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THE Anchor NEWS

FREE! | JULY 2025 VOLUME 22, NUMBER 12

PREMIER HIGH SCHOOL WACO: A SECOND CHANCE THAT WORKS

BY LINDA CRAWFORD

For students who need to catch up on credits or take control of their academic future, Premier High School in Waco offers a unique and effective path forward. For nearly two decades, the school has been led by no-nonsense Campus Director Lisa Linton, whose dedication to structure, safety, and student success has made Premier High School Waco a trusted name in credit recovery education.

At Premier, students complete ten knowledge units per subject to earn full credit. Each unit includes clear sections, quizzes, a practice test, and a final test. This mastery-based model allows students to work at their own pace, giving them the flexibility to advance quickly or focus on areas that require more support. Students are expected to take



LISA LINTON

at least three tests per week, and some high achievers have taken up to 5 tests weekly—demonstrating the power of self-motivation within a structured environment.

Premier's schedule runs from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM, with

a 30-minute lunch break. Mini-lessons and daily motivation sessions help students stay focused, while one-on-one guidance from teachers supports students academic and personal growth. The school culture is built on mutual respect, and behavior problems are not tolerated. This commitment to discipline and order creates a peaceful, distraction-free atmosphere where students can concentrate and thrive.

Safety is a top priority. Parents and guardians take comfort in knowing that Premier High School is a place where students are respected, protected, and held to high standards. This environment allows students to regain their confidence and find joy in learning again.

Under Director Linton's

SEE **LINTON** PG. 12

PERKINS: A LEGACY OF MUSIC, MATH, AND MEANINGFUL SERVICE

Born in Elm Mott, Texas, in 1946, Charles Perkins graduated from George Washington Carver High School in Waco in 1965. Three years later, he married Rosemary Clayton of Gholson. He earned a B.A. in Mathematics from the University of Texas at Austin in 1971 and, in 1993, received his National Intelligence Officer certification from the Air War College at Maxwell AFB, Montgomery, Alabama. At the time, he was serving as a senior analyst supporting the CIA, DIA, and NSA.

Perkins retired after 33 years of federal service. While living in Virginia, he was ordained a deacon at First Mount Zion Baptist Church in Dumfries on April 1, 1979. There, he founded and led several ministries: the Zone Fellowship Ministry, the Baptist Training Union (17 years), the Christian Co-Ed Volleyball League (25 years), and the Free Spirit Gospel Band (27 years). His musical journey began in high school with the Blue Panthers and continued as the first African American member of UT's "Show Band of the Southwest."

For 30 summers, Perkins volunteered a week of vacation to teach youth at First Mount Zion's Vacation Bible School. After retiring from federal service in 2004, he taught math, science, and band at Calvary Christian School in Dumfries. In 2007, he and Rosemary returned to Gholson, where he earned Texas teaching certificates in elementary and high school math through McLennan Community College.

He taught at Connally



CHARLES L. PERKINS, SR.

and La Vega High Schools before joining Aquilla ISD in 2008 as both a math teacher and the district's first band director. In 2013, he began splitting his time between Aquilla and a music-and-math business he co-founded in Woodway. He retired from both in 2018 but continued tutoring part-time at Brook Avenue Elementary until the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

In retirement, Perkins turned to civic service. In 2021, he became the first African American Secretary-Treasurer of the McLennan County Historical Commission. His work helped secure historical markers for two 150-year-old Gholson institutions and the Alpha Theater, as well as a Recorded Texas Historical Landmark in Waco for Just As I Am Ministries, Inc.

Now in his 46th year as a Baptist deacon, Perkins serves as a deacon and trustee at Pleasant Grove Missionary Baptist Church in Gholson. He is currently working on his second book.

NEIGHBORWORKS NAMES PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

NeighborWorks Waco is proud to announce Delisa Burnell-Smith as its new President and Chief Executive Officer. A devoted member of the organization since 1994, Delisa has brought over three decades of community development experience and a deep legacy of service to this leadership role.

Throughout her tenure at NeighborWorks Waco, Delisa has counseled thousands of families on their journey to homeownership. She holds a residential mortgage lending license and is an approved HUD Certified Counselor.

Delisa's leadership and commitment to the community extend far beyond the walls of NeighborWorks Waco. She



DELISA BURNELL-SMITH

has served on the boards of numerous nonprofit and civic organizations, including the Family Abuse Center, Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce,

Centex African American Chamber of Commerce, City of Waco Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission, City of Waco Building and Standards Commission, and the Cameron Park Zoological and Botanical Society, Inc. She currently serves on the Community Race Relations Coalition, the Waco Housing Authority Family Self-Sufficiency Advisory Board, Cadence Bank Community Advisory Council and Heart of Texas Workforce Development Board, Inc. Delisa is also a proud member of Delta Upsilon Zeta of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.

Delisa is a native of Waco

SEE **SMITH** PG. 15

**J.L. & LINDA CRAWFORD**

Co-owner of *The Anchor News*, J.L. Crawford is the director of operations for the paper. He has retired from teaching at McLennan Community College. J.L. is a Bible teacher, and a LegalShield Senior Manager. Linda Crawford is co-owner and editor of *The Anchor News*. She is a retired professor at McLennan Community College, a Bible teacher and a conference, workshop and motivational speaker. Linda also owns Enjoy the Journey Life Coaching Service.

BY W.B. GUNTER

As cookout grills fill the warm air with fragrance and splashes of water cool down the humid temperatures, music echoes from cars, yards, festivals, and private gatherings. Mixed with the beat are stomps, pops, cheers, and claps—the unique and enthusiastic rhythm of line dancing. This joyful sound travels across the world, as nearly every culture has its own timeless version of synchronized choreography.

Although line dances have existed for centuries, the genre of Southern Soul Trail Ride music has recently gained national popularity, along with the dances that complement its distinctive sound. While the music may draw influence from country, folk, and blues, the lyrics focus on joy and connection rather than despair. With words that guide listeners through specific steps and movements, Southern Soul invites people to get up and dance. It's a genre that reflects everyday life and social interaction in a real and relatable way. As the music's popularity has grown, so has

**WANDA B. GUNTER**

the community of dancers. One need only ask, "Where them fans at?" and the boots will be on the ground. Southern Soul is more than music; it's a whole vibe.

Beyond fun and entertainment, Southern Soul's infectious rhythm is often paired with a swinging motion or line dance routines. This music feels like comfort food for the ears; it naturally makes you want to move. One of the many benefits of line dancing is that it can be done solo. It improves memory recall, reduces stress, and provides a fun cardiovascular workout. When dance steps are called

out in the lyrics, both auditory and cognitive responses are activated. The steps serve as visual and verbal cues, and with repetition, the body builds muscle memory. Like most forms of art, dancing engages the whole body and invites participation through music, movement, emotion, and community.

Line dancing also serves as an effective and enjoyable icebreaker. In some cities like Durham, North Carolina, it's more than a pastime; it's a way of life, com-

SEE **GUNTER**, PG. 6*From the Editor...*

GET PUBLISHED IN OUR AUGUST ISSUE

August is our traditional anniversary and education issue. Celebrating 23 years in the community, we spotlight students, educators, administrators, staff, educational events, institutions, etc. The deadline to submit a 250-300 word article on a person of accomplishment or news worthy educational event,

institution, organization, etc. is July 31st. So come on! Send us your clear, JPEG headshot and a typed article (Word document attached or written within the body of an email) to theanchornews@aol.com. We will do our best to include every profile that we receive, and who knows? Your submission might be one of our cover stories.

LIFE COACHING WITH LINDA – Q&A

BY LINDA CRAWFORD

QUESTION: I've always been the one everyone leans on—family, friends, coworkers. Lately, I feel exhausted, taken for granted, and even a little resentful. But I feel guilty saying no or setting boundaries. What should I do?

ANSWER: That feeling of being everything for everyone can be heavy. If you're always the one others depend on, it's easy to lose yourself in the process. And yet, saying no often comes with guilt, especially when your heart is wired to help.

**LINDA CRAWFORD**

But even the most giving heart needs rest. In fact, Jesus himself often stepped away from the crowds to pray and recharge. One verse that has guided me in moments like these is this: "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it" (Proverbs 4:23). That means your well-being matters. You can't pour from an empty cup, no matter how willing your spirit may be.

Even if faith isn't your lens, the principle is the same:

SEE **LIFE**, PG. 6

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMUNITY

**SUBMITTED BY BETTY
DURHAM-BIBLE, MEXIA,
TEXAS**

Good morning,
I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. and Mrs. Crawford

at the Links 50th Anniversary celebration in Waco this past Saturday. I was truly impressed by their warmth and dedication. I shared with them how much I enjoy *The Anchor News* and how I regularly pass

it along to others in my community.

In fact, I drive 50 miles just to pick up a copy, so I can

SEE **MESSAGE**, PG. 11

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PURPOSE

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

POLICY

Anchored on the principles of scripture, *Anchor News* will at no time publish information that is potentially libelous material or intentionally malicious, derogatory or irrelevant.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Signed opinion articles do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editorial staff. Unsigned editorials

also reflect the opinions of the editor.

LETTERS & ARTICLES POLICY

The comments and opinions of our readers are welcomed. Letters and articles should be e-mailed. Letters should be no longer than 200 words and must include a name and phone number. Article submissions should be no longer than 450 words and should include an original head shot (in jpeg

format) along with your name, address and phone number. We reserve the right to edit for grammar, space, potentially libelous material and copyright infringement. We also reserve the right to refuse derogatory, irrelevant and malicious submissions.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions are \$49 a year (12 issues) and can be paid by check or money order. Send all correspondences to *The Anchor News*, P.O. box 24014, Waco, Texas 76702, or email to theanchornews@aol.com.

ADVERTISING RATES

To request advertising rates, contact the office at (254) 715-8943 or visit theanchornews.org.

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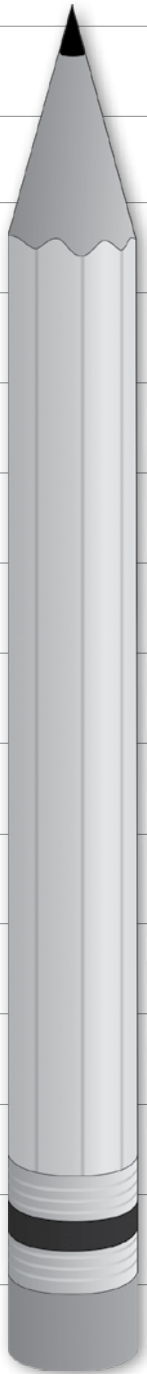
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BY J.L. CRAWFORD,
LEGALSHIELD,
SENIOR MANAGER

Retirement can be financially challenging, especially with the rising costs of housing, healthcare, and everyday essentials. Many older Americans who have worked hard all their lives are unaware they may qualify for public and private benefit programs that can help pay for food, medications, utilities, and other vital needs.

According to the National Council on Aging (NCOA), nearly \$30 billion in benefits goes unclaimed each year—simply because people don't know these programs exist or how to apply.

These are not scams or loans. They are legitimate programs designed to support older adults, and the NCOA's BenefitsCheckUp® website is a free, confidential resource that makes it easy to find them. By entering a ZIP code, users can safely explore available programs for help with:

- Health care (including



J.L. CRAWFORD

Medicare Savings Programs and prescription assistance)

- Food and nutrition
- Utility costs
- Housing, transportation, and property tax relief
- Veterans' benefits and caregiver support

For seniors living on fixed incomes, gaining an extra \$200-\$300 a month can significantly improve their standard of living.

NCOA also promotes Boost Your Budget® Week

each April to raise awareness, but BenefitsCheckUp.org is available year-round. You can also find local partners to help with applications by visiting ncoa.org/map

Why Legal Protection Matters, Too

While programs like BenefitsCheckUp can help stretch your income, seniors often face legal challenges as well—such as housing disputes, estate planning, consumer scams, and healthcare decisions. That's where a LegalShield membership can make all the difference.

LegalShield provides affordable, ongoing access to licensed attorneys who can review documents, answer legal questions, and help protect your rights—without high hourly fees. Legal support is just as vital as financial aid when it comes to aging with dignity and peace of mind.

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SERVICE AS AN ACT OF WORSHIP

BY MICHAEL JONES

Several years ago, long before I became a member of the Bahá'í Faith, I volunteered at a local church to help recent Latino immigrants learn basic English. My elementary school teacher wife helped me to prepare lesson plans, visual aids and other materials. I found that I enjoyed teaching, but moreover, how fulfilling it was to be thought of as a friend and mentor to these gentle, eager, shy, whip smart, fun-loving, courageous folks.

Among the many things that drew me to the Faith is its emphasis on service. One of our Faith's founders, Bahá'u'lláh, asserted that service to others constitutes the "paramount motive of all existence," and that service to all humanity is service to God. For Bahá'ís, loving God means loving His creation – and one expression of that love is service. To help others – to give selflessly, freely and generously of your time, your resources, your energy and your heart – this, the Baha'i teachings say, is the path to becoming a truly spiritual being.

Service to others builds community, closeness and interdependence, friendship and



MICHAEL JONES

joy, kindness and concern, love and unity. In the Bahá'í teachings, no other action receives so much emphasis and importance. Bahá'u'lláh's son, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, even elevates service to others to the rank of worship: "...to serve mankind and to minister to the needs of the people, is prayer. The physician ministering to the sick, gently, tenderly, free from prejudice and believing in the solidarity of the human race, he is praising God."

All our lives are busy, loaded with responsibilities and commitments, and often it's a challenge to make ends meet or set aside and enjoy down


time. But if we wish to get closer to God, to do His will, then some sort of service to further the welfare and happiness of others, to work for justice and mercy and lovingkindness for all mankind, should be an integral part of our lives.

'Abdu'l-Bahá also wrote: "This is not servitude but sovereignty, and this is not service but chieftainship and greatness! This is the garment of everlasting glory with which thou hast clothed thyself, and this is the rose of eternal exaltation with which thou hast adorned thy head. It is said in the New Testament: 'Who-soever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.' In short, thou shouldst thank God a hundred-thousand times for having been confirmed and strengthened in obtaining such a great gift! Know thou the value thereof and consider that its price is highly appraised."

**ADVERTISE
HERE
TODAY!!**

Please visit our local Bahá'í website at wacobahais.org or the global information site at


bahai.org/beliefs. Our Facebook page is Bahai Faith of Waco.



"This is worship:
to serve mankind
and to minister to
the needs of the
people. Service
is prayer."

~ 'Abdu'l-Bahá

To learn more about
the Bahá'í Faith,
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GAME CHANGER

BY MONA DUNKIN

I often look around us to determine what is “normal”. Think of moving to another country with a different culture. Because of our genetic need to fit in, our pre-programmed ego adjustment kicks in to bring us up to status quo. To be able to adjust has its good points.

This scenario is equally relevant in the automatic ordering of our everyday routine. We assess standards of conduct and search for evidence to confirm our perception. An unconscious involuntary mechanical regulator can be to our detriment. We internalize what we believe and carry it with us through life, even when it no longer serves us.

Most of us know ourselves by hearsay. What we overhear about us from others may be right on – or not. We come up with notions about what is and is not true about ourselves. Other’s perception may be actual or eschewed, genuine or flawed, assumed or myopic.

We also come up with notions about what is and is not true about others and about the world in general.

Walter Cronkite, then the most trusted man in America, famously ended his nightly newscast with “And that’s the way it is.” His affirmation



MONA DUNKIN

of absoluteness was based on unbiased facts.

What if we made a deliberate-on-purpose-game-changing choice to test, weigh, and measure our perceptions. “Is this really true?” “How can I know it is true?” “When I think it is true, how do I behave?”

What if we chose to give grace to our assumptions, as in “Maybe I really do not know what he is thinking”? How would the interaction with that individual change when we extended a little bit of honest doubt?

What if we became aware of inflections, nuances, and shifts in thinking that made huge differences? As in going from the all-inclusive statement of “I am stupid” to a more accurate assessment

of “I made an inaccurate statement” (or choice; whatever the situation dictates). How would one’s self-esteem blossom when we see ourselves as individuals in the legitimate transition of growing and learning?

What if you made a conscious decision to change from automatic pilot to internal intentional choice? What if you chose to explore options and accept the mysteries of unique viewpoints?

I’m game. How about you?

Mona Dunkin, *Solution Principles*, P.O. Box 774, Elm Mott, TX 76640; www.monadunkin.com; www.monadunkin.blogspot.com.

GUNTER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

plete with events, competitions, and opportunities to dance whenever the music plays. So the next time a line dance kicks off and that Southern Soul beat drops, jump in. No matter your age, someone will be happy to guide you—whether they’re standing or sitting. Just watch, learn, and keep practicing.

“Jump in the Line,” also known as “Shake Senora,” was composed by Lord Kitchener and made famous by Harry Belafonte in 1961. While this particular song features a different style of line dance—where participants line up one behind the other rather than side by side—it still represents how music and dance continue to evolve and connect people worldwide. Like Calypso, like Southern Soul Trail, is part of the evolution of music and dance worldwide.

LIFE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

boundaries are not selfish. They are a form of self-respect and self-preservation. Start by giving yourself permission to matter. Say no when you need to. Rest without apology. And trust that the people who truly care for you will understand.

When you learn to protect your peace, you’ll be able to give from a full heart, not a drained one.

Have a life question? Send it to me via Messenger on Facebook. Linda Crawford, Certified Life Coach.

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We will do our best to include every profile that we receive, and who knows? Your submission might be one of our cover stories.

GOD, DESTINY AND A GLASS OF WINE, AN EASY READ AND PERFECT GIFT

The best gift sometimes comes in a small package. Such is the case with *God, Destiny and a Glass of Wine*. All chapters begin with one of Linda Crawford's own "true-story" personal narratives that she later connects to a point that is relevant to this journey called destiny. The book is an easy read. Several readers have told her that they couldn't put it down once they started. It is available on Amazon.com. *God, Destiny, and a Glass of Wine* is sure to open your heart to receive healing, encouragement, and a different outlook on life.

Chapter 1: This Too Shall Pass, but When?

I was almost out of breath by the time I made it to the car. Though it was just a few feet away, it seemed like 100 miles. I

had parked my car in the backyard to hide it from the bank. Let's face it. It was an old piece of stick-shift junk, but it was all I had, and I was behind on the payments. But tonight, in my panic to get out of the house, maybe the backyard wasn't so smart. Dressed in a gown, house shoes, and a thin jacket, I gripped the keys that were pinned inside my bra. Oh yes, my bra. That was the safest place to keep my valuables, like my car keys and what little money I had. I had learned a lot in my 29 years. With lightning speed, I dashed out the backdoor, tripping over the threshold, but still holding my balance and determination. Thank God my boy was spending the night with a friend. It was pitch-black dark outside, as I had no time to flip



LINDA MASON CRAWFORD

on the outside lights. I just needed to get out. Once inside my car, I let out a sigh, unaware that I had been holding my breath. Quickly locking the car doors, I knew I was on my way. The car was run down and bent up, but it was my path to freedom tonight and my only means of transportation. I'll never forget it. It was a gray and black Toyota, well...a fading gray and a fading black, a hatchback, about 8 years old at the time, and a stick. Ha! A stick. That could be a holdup since I was still in the learning stage, but I could handle it. I tried to crank the old trap, but it just clicked. I tried again, combining my efforts with a plea. "Please God, I need my car!" Just as the motor turned over, I heard that dreadful sound, a swatch-type sound, like an old screen door dragging. My God! He knew I was going to try to get away. He knew, so he had

unlocked the hatch back, ahead of time! He was in the back so fast; all I could do was bite my lip and jerk forward. "Stop the car, Lynn, and give me the money!" he yelled, as he swiftly crawled into the back seat. He lurched through the bucket seats so fast that my head literally seemed to spin, like the girl in the Exorcist. Grabbing the steering wheel, he yelled again, "Gimme the money, Lynn!" The Exorcist...I was sure that his voice changed. But tonight...no, not tonight. I kept driving, the car swerving across into the other the lane and back again as he, too, gripped the wheel. We came within inches of hitting a minivan. I saw head lights of an 18 wheeler that we also barely missed as we sped into the on-coming traffic. Hands pinned to the wheel, I was driving to my pastor's house, and no one was stopping me. That was the life I lived for most of my 16 years of marriage to a crack addict, one that was much different from my single days of the quiet, country, church girl. I had never touched drugs in my life. I smoked only one cigarette that nearly killed me. And here I was, 29 years old, married to a drug addict. I had so many similar stories to contend with, jumping fences to get my car back from the drug dealers, standing toe-to-toe and nose-to-nose with dealers who threatened to kill me if I didn't leave them alone about getting my car back, knocks on the door in the middle of the night from thugs demanding money my husband owed them, stealing my

own car back and driving backwards, trying to miss the flying bullets. You name it; I just about dealt with it. Many times over the years, I walked into my house to find that every piece of furniture and every appliance was gone—sold in exchange for drugs. I remember waking up one Christmas Day to find that my babies' gifts were gone, sold for drugs. Once, I frantically searched the streets of Tampa because my husband put our 6-year-old out of the car since it was "too dangerous to take him to the crack house," he said. This was before the days of cell phones. I don't even remember how I found my baby boy. I could go on and on, but the only thing that matters is that one day, I accepted the truth that I had to forgive if I expected to move on with my life. I have since come to grips with the truth, that my now ex-husband was a good person, who loved people. When he was straight, he would give away his last. When he was not, he would take another person's last. I literally saw him take his shirt off and give it away. Once he pulled off his watch and gave it away, and then took my watch and gave it away, too. He had a heart of gold, but in addiction, he was the devil. Still, I had to find a way to forgive. I owed it to myself, my children, and my God.

To order *God, Destiny, and a Glass of Wine*, paste the following into your browser: <https://www.amazon.com/Destiny-Glass-Linda-Mason-Crawford/dp/069211761X>.

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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!"

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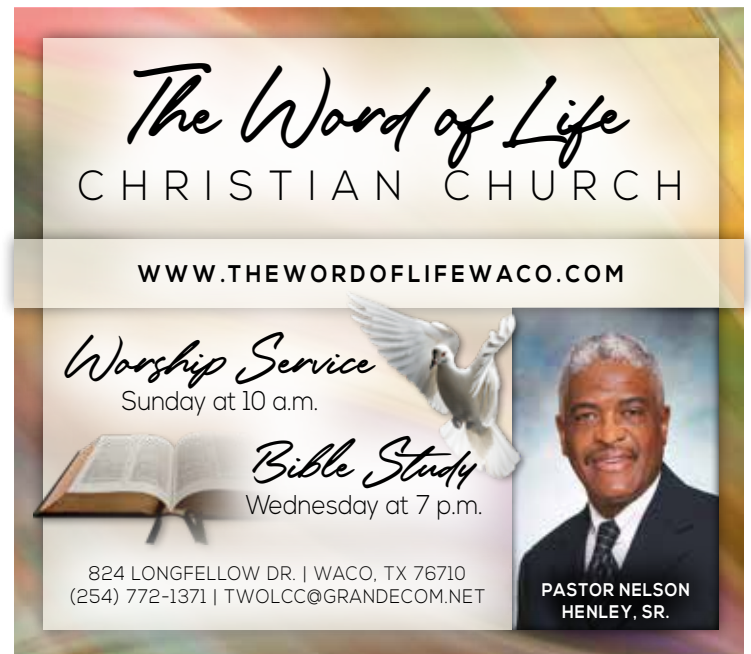
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Do not expect men to

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AND LADY HELEN REED**

commit to you. Anyone having the doctrine of God should have our attention. That is the only commitment we should heed to, going along to get along is a quick way to hell. The peace we enjoy to God be the glory, for in his doctrine he teaches to forgive, so we forgive. He teaches us that fear has torment so we don't fear. We simply trust in God's salvation by the power of his might.(To God Be The Glory) The words we (the church) speak and teach they are his.(To God Be The Glory).

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WHY RESPECTING YOUR BOSS STILL MATTERS, EVEN WHEN HE OR SHE IS KIND AND EASYGOING

BY LINDA CRAWFORD

It's a gift to work for a boss who is kind, approachable, and easy to talk to. A laid-back leader can make the workplace feel more like a team and less like a hierarchy. But that easygoing nature can also lead some employees to let their guard down and forget that leadership still carries authority.

Just because a supervisor doesn't micromanage or demand constant updates doesn't mean expectations

are lower. Kindness should never be mistaken for weakness. In fact, it often takes greater strength and maturity to lead with patience and humility rather than control.

Scripture says, "Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people" (Colossians 3:23). Whether one follows the Bible or not, the principle applies across the board; our work reflects our character, not just our compliance.

When an employee begins



LINDA CRAWFORD

to take advantage of a relaxed atmosphere, there are real consequences. It may start with a breakdown in trust, followed by poor evaluations or missed opportunities. In some cases, continued lack of respect or accountability can lead to disciplinary action or even termination. The job still has expectations, even when the boss doesn't constantly remind everyone of them.

Respecting a leader means honoring the position, not just

the personality. True professionalism is measured when no one is watching, and when responsibility is taken without being forced. A respectful employee brings stability to the workplace and becomes someone the team can count on.

If you are fortunate enough to work for someone who leads with kindness, let that motivate you to give your best, not because you are being watched, but because it's the right thing to do.

WHY CHOOSING A REALTOR WHO DOES HER HOMEWORK MATTERS

BY LINDA MCDONALD

When it comes to selling your home, choosing the right realtor is one of the most important decisions you can make. A local realtor who knows the area well brings much more to the table than just a "For Sale" sign and a lockbox. She understands the unique selling points of your neighborhood, what buyers are looking for in your community, and how to price your home competitively using real, up-to-date information.

But local knowledge is only the beginning. A strong realtor does her homework. This means researching recent sales in your area, studying current market conditions, and knowing what buyers in your price range expect. She will walk through your home with a trained eye and offer practical suggestions on staging, repairs, or simple updates that



LINDA MCDONALD
REALTOR, CRS, GRI, PMN, SRS

could help you sell for more. She does not just list your home; she prepares it to stand out.

A realtor who takes the time to prepare will also create a smart, targeted marketing plan. From professional photos and compelling listing descriptions to online visibili-

ty and open house strategies, she customizes every detail to reach the right buyers and generate real interest.

Most importantly, a well-prepared local agent will be your trusted guide through each step of the process. She will help you review offers, manage negotiations, and handle inspections with confidence because she has done the work in advance and knows how to protect your interests.

In today's competitive housing market, it is not enough to have someone with a license. You need a local expert who studies the details, understands your goals, and is willing to go the extra mile to help you succeed.

If you are looking for a realtor with all of these qualities, call me, Linda McDonald, at 254-855-1717. With over two decades of experience, I bring expert knowledge, trusted guidance, and a strong commitment to helping you sell with confidence and success.

MESSAGE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

share it with my family and friends in Mexia. The Anchor has sparked something in me—it has inspired me to consider starting a small paper in my area to highlight the good things happening in our community and to remind people of what we have to be thankful for.

This paper reminds us that God is still in control. It brings meaningful conversation back into our homes. We may be called a "generatrix" commu-

nity—a generation that still prefers something we can see and touch, black and white on paper, rather than digital screens. And that's exactly what The Anchor News provides.

Thank you, Mr. and Mrs. Crawford, for your presence on Saturday and for 23 years of faithfully publishing such a powerful, uplifting newspaper.

With gratitude,
Betty Durham-Bible
Mexia, Texas

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**WANDA B.
GUNTER**

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

YOUNG PEOPLE NEED SLEEP, TOO

BY JERRY SNIDER

When our teenagers are out of school during the summer months, we tend to see a change in their sleep habits. Without a designated time to get up and be at school, many teens will stay up late into the night and sleep late into the morning if not all the way past noon.

While during most of our lives we sleep on a schedule that matches the sun (called circadian rhythm), this change in sleep behavior has been studied and is actually normal for the teenage body. Even before electricity made it easy to be up and active in our homes after sunset, teen's sleep habits shifted between 2-4 hours from the normal circadian rhythm.

Sleep may be the most



JERRY SNIDER

beneficial piece of a healthy lifestyle. Unfortunately, many of us try to keep the late night activity level as part of our daily routine after we move into our 20s and 30s. This can be particularly damaging to our overall health and leads to several chronic diseases

since we often don't have the liberty to sleep until noon once we are in the working world. Some estimates suggest that over 50% of chronic disease would disappear if people simply improved their sleep habits.

This lack of sleep prevents our body from completing its nightly repair and prevention routines. When we sleep, our cells are hard at work repairing tissue, removing toxins, regulating hormones, and many other vital functions for optimal health. We know this isn't happening well when we set an alarm to wake up and either don't feel refreshed or hit the snooze button.

To get the most out of our sleep we need to implement a routine to prepare us for better sleep. That includes a winding down time where we remove electronics, have a set bed time that will result in 7-9 hours of sleep by the time we need to arise, placing our phone and any other devices that could be a distraction in a different room, and dimming the lights in the hour before we plan to go to bed.

Like so many other parts of our lives, great sleep doesn't just happen. It's a practice of daily habits that create greatness.

Have a health question for Jerry? Send it to jerry@allinhealthandwellness.com.

Jerry Snider is an exercise physiologist, health coach,

and owner of All In Health and Wellness. He has authored two books available on Amazon: *No More Sugar Coating and Confidence Through Health*, and is the host of the podcast *Confidence Through Health*. Visit www.allinhealthandwellness.com to learn more about Jerry Snider.

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YOUR CONFESSIONS BECOME YOUR POSSESSIONS, PART 2

BY EVANGELIST
RUBY MCCRAY

Continued from the June issue of The Anchor News. To find previous parts of this article and other subjects, please go to www.theanchornews.org. Click "Archives," and you'll find several years.

Proverbs 18:21 says, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit." We will either eat the fruit of death by speaking negatively or the fruit of life by speaking positively. This is from the NKJV (New King James Version) of the Bible. Let's see how the NLT (New Living Translation) states it.

"The tongue can bring death or life; those who love to talk will reap the consequences." If you love to talk like I do, say positive things only.

Here is an account that's recorded in Mark 7:24-30 about a woman who refused to take NO, for her answer. She was a Gentile to whom Jesus had not yet come. However, when He went to His own, many of them refused Him; therefore, He extended the opportunity for

anyone willing to receive Him. See John 1:10-13. A Gentile is a person who is not a Jew.

"From there He arose and went to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And He entered a house and wanted no one to know it, but He could not be hidden. For a woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit heard about Him, and she came and fell at His feet. The woman was a Greek, a Syro-Phoenician by birth, and she kept asking Him to cast the demon out of her daughter. But Jesus said to her, 'Let the children be filled first, for it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs.'

"And she answered and said to Him, 'Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs under the table eat from the children's crumbs.'

"Then He said to her, 'For this saying go your way; the demon has gone out of your daughter.'

"And when she had come to her house, she found the demon gone out, and her daughter lying on the bed."

Precious people, do you see that? If you read this same account in Matthew 15:21-28, you'll even see that



EVG. RUBY MCCRAY

Jesus' disciples were telling Him to send her away because she was bothering them with her begging. She called Jesus Son of David and asked Him to have mercy on her and heal her daughter at home who was grievously vexed with a devil. Jesus even told her that He had only come to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He said that He couldn't take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs. She agreed that was the truth, but she knew that if she could get some of the crumbs of bread that fell on the floor, it would be enough to cast that demon

out of her daughter. Please read that account in Matthew to see if you would persist. Jesus told her that she had great faith, go home and whatever she was desiring, she had it.

Think about this. Her daughter wasn't with her so that Jesus could touch her, blow on her, knock her down or whatever, she was at home! When Jesus told her to go home because her faith had prevailed, she believed Him and left. She found her daughter at home completely demon-free!

Here is an account of another Gentile who had heard about some of the miracles that Jesus had done. Matthew 8:5-13 records, "Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying 'Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented.'

"And Jesus said to him, 'I will come and heal him.'

"The centurion answered and said, 'Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having sol-

diers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

"When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel! And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' Then Jesus said to the centurion, 'Go your way and as you have believed, so let it be done for you.' And his servant was healed that same hour."

The centurion possessed what he confessed. He told Jesus that he didn't have to come to his house, but only speak the word and it would be done.

Evangelist Ruby McCray is the founder of A City of Refuge Ministries. For questions or comments e-mail rubbya-corm@yahoo.com or write to: A City of Refuge Ministries, P. O. Box 2025, Waco, Texas 76703.

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WHAT DID I JUST EAT?

BY MARGARET IVORY

I love me some soul food, but sometimes, after I really eat soul food, I feel very sleepy, and my heart starts racing.

Then, I check my blood pressure, and just as I suspected, the reading is soaring. Today, let us talk about foods that can cause high blood pressure aka the silent killer.

1. Processed Meats: Bacon, ham, sausages, deli turkey. These meats are packed with sodium that keep them preserved and flavorful. Even that innocent turkey sandwich from the deli counter can have half your day's sodium intake in just a few slices.

2. Canned Soups: Soups may seem to help when you feel a cold coming on, but many canned soups have over 800-1,200 mg of sodium per serving. That's nearly half your recommended daily intake in one small bowl!

3. Fast Food: Burgers, fries, chicken sandwiches, tacos... you name it. Fast food is deliciously addictive but loaded with salt, saturated fats, and trans fats. One meal can push your blood pressure up for hours.

4. Pickles and Pickled Foods: Pickles are crunchy and tangy, but they're also soaked in salty brine. Just one spear can have over 300 mg of sodium – imagine eating several!

ine eating several!

5. TV Dinners: They're easy on busy nights, but these frozen dinners often contain high levels of sodium and unhealthy fats to preserve flavor and shelf life.

6. Cheese: Cheese lovers, beware. Many cheeses, especially hard varieties like cheddar and parmesan, contain high amounts of salt and saturated fat, both of which impact blood pressure.

7. Baked Goods with Trans Fats: Pastries, pies, cookies, donuts... they smell heavenly at bakeries. But many contain trans fats to stay flaky and



MARGARET IVORY

fresh longer. Trans fats raise bad

cholesterol and blood pressure while harming your heart health overall.

8. Sugary Drinks: Sodas and sweetened drinks not only lead to weight gain which increases blood pressure but can also trigger inflammation in the arteries, affecting how your blood vessels function.

9. Caffeine: While a cup or two of coffee is usually fine, excess caffeine from energy drinks or strong coffees can cause temporary spikes in blood pressure, especially in sensitive individuals.

10. Alcohol: A glass of wine

here and there isn't the issue. It is regular heavy drinking that raises blood pressure over time and damages the heart.

You don't have to eliminate all these foods forever. But being mindful of how often you eat them and your overall sodium and fat intake can keep your blood pressure in check.

Think of your body like a car engine? It runs best on the right fuel. Treat it well, and it will carry you far.

Margaret Ivory - Medicare Plans Broker. About to go on Medicare? Call me at 254-313-7413.

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and earned her Bachelor of Science degree from Paul Quinn College in Dallas, Texas. Further demonstrating her commitment to excellence in leadership, Delisa completed the prestigious Achieving Excellence Program at Harvard Kennedy School, an intensive 18-month executive education program designed to strengthen organizational performance in the nonprofit sector.

Delisa's guiding principle comes from Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Her faith, strong community ties, and lifelong dedication to empowering others make her a natural fit to guide NeighborWorks Waco into its next chapter.

NeighborWorks Waco is honored to have such a dedicated, knowledgeable, and community-minded leader at the helm. We look forward to the continued impact of her leadership across Central Texas.

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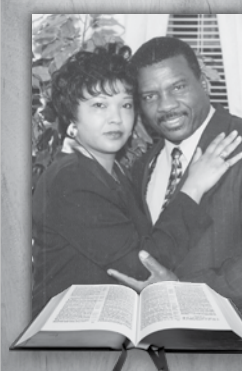
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