or recognition. It is an opportunity to inspire, motivate, and bring hope to others. As he continues building his career, he remains committed to honoring his faith, family, and purpose while encouraging others to pursue their dreams with determination and courage.

ARTICLES FOR MICHAEL AND JEREMIAH ALEXANDER CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



J.L. & LINDA CRAWFORD

J.L. and Linda Crawford are co-owners of *The Anchor News*. J.L. Crawford serves as Director of Operations and is a Bible teacher and columnist writing on faith, family, and men's issues. Linda Crawford serves as Publisher and Editor, is a motivational speaker, and is the owner of Enjoy the Journey Life Coaching Services.



LINDA CRAWFORD

BY LINDA CRAWFORD

QUESTION: I keep putting off an important decision because I'm afraid of making the wrong choice. How do I know when to move forward and when to wait?

ANSWER: One of my favorite places in Willow Grove is Hog Creek. Years ago, my

husband took me there, and to reach the other side, we literally had to drive through the creek. The water is usually clear and beautiful, and there is something peaceful about watching it flow. I have always loved the experience.

The last time we visited Willow Grove, however, things were different. It had rained

heavily, and the water was too high. We could not drive through the creek as we normally would. We had to turn around and wait for another time.

Life is often like Hog Creek. Sometimes the path forward requires us to go straight through the challenge. We cannot reach the other side by

standing on the bank wishing things were different. We have to move forward with courage and faith.

At other times, the water is simply too high. The wise decision is not to force our way through but to wait until con-

SEE Q&A, PG. 16

ENJOY THE JOURNEY: A LIFE COACHING Q&A WITH LINDA CRAWFORD—

LESSONS FROM HOG CREEK

IF MONEY CAN'T BUY HAPPINESS, WHAT DOES?

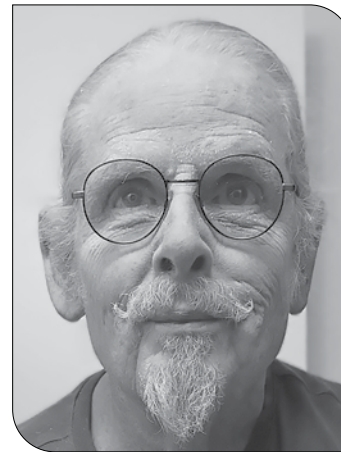
BY MICHAEL JONES

As people enter into adulthood, new expenses begin popping up, like apartment upkeep, student loans, and unexpected travel expenses. Sometimes it's tough making ends meet.

It's all too easy to fall into a money-centered mindset. For rich and poor alike, our society expects us to make as much money as possible. And after we have it, we're supposed to spend, spend, spend. Endless advertising tells us we aren't living life to the fullest if we don't buy new stuff. And often. Many of us wind up feeling like we're living in survival mode, even when we don't need to.

The Bahá'í writings suggest that the key to happiness lies not in getting more money and/or stuff, but in the opposite. Finding ways to give to others allows us to tap into a much more bountiful way of living. While most people would agree that the point of life isn't just to make money and enjoy what it can buy us, that's not actually how we behave.

To build a prosperous society free from injustice and misery,



MICHAEL JONES

we must all be generous and giving to transcend these patterns of consumerism. Generosity is an attribute of the human soul, independent of the degree of wealth or poverty.

But at the same time, inequality flourishes. Too many people live in stressful situations where housing, food, transportation and healthcare are a daily concern. For some of us, high rates of debt, increasing prices of housing, and basic needs keep

us in survival mode—and that isn't healthy. When this happens, we can experience fight, flight or freeze mode, sometimes desperately on the lookout for ways to make more money. We might miss chances to be generous, to be kind, or to develop other aspects of who we are.

Missing opportunities to develop our ability to be generous does a disservice to our souls.

To push back against survival mode, try to stay aware of opportunities for spiritual growth. Try to choose friends who focus on both their spiritual and material development, and to pray throughout the day rather than only in church.

When we stay in survival mode, we find it difficult to give and can be stingy with our time and energy. But living joyfully requires finding ways to rethink how we use our time. Rather than viewing time as something we give away to do things that benefit others, we can see it as just existing so we can give more freely. And as we give more freely, our lives become fuller and more enjoyable.

To learn more, please visit our local Bahá'í website at wacobahais.org or the global information site at bahai.org/beliefs.

FROM THE EDITOR...

CELEBRATING FREEDOM, FAMILY & LEGACY

As we celebrate Juneteenth, a time of reflection, freedom, perseverance, and progress, we are honored to bring you this special Father/Son issue of *The Anchor News*. Throughout these pages, you will find inspiring stories that highlight the influ-

ence of fathers, the promise of sons, and the power of family legacy. We hope you enjoy this issue and encourage you to look ahead to July, when we will spotlight local nonprofits and the vital work they do to strengthen our communities.

THE Anchor NEWS

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The Anchor News, dedicated to serving the community and surrounding areas, focuses on positive news and accomplishments of minorities.

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ials reflect the opinions of the editor.

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REV. BRILL R. STONE, SR.: A LIFE OF FAITHFUL SERVICE, LEADERSHIP, AND COMMITMENT TO GOD

For decades, Brill R. Stone Sr. has faithfully served as a pastor, shepherd, counselor, mentor, and friend to countless individuals throughout Central Texas. A native of Waco, Reverend Stone has devoted his life to preaching the Gospel, leading congregations, and serving the people of God with humility, wisdom, and compassion.

The youngest of six siblings, Reverend Stone received his elementary and secondary education through the Waco Independent School



REV. BRILL R. STONE, SR.

District and graduated from Jefferson-Moore High School. Even in his early years, those who knew him recognized his strong character, steady spirit, and deep sense of purpose.

In March of 1987, Reverend Stone accepted the call of Jesus Christ into the ministry, a decision that would shape the course of his life and impact generations to come. He was licensed to preach in 1988 and ordained into the Gospel ministry in 1989. Determined to deepen his biblical knowledge and preparation for ministry,

he later enrolled at Guadalupe Theological Seminary, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Theology.

Reverend Stone's pastoral journey has been marked by years of faithful leadership and unwavering dedication to the church. In 1991, he accepted his first pastoral assignment at St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church in Robinson. Five years later, in 1996, he was called to lead Hopewell Missionary Baptist Church in Ax-tell.

In 2009, Reverend Stone accepted another call to pastor Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, where he continued ministering to the spiritual and personal needs of the congregation and community. Continuing his legacy of service, Pastor Stone began serving as pastor of Greater Zion Missionary Baptist Church on July 13, 2025. He remains grateful and excited about the marvelous things God continues to do through his ministry and the lives of His people.

Throughout the years, Pastor Stone has also provided leadership beyond the walls of the church. He served as First Vice Moderator of the Union Baptist Association and faithfully worked for many years as the Pastoral Advisor to the Union Baptist District Asso-

ciation Ushers and Nurses. His leadership, wisdom, and steady guidance have earned him deep respect among fellow ministers and church leaders throughout the region.

In addition to his ministry work, Pastor Stone is a distinguished 33rd Degree Prince Hall Mason and a committed member of Wyatt Lodge #21 and Rose of Sharon Consistory #180. His commitment to service, integrity, and brotherhood extends into every area of his life.

At the center of Reverend Stone's life is his family. He has been married to his beloved wife, Vicki L. Stone, for 42 years. Together, they have built a strong foundation of faith, love, and commitment. He is also the proud father of Brill Stone Jr. and the loving grandfather of two granddaughters, Jaubrey and Tahlia.

Those who know Reverend Stone often describe him as a man after God's own heart. Through decades of ministry, leadership, and faithful service, he has remained grounded in the belief that only God could strengthen and enable him to serve as he has served.

His life stands as a powerful example of devotion, perseverance, humility, and unwavering faith in God.

FAITH, LEADERSHIP, AND PURPOSE GUIDE THE LIFE OF MINISTER BRILL STONE, JR.

Rooted in faith, discipline, and service, Brill Stone Jr. continues to make an impact both in ministry and in his professional career. A devoted servant of God, Minister Stone is known for his passion for spreading the true Word of God and inspiring others through faith, wisdom, and enthusiasm.

Born in Waco on July 15, 1991, to Rev. Brill R. Stone, Sr. and Vicki L. Stone, Minister Stone developed strong spiritual and family foundations early in life. He attended schools within the Waco Independent School District during his elementary years before graduating from Midway High School in 2009. During high school, he distinguished himself academically while also participating in track and field and excelling in powerlifting.

Following graduation, Minister Stone attended McLennan Community College before transferring to Tarleton State University. In 2014, he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting, a milestone that would help prepare him for a successful professional career.

In 2021, Minister Stone



MINISTER BRILL STONE, JR.

began working for Polygard Products in Ennis. Through dedication and leadership, he advanced within the company and now serves as Chief Financial Officer.

While thriving professionally, Minister Stone never lost sight of his spiritual purpose. In 2018, he discerned and answered his calling into the Gospel ministry. Today, he serves as a passionate licensed minister at Life Vision Church in Arlington under the leadership of Lead Pastor Overseer Joel Bogar and Executive Pastor Dr. Laurance Bogar.

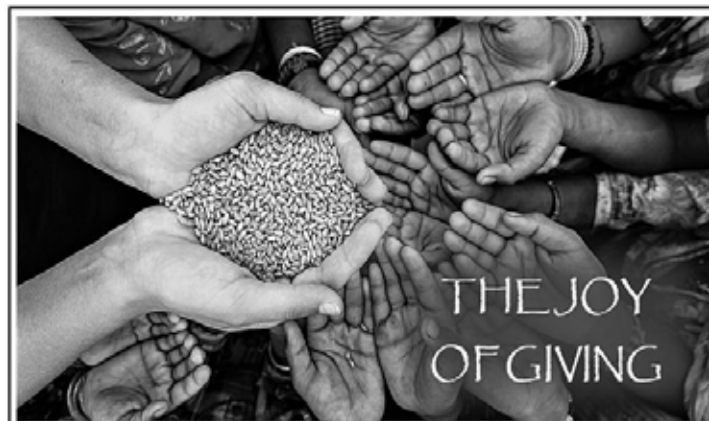
Known for his commitment to studying scripture

and rightly dividing the Word of God, Minister Stone has developed a special passion for mentoring and guiding young people. His favorite scripture, Philippians 4:12, reflects his faith, humility, and perseverance through every season of life.

At Life Vision Church, he faithfully serves on the security, media, prayer, and clergy teams. He also leads the teen ministry under the direction of the Executive Pastor, helping encourage and shape young people into what God has called them to become.

Beyond ministry and career success, Minister Stone is devoted to his family. He is the loving father of two daughters, Jaubrey and Tahlia, who remain one of his greatest joys. In his spare time, he enjoys watching sports, especially football and basketball, and spending meaningful time with family and friends.

Through his unwavering faith, servant leadership, and dedication to both ministry and community, Minister Brill Stone, Jr. continues to inspire others to pursue purpose, excellence, and a closer walk with God.



"We must be like the fountain or spring that is continually emptying itself...giving out for the good of our fellows undeterred by fear of poverty and reliant on the unfailing bounty of the Source of all wealth and all good—this is the secret of right living."

—Shoghi Effendi

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LIKE FATHER, LIKE SONS: A FAMILY BUILT ON FAITH AND STRENGTH

—MICHAEL ALEXANDER—

Michael Alexander, at 15, is stepping into his junior year with quiet determination and a heart full of talent. Michael is already building a strong foundation in his faith. At a young age, he's not only learning the Word of God, but he's deeply committed to applying it in his life. With a sincere heart, he seeks to live with purpose, striving to walk in integrity and holiness. Michael's dedication to growing spiritually, even as he prepares for life's next steps, is a testament to his character and the bright path he's walking.

Though soft-spoken like his



MICHAEL ALEXANDER

father, Michael comes alive when inspired. A gifted artist, musician, and singer, he balances creativity with a keen interest in hands-on work, from welding to engineering. As he prepares for his driver's license, he already relishes picking up his dad after work, a gesture that mirrors his deep appreciation for his father's guidance. Michael dreams big, knowing his dad's support is ever-present.

As he navigates high school and beyond, his quiet confidence and love for creation promise a future filled with purpose. We're excited for what's to come!

—JEREMIAH ALEXANDER—

Jeremiah Alexander, freshly 12 this May, is the energetic heartbeat of the family. As the youngest, he brings vibrancy to every moment—whether he's mastering the saxophone, piano, drums, or singing. His knack for picking up skills quickly is impressive—he learns, and boom, he's performing.

While enjoying typical fun—video games and time with friends—Jeremiah also treasures his growing faith and looks up to his dad, who nurtures his relationship with God. Heading into seventh grade, Jeremiah is eager to take the football field for the first time while continuing his band journey.



JEREMIAH ALEXANDER

As he blossoms, his dad's presence remains a cornerstone, shaping Jeremiah into a young man of faith, talent, and boundless potential.

ANTHONY "TONY" TOLBERT SR.: A LIFE OF SERVICE AND DETERMINATION

Anthony "Tony" Tolbert Sr. has spent much of his life serving others, first through military service and later through his dedication to family, work, and education. A retired First Class Petty Officer in the United States Navy, Tony proudly served his country for 20 years as an Aviation Electrician.

Tony entered the Navy through the Delayed Entry Program before graduating from high school in 1983. After completing specialized electrical training, he was assigned to Miramar Naval Air Station in San Diego, California, where he spent much of his military career. During his years of service, he participated in numerous Western Pacific deployments and special assignments with various aircraft squadrons, many lasting six months or longer.

Among the highlights of his military career were his contributions during Desert Shield in 1991 and Operation Enduring Freedom following the September 11, 2001 attacks. Through each assignment, Tony remained committed to both his country and his family.

In November 1994, Tony and his wife welcomed their first child, Anthony Tolbert Jr. Following his retirement from the Navy in 2003, he transitioned into civilian employment with defense contractors in the San Diego area.

A workplace injury in 2004 created an unexpected chal-



ANTHONY TOLBERT "A.J.", JR. AND ANTHONY "TONY" TOLBERT, SR.,

lenge, leaving him on long-term disability and temporarily out of work. Determined to provide for his family, Tony continued seeking opportunities and accepted a position with L-3 in Waco, Texas. In November 2005, he and his family relocated to Central Texas, where he continues to work nearly two decades later.

While maintaining a full-time career, Tony pursued higher education through Ashford University. He earned an Associate Degree in Busi-

ness in 2012 and a Bachelor of Arts in Operational Management in 2014, graduating Magna Cum Laude.

When he is not working, Tony enjoys reading, traveling, watching movies, and playing video games. His life reflects perseverance, lifelong learning, and a strong commitment to family. Whether serving his nation, supporting his loved ones, or pursuing personal growth, Anthony "Tony" Tolbert Sr. continues to exemplify dedication and determination.

ANTHONY "A.J." TOLBERT: A CREATIVE SPIRIT

Anthony Tolbert Jr., affectionately known as A.J., is a talented and energetic young man whose creativity, humor, and passion for music have made him a joy to family and friends. The oldest of two siblings, A.J. graduated from China Spring High School in 2013 and later attended Texas State Technical College, where he studied digital design and video game creation.

A.J.'s love for video games began early in life and mirrors that of his father, Anthony Crawford Sr. As a baby, A.J. was known as a night owl. To allow his wife to get some much-needed rest, Anthony Sr. would take his son upstairs, rock him back to sleep, and spend the quiet hours playing video games. Those special moments became treasured memories and laid the foundation for a shared father-son interest that continues today.

Music is another passion that A.J. inherited from his family. Although many people are surprised by his appreciation for classic songs, A.J. proudly explains that his parents introduced him to "the oldies but goodies" at a young age. Singing is a constant part of his daily life, and those who know him well can often hear him breaking into song. His favorite art-

ists include Michael Jackson and Kendrick Lamar, two performers whose creativity and talent he greatly admires.

In addition to gaming and music, A.J. enjoys drawing and creating videos featuring Sonic the Hedgehog, combining his artistic abilities with his love of animation and storytelling. He also possesses a gift that cannot be taught—the ability to make others smile. Whether through a joke, a funny observation, or his infectious personality, A.J. has a knack for lifting the spirits of those around him.

One of his father's favorite memories took place during a New Year's dinner cruise attended by the entire family. To the surprise of everyone on-board, A.J. confidently stepped onto the dance floor and captivated the crowd with dance moves that perfectly mimicked Michael Jackson's signature style. Guests watched in amazement as he performed with confidence and flair, shattering any assumptions that he was shy. As his family knows well, there is nothing shy about A.J.

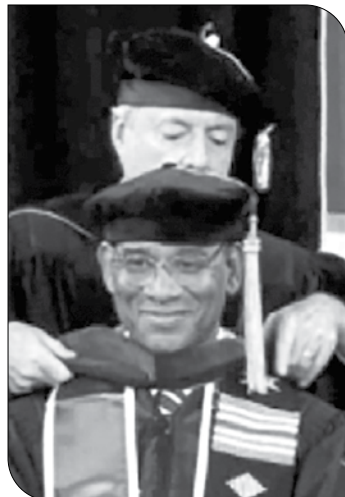
Today, A.J. continues to embrace life with creativity, humor, and a deep appreciation for family, music, and self-expression—qualities that make him truly unforgettable.

PASTOR, SCHOLAR, AND HISTORIAN: DR. NIKA DAVIS EARNS PH.D. IN HISTORY

On May 3, 2026, Dr. Nika Davis, pastor of Second Missionary Baptist Church, achieved a major milestone by earning his Ph.D. in History. His area of specialty focuses on the antebellum period before the Civil War, and his dissertation highlighted the lives of enslaved people owned by U.S. presidents.

The journey to the doctorate was not easy. Completing the degree required nine years of study, dedication, sacrifice, and perseverance. While balancing the responsibilities of pastoral ministry and teaching, he remained committed to fulfilling the goal God placed in his heart.

This accomplishment carries a powerful message for both older and younger generations. Older adults can look at his journey as proof that it is never too late to pursue a dream. Young people are encouraged to take education seriously, even during seasons when fun and social activities seem more important. Education, he believes, is a gift that produces lifelong benefits.



DR. NIKA DAVIS

One lesson that inspired his academic focus was learning how strongly education connects to economic prosperity and personal freedom. Without knowledge and useful skills, people can become trapped in limited opportunities and dead-end situations. Continuing to learn and develop one's gifts opens doors for growth, purpose, and service to others.

His background as a his-

torian also shaped his perspective on perseverance and self-help. Looking at the years following the Civil War, he notes that many African Americans survived and built successful communities with little support outside of their faith in God and their willingness to work. Churches, schools, farms, and businesses were created through vision, determination, and the development of practical skills.

That same spirit, he believes, is still needed today. People cannot afford to depend entirely upon others to provide for them. Instead, they must discover, strengthen, and use the talents God has given them.

This achievement is more than a personal victory. It serves as an inspiration to anyone pursuing a dream that may seem difficult or delayed. His story reminds others to keep learning, keep working, and keep trusting God through the process.

As this milestone is celebrated, all glory and praise are given to God.

BE NOT AFRAID

BY PASTOR MATTHEW REED

The word from God to the church is "Be not afraid." God gave the judges instruction in Deuteronomy 1:17: "Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God's: and the cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me, and I will hear it." These are the very same instructions for the church today. Be not afraid. It does not matter if your enemies appear to have the upper hand; be not afraid.

Deuteronomy 1:28: "Whither shall we go up? our brethren have discouraged our heart, saying, The people is greater and taller than we; the cities are great and walled up to heaven; and moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakims there."

29 Then I said unto you, "Dread not, neither be afraid of them."

30 "The LORD your God which goeth before you, he shall fight for you, according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes."

The very same God that delivered (saved) His people then will save His people today! Be Not Afraid. Remember:

Deuteronomy 7:17: "If thou shalt say in thine heart, These nations are more than I; how



PASTOR MATTHEW REED

can I dispossess them?

18 "Thou shalt not be afraid of them: but shalt well remember what the LORD thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all Egypt."

When fear and doubt grip your heart, remember: Be Not Afraid!

And last, remember when Jesus commanded His disciples to go to the other side, they encountered a storm. He did not leave them nor forsake them. He came to them, saying, "It is I, be not afraid."

Matthew 14:27: "But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid."

The word for the church today is Be not Afraid!



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NIKA DAVIS, JR.: FROM LINEBACKER TO LEAD ENGINEER

Nika Davis is a software engineer and former collegiate athlete with a diverse background in leadership, technology, and teamwork. He graduated in the top 10% of his class from Waco High School before attending United States Military Academy West Point, where he spent two years playing linebacker and developing the discipline and leadership skills that continue to shape his professional career.

After transferring to University of Texas at Arlington, Nika earned his degree in Software Engineering and transitioned his focus toward the technology industry. He has since built a successful career at O'Neil Digital Solutions, where he has worked for six years and currently serves as a Lead Software Engineer.

Throughout his career, Nika



NIKA DAVIS, JR.

has led software development initiatives, contributed to complex engineering solutions, and helped drive innovation through

strong technical expertise and collaborative leadership. His unique combination of athletic discipline, military academy experience, and engineering knowledge allows him to bring a results-driven mindset to every challenge he takes on.

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WANDA B. GUNTER

Author, Artist & Contributing writer for *The Anchor News*

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BISHOP LONNIE D. GARRETT CONTINUES TO INSPIRE GENERATIONS

For more than five decades, Bishop Lonnie D. Garrett has faithfully served as a pastor, leader, gospel singer, mentor, and spiritual pillar in Central Texas. At 78 years old, his life stands as a powerful testimony of dedication, perseverance, and unwavering faith.

Born as the seventh child of the late Major and Gertha Garrett in the Rocky Hill community near Marlin, Texas, Bishop Garrett's journey reflects both courage and determination. He attended Booker T. Washington Schools before making history as the first integrated Black graduate of Marlin High School in 1967, paving the way for future generations.

Even in his childhood years, Bishop Garrett was known for being adventurous, fearless, and driven to accomplish great things. He dreamed of becoming both a gospel singer and preacher, and over the years, he successfully fulfilled both callings. Alongside his wife and daughter, he helped form the Garrett-Roberts Gospel Trio, a group that has recorded six albums since 1986 and continues ministering through music today.

Bishop Garrett has faithfully served as pastor of Bible Way Church Family Worship Center in Marlin since 1971. His remarkable 54-year tenure makes him one of the longest-



BISHOP LONNIE GARRETT

serving pastors of the same church in Falls County and the Marlin area. Through decades of ministry, he has become widely respected for his steadfast leadership, spiritual wisdom, and commitment to serving the community.

His influence extends beyond the local church. In July 2004, Bishop Garrett was appointed State Bishop of Texas through the All Nations Pentecostal of Apostolic Faith in Jesus Name organization. In March 2014, he was elevated to National Bishop of the same organization, a role that further expanded his ministry impact across the nation.

Education and spiritual growth have also remained important parts of his journey. Bishop Garrett graduated from the Interdenominational

Theological Center (ITC) Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia. He has also earned certificates and awards in pastoral and ministerial studies from Truett Seminary at Baylor University and other institutions.

Family has always been central to Bishop Garrett's life.

He and his wife, Minister Gail Garrett, have shared more than 41 years of marriage. Together they have built a strong family legacy that includes two daughters, Tanunya Adamson and Lana Alexander, one son, Gaylon Garrett, and nine grandchildren.

Today, Bishop Lonnie D. Garrett continues to be a blessing to countless lives through his preaching, music, wisdom, and faithful example. His story is one of endurance, purpose, and a lifelong commitment to serving God and uplifting others.

SON GAYLON GARRETT EARNS DEGREE FROM UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

University of North Texas graduate Gaylon Durrell Garrett is proving that determination, faith, and perseverance can make dreams come true at any stage of life.

Garrett, the son of Bishop Lonnie and Gail Garrett of the Waco-Marlin area, proudly earned his Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences with a concentration in Education from the University of North Texas in Denton, Texas, on May 10, 2026. The graduation date made the accomplishment even more meaningful as it fell on Mother's Day, creating what Garrett described as a special gift for his family.

At 37 years old, Garrett hopes his educational journey will inspire others who



GAYLON DURRELL GARRETT

may feel it is too late to pursue their goals.

"Stay focused on your dreams and they will be achieved," Garrett shared.

"Sooner or later, I was happy to make this happen for my wife, parents, children, as well as myself. Thank you, God!"

Family members say Garrett's accomplishment reflects years of hard work, sacrifice, and commitment to building a brighter future for himself and those he loves. His success also serves as an encouraging reminder that perseverance and faith can open doors to new opportunities regardless of age or obstacles.

As Garrett celebrates this milestone achievement, family and friends are applauding not only the degree itself, but also the inspiring example he has set for his children and community.

CELEBRATE JUNETEENTH IN KILLEEN!

BY W.B. GUNTER

Get Ready, Get Ready, Let's Go! Killeen has Juneteenth activities galore! From June 18-21, this Central Texas city is ready! Juneteenth kickoff begins at 6:00 AM at the E-Center located at 809 N. Gray Street downtown. At 10:00 AM, enjoy the NAACP Jubilee Celebration at Douse Community Center located at 2201 E. Veterans Memorial Blvd. (254) 501-8889, and VFW Post 9191 at 3307 Zephyr Rd. (254) 690-7575. Later that evening, at 6:30 PM the Juneteenth Pageant will crown a new queen at the Killeen Arts and Activity Center, 801 N. 4th Street B. For all of these events, you'll want to ar-



W.B. GUNTER

rive early for prime parking. On the 19th of June, orga-

nizations, sororities, fraternities and local groups will gather to celebrate and unite. The group with the most participants. Kickoff for this event is 6:00 PM at E-Center, 809 N. Gray Street. Get those fans, boots, and buckles because the Rodeo Classic begins at the Killeen Rodeo Grounds, 3201 S. WS Young Dr at 5:00 PM.

You'll want to wake up early for the Juneteenth Unity 5K Run from 7:30 AM-8:30 AM. Registration ends at 7:20 AM, so you may want to register online by logging in to runsignup.com. Get those shoes laced

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THE REALITY OF HOME HEALTHCARE

BY MARGARET IVORY

Correction: In last month's article, I stated that my husband was on hospice care. At that time, our family was considering hospice as one of several options. However, my husband has not been officially enrolled in hospice. I appreciate the opportunity to clarify that information.

Like many families facing a serious illness, we have spent the past several weeks exploring different levels of care. One option we considered was home healthcare. After spending one night at home, however, we realized that the situation was far more challenging than we anticipated, and the experience did not turn out favorably for my husband.

This experience led me to learn more about both the benefits and limitations of home healthcare. Home healthcare allows a patient to receive medical services in the comfort of their own home. Depending on the situation, services may include skilled nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, wound care, medication management, and assistance with daily living activities.

One of the biggest advantages of home healthcare is that patients remain in familiar surroundings. Being at home can provide comfort, reduce stress, and allow family members to spend more time together. Many patients sleep better in their own beds and enjoy being surrounded by loved ones rather than hospital equipment and unfamiliar staff.

Home healthcare can also help reduce the risk of certain facility-acquired infections and may allow patients to maintain a greater sense of independence. For some families, home healthcare provides a balance between medical support and quality of life.

However, home healthcare



MARGARET IVORY

also comes with significant challenges. One common misconception is that home healthcare means someone is available around the clock. In reality, many home health visits are scheduled for very limited periods of time. Family members often become the primary caregivers for the remaining hours of the day and night.

This responsibility can be physically exhausting and emotionally overwhelming. Caregivers may need to assist with bathing, repositioning, feeding, medications, transportation, and monitoring for medical emergencies. In cases involving complex medical conditions, breathing difficulties, feeding tubes, or extensive mobility limitations, the

demands can quickly become overwhelming.

Another challenge is the need for specialized equipment. Hospital beds, oxygen equipment, wheelchairs, suction machines, and other medical supplies may be required. Family members must learn how to operate this equipment safely while also providing ongoing care.

Financial considerations can also play a role. While Medicare and other insurance plans may cover certain home healthcare services, they do not always cover long-term custodial care or around-the-clock assistance.

The truth is that there is no one-size-fits-all answer. Home healthcare can be an excellent solution for some families and patients. For other families, a higher level of care may be necessary to ensure safety and proper medical support.

Every family's situation is unique. The most important thing is to carefully evaluate the patient's needs, ask questions, and choose the option that provides the best care, comfort, and dignity for your loved one.

Sometimes the best decision is not the easiest one—but it is the one made out of love.

Margaret Ivory - Medicare Plans Broker, 254-313-7413.



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YOUR ANNUAL HOME MAINTENANCE BUDGET

BY LINDA MCDONALD

Owning a home means budgeting for more than your mortgage. Maintenance costs can include everything from HVAC service and gutter cleaning to appliance repairs and roof work, which is why setting aside money each year can help you avoid financial surprises. A simple way to think about it:

Set aside a little each month instead of waiting for emergencies. Expect bigger costs for older homes prioritize seasonal upkeep like HVAC, gutters and exterior repairs. Keep a separate emergency cushion for unexpected breakdowns. Choose one feature that encourages lingering, like a hammock, a pair of comfortable chairs or soft string lighting. A single focal point can instantly make the space feel more intentional. From there, build around that anchor with a few low lift additions such as potted plants, lanterns or a small side table. Even modest changes can shift the feel of an outdoor area from purely functional to somewhere you want to spend time. The



LINDA MCDONALD
REALTOR, CRS, GRI, PMN, SRS

goal is to create a space that feels welcoming enough to use every day, even on a limited budget and scope. Small updates can make your patio feel less like left over square footage and more like a favorite room outdoors. Some homeowners use the rule of thumb to save 1% to 2% of their home's value each year, but your real number depends on the age, size and condition of your house. A newer home may need less in the short term, while an older proper-

ty could require more frequent attention. Repair costs can also rise quickly depending on labor, materials and the scope of the work. Planning ahead will not prevent every repair, but it can make homeownership feel much more manageable. A steady maintenance budget gives you more flexibility, helps protect your investment and makes it easier to handle both routine upkeep and the occasional surprise.

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EFFECTIVE ASKING

BY MONA DUNKIN

What is the underlying message you give to recovering addicts. Here are a few thoughts on effective asking.

Ask pertinent questions to get the individual thinking in a new vein. The purpose in asking self-evaluation questions is not for the person to rattle off answers, but to give them something to privately consider and come to a conclusion.

Do not give an answer before the question is asked. Agree there is a problem before exploring an answer to the problem. We must see the vulnerability before setting boundaries.

Focus on self-evaluations such as...

What do you hope to accomplish through this action?

What are you doing to help meet this goal?

What will you do if things do not go as, you assume they will?

What else can you do? What resources do you need?

Establish a benchmark. As you help establish a point of reference, he is better able to gauge his present behavior. The more thought-provoking insights, be they questions or comments, the more effective the individual's self-evaluation becomes.



MONA DUNKIN

Ask for permission to give suggestions and then respect their wishes. Respectfully ask something like, "Have you considered..." or "What would you think about..." Giving specific feedback will reinforce the behaviors being taught. I find most people are open to feedback if it is not forced upon them. If you find resistance, change the subject and move on.

Leave the final decision up to the individual regardless of the consequences. What is your motive when advising another? If they take your advice and the consequences are favorable, rejoice with them and do not take credit for their decision. You may have given the schedule, but

they bought the ticket and got on the bus. If they ignore the principles and life continues in a downward spiral, have compassion for their misery and continue to be an encourager.

Carry the message not the person. Each person is self-determining, even if he chooses destructive behavior or believes differently. The message is, I care, but I will not carry you. I will give you tools, but I cannot use them for you. There are other noted perspectives, but I cannot make you receive them. The message is, there is help but I will not force it on you.

What is the best way to help, telling someone what to do or asking questions that lead to the individual's accountability and growth? As you learn to ask thought-provoking questions, it will lead the individual to self-evaluation and personal accountability.

Effective Asking is about helping the person come to terms with who he is and who he wants to be.

Invite Mona to speak to your group. You will be entertained with her humor, challenged by her gift of uncommon insights and motivated by her thought-provoking poems. 254-749-6594.

FOR THE BROTHERS...

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF A FATHER

BY J.L. CRAWFORD



J.L. CRAWFORD

A father's responsibility reaches far beyond paying bills or putting food on the table. A real father helps shape the heart, character, confidence, and future of a child. Children may not remember every gift they received, but they will remember whether their father was present, supportive, patient, and loving.

A father teaches by example. Sons often learn how to treat women by watching their fathers. Daughters often learn what kind of treatment to expect from men by how their fathers treat them and their mothers. A father's words matter. Encouragement can build strength that lasts for years, while harshness or absence can leave wounds that take a lifetime to heal.

Good fathers understand that children need more than correction. They need conversation, affection, guidance, prayer, and time. Even during busy seasons, children should never feel like an afterthought. A father who listens, attends school events, asks ques-

tions, and stays involved sends a powerful message: "You matter to me."

Stepfathers also deserve recognition. Many stepfathers step into difficult situations and choose to love, guide, protect, and provide for children who are not biologically their own. That takes patience, maturity, sacrifice, and a genuine heart. A man does not have to share DNA to make a lasting impact on a child's life.

Fatherhood is not about perfection. It is about consistency, responsibility, and love. The greatest legacy many men will ever leave is not wealth or possessions, but children who felt valued, protected, and deeply loved.

5.0 out of 5 stars | Inspiring & Encouraging | Kindle Customer

(Reviewed in the United States on August 20, 2019)

"I absolutely love this book! I could not put it down and read it in two days. There is so much good stuff in this book that I am reading it again. It is inspiring, encouraging and will bless you."

5.0 out of 5 stars Five Stars | Amazon Customer

(Reviewed in the United States on May 21, 2018)

"This is an amazing book. It is entertaining, compelling and convicting. A definite must-read for everyone!"

5.0 out of 5 stars | Easy read and applicable to my life

(Reviewed in the United States on March 27, 2019)

"After God, Destiny, and a Glass of Wine, I felt like I could take the author's response to certain circumstances and apply to my own life. Each chapter is a life learning lesson of praising God through hard times, and walking into God's plan for my life. It may appear as an easy read, because I read it in one day my first time reading it. Then I had the opportunity to re-read and breakdown each chapter week by week."

Rey

5.0 out of 5 stars | Excellent Book

(Reviewed in the United States on June 13, 2020)

"This is an amazing book. I found it helpful in navigating my fear of not reaching my full potential. It helped me understand how I can have a positive God-ordained destiny. Excellent work!"



God, Destiny, and a Glass of Wine
Available on Amazon

Dr. Mia Moody-Ramirez

STRONG MEN TAKE CARE OF THEIR HEALTH

BY DR. SHAMONICA TRUNELL

May is Mental Health AJune is Men's Health Month—a time to raise awareness about the health challenges men face and encourage prevention, strength, and long-term wellness. It's also a meaningful time to recognize Father's Day and celebrate the fathers, grandfathers, mentors, and men who care for others every day.

Men often carry responsibilities quietly—showing up for work, family, and those around them. But too often, their own health gets pushed aside. Preventive care is not a sign of weakness—it's one of the strongest decisions a man can make.

This month is about honoring men by encouraging them to move more, check in on their health, and prioritize wellness with intention.

TIPS FOR MEN'S HEALTH & MOBILITY

1. Don't Skip the Check-Up

Many serious health conditions—including high blood pressure, diabetes, and heart disease—can develop with few early symptoms. A yearly wellness visit is one of the best ways to catch issues early and stay ahead of them.

2. Keep Moving to Protect Your Body

Mobility matters. Regular stretching, walking, and strength training support joint health, re-



DR. SHAMONICA TRUNELL

duce stiffness, and improve balance. Men who stay active tend to have better heart health, stronger muscles, and more consistent energy.

3. Pay Attention to Heart Health

Heart disease continues to affect men at high rates. Make simple choices like walking more, reducing excess sodium, drinking water, and getting quality sleep. Your heart works hard every day—support it well.

4. Fuel with Strength in Mind

Healthy eating supports stamina, muscle recovery, and long-term wellness. Build meals around lean protein, vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and healthy fats. Fuel matters more than we often realize.

5. Speak Up About Stress & Mental Health

Men often feel pressure to “handle it” alone, but emotional wellness matters too. Talking with a trusted friend, family member, counselor, or healthcare provider can be a powerful step toward better health.

A FATHER'S DAY REMINDER

Father's Day is a beautiful opportunity to celebrate the men who guide, protect, and support us. One of the most meaningful gifts we can give is encouragement—encouragement to rest when needed, make the appoint-

ment, go for the walk, and prioritize wellness.

To every father, grandfather, mentor, and father figure: thank you for the strength you give. May this month also be a reminder to care for your own health, too.

Your Takeaway

Good health is built through consistency, not perfection. A yearly check-up, regular movement, healthy meals, and honest conversations all create a stronger foundation.

This June, let's remind the men in our lives—and ourselves—that caring for your health is one of the

most important investments you can make.

MONTHLY SELF-CARE CHALLENGE

“Move with Purpose”

Take a 15-minute walk every day this month—alone, with family, or with someone you love. Use that time to move your body, clear your mind, and reconnect with your health.

Screening Reminder: Encourage the men in your life to schedule a wellness exam and check blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar—especially if appointments have been delayed.

JUNETEENTH: REMEMBERING THE STRUGGLE AND RESPECTING THE PROGRESS

BY J.L. CRAWFORD

Juneteenth is more than a celebration. It is a reminder of endurance, faith, sacrifice, and progress. On June 19, 1865, more than two years after the Emancipation Proclamation had been signed, enslaved African Americans in Galveston, Texas finally learned they were free. That moment became a powerful symbol of delayed justice, but also of hope.

Many of the freedoms and opportunities African Americans experience today were

built on the backs of people who survived unimaginable hardship. They worked fields without wages, endured discrimination, fought for voting rights, built churches, created businesses, educated their children, and still found ways to worship, sing, pray, and dream. Their resilience helped open doors for future generations.

Because of those sacrifices, today we see Black doctors, educators, pastors, business owners, judges, elected officials, entrepreneurs, and community leaders making a differ-



J.L. CRAWFORD

ence across America. Progress did not happen overnight. It came through courage, unity, determination, and faith in God during difficult seasons.


Juneteenth should also remind fathers, grandfathers, and mentors of the importance of leadership in the family and community. Strong families helped many African Americans survive some of the hardest periods in history. Men who worked hard, protected their households, valued education, and kept faith alive helped shape generations that continued to move forward despite obstacles.

While challenges still exist, Juneteenth reminds us not only to reflect on the past, but also to appreciate how far we have come. We honor our ancestors best by continuing to build, lead, educate, support one another, and leave something meaningful for the next generation.

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ANCHOR NEWS SEEKING NON-PROFITS

The Anchor News July issue is our first time highlight of non-profits. Nonprofit Spotlight will highlight organizations making a difference in our community. If you want your non-profit to be included, please submit responses to the below questions and requested photos by June 25. Responses may be edited for space and style.

NONPROFIT SPOTLIGHT QUESTIONNAIRE:

Please answer in 2-3 sentences per question. Responses may be edited for length and clarity. Please number your responses.

1. What is the name of your nonprofit organization?
2. What inspired the founding of the organization, and when was it established?
3. What is your mission, and who do you serve?
4. What are the primary programs or services your organization provides?
5. What is one success story or accomplishment that demonstrates your impact on the community?
6. What are the greatest challenges

facing your organization today?

7. How can individuals, businesses, churches, or community members support your mission? For example, donations, volunteers, sponsorships, in-kind gifts, other.
8. What are your goals or vision for the next three to five years?
9. What message would you like readers of The Anchor News to know about your organization?
10. Please provide:
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NOTES

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GOD WANTS YOU WHOLE – SPIRIT, SOUL, AND BODY

**BY APOSTLE
FANNY MINNITT**

Beloved, I have a question for you. Do you believe that God, the Almighty Creator of all things, wants you whole? Do you believe that His ultimate plan for you is wholeness? God cares about the whole person. Why is it so difficult for us to align our body with our soul, our soul with our spirit, and our spirit with our Father in Heaven?

A holy thing lives within you: the Holy Spirit. Here is the proof:

1 Corinthians 6:19 (KJV) says, “What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?”

Meditate on this verse. If believers truly embraced this truth, I believe overeating, refusing to exercise, neglecting water intake, and ignoring rest would begin to flee. Too often, we only become mindful after a doctor gives a diagnosis. Yet

our bodies are earthly temples for the Holy Spirit every single day.

I do not know about you, but I have decided that I want my temple to be pleasing to the Holy Spirit. It can be difficult at times because, like many others, I have developed some unhealthy habits.

Our bodies were purchased with a price, as 1 Corinthians 6:20 reminds us: “For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” Are you treating God’s temple properly? Remember,



APOSTLE FANNY MINNITT

your body and spirit belong to Him.

3 John 1:2 speaks of wholeness in spirit, soul, and body: “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.”

I spent much of this message discussing the body because it plays a major role in wholeness. Physical health can affect emotional stability, mental clarity, and spiritual discipline. If the mind is not renewed in the things of Christ, it can disconnect us from God. A person may be ex-

tremely successful outwardly while still struggling emotionally, mentally, or physically.

God wants our souls to prosper as well. He desires for us to walk in good health spiritually, emotionally, mentally, and physically. Develop a deeper relationship with God. Be mindful of your thoughts, emotions, and mental well-being. Take care of your physical body. Jesus paid a price for you.

Align your body with your soul, your soul with your spirit, and your spirit with God.

God wants you whole.

Church DIRECTORY

Tree of Life NDC
1612 Austin Avenue, Suite A | Waco, Texas 76701
Pastor/Founder – RT Allen | Co Pastor – Sandra Allen

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CELEBRATE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

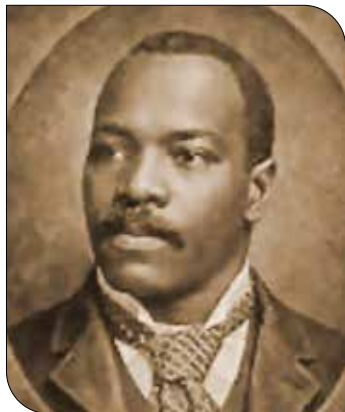
and tied to start your morning at 205 E. Avenue D. The Central Texas 5K is part of the Cen-Tex Race Series, which brings runners together from all over the region. Stay for the presentation of medals.

Following the 5K run, head to 101 N. College Street to City Hall and line up for the parade which will begin at 10:00 AM. Following the Juneteenth parade, Innovation Black Chamber of Commerce will host the Juneteenth Festival from 11:00 AM – 3:00 PM at 4th Street and E. Avenue D. and 330 N. Gray St. The theme of this year’s Juneteenth, is “Rooted In Tradition.”

Sunday, June 21, 2026, bring the family to the “We The Culture Celebration” Visit the Black History Museum, a fashion show, and Father’s Day acknowledgements from 3:00PM –8:00 PM at 809 N. Gray Street, downtown Killeen. To learn more about Juneteenth events in Killeen, visit, <https://killeen-texas.gov> and <https://event-brite.com>

If you need to register to vote, be prepared to take care of it at one or more of the events. Come celebrate Juneteenth 2026 in Killeen and enjoy a weekend filled with culture, history, unity, and community pride.

BLACK AMERICANS WHO CHANGED HISTORY BUT ARE RARELY MENTIONED



GRANVILLE T. WOODS

When people discuss Black history, names like Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, and Harriet Tubman often come to mind. Yet many lesser-known African Americans made re-



DR. PATRICIA BATH

markable contributions that continue to impact our lives today.

Granville T. Woods was an inventor who held more than 50 patents. His improvements



LEWIS LATIMER

to railway communication systems made train travel safer and more efficient. His innovations helped

Dr. Patricia Bath became the first Black female physician to receive a medical patent. She invented the Laserphaco Probe, a device that improved cataract surgery and restored sight to countless

Lewis Latimer played a critical role in developing the electric light bulb. His im-



MARY ELLEN PLEASANT

provements made electric lighting more affordable and practical for homes and businesses.

Mary Ellen Pleasant used her wealth to support the abolitionist movement and helped finance legal challenges against racial discrimination during the 1800s.

Charles Drew revolutionized blood banking by developing methods for storing and transporting blood plasma.



CHARLES DREW

His work saved thousands of lives during World War II and laid the foundation for modern blood banks.

These men and women may not appear in every history textbook, but their contributions helped shape medicine, transportation, technology, and civil rights. Their stories remind us that history is filled with heroes whose legacies deserve to be remembered and celebrated.

Q&A

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

ditions are safer. Waiting is not quitting. Turning around is not failure. Sometimes wisdom means recognizing that the timing is not right.

Hog Creek reminds me that life requires both courage and discernment. There are moments when we must move forward despite uncertainty, and there are moments when we must be patient and trust that another opportunity will come.

The creek also teaches a simple but powerful lesson: the water is not the destina-

tion. It is only something we pass through on the way to where we are going. If we keep our eyes on the other side, we can trust that difficult seasons are temporary.

As I think about Hog Creek, I am reminded that God does not always remove the waters before us. Sometimes He helps us drive through them. Other times, He tells us to wait until the waters recede. Either way, He is guiding us safely toward the other side.

—Coach Crawford

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ANCHOR NEWS SEEKING NON-PROFITS

The Anchor News July issue is our first time highlight of non-profits. Nonprofit Spotlight will highlight organizations making a difference in our community. If you want your non-profit to be included, please submit responses to the below questions and requested photos by June 25. Responses may be edited for space and style.

NONPROFIT SPOTLIGHT QUESTIONNAIRE:

Please answer in 2-3 sentences per question. Responses may be edited for length and clarity. Please number your responses.

- 1 What is the name of your nonprofit organization?
- 2 What inspired the founding of the organization, and when was it established?
3. What is your mission, and who do you serve?
4. What are the primary programs or services your organization provides?
5. What is one success story or accomplishment that demonstrates your impact on the community?
6. What are the greatest challenges

facing your organization today?

7. How can individuals, businesses, churches, or community members support your mission? For example, donations, volunteers, sponsorships, in-kind gifts, other.

8. What are your goals or vision for the next three to five years?

9. What message would you like readers of The Anchor News to know about your organization?

10. Please provide:
- CEO/Executive Director Name
 - Website
 - Social Media Links
 - Contact Information
 - High-Resolution Logo
 - One Photo of Programs, Staff, or Clients Served

THEANCHORNEWS@AOL.COM