

THE Anchor NEWS

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THE LEGACY OF ANNIE PEARL WORTHEY JOHNSON

BY DR. FRANCES WORTHY AND JACQUELINE BROWN

Mrs. Annie Pearl Worthey Johnson was born June 30, 1932, to the proud parentage of Luther Craig and Viola Kerl Worthey in the Baileyville-Widerville Community of Rosebud Milam County, Texas. Annie was the fourth of ten children born to this 75 year plus Worthey marital union.

Annie Pearl grew up working the fields, learning homemaking skills, attending school and playing most sports offered to girls during her season. One of her fondest memories is having the academic honor of being Valedictorian of Wilson White Colored High School graduating class. On occasion, she still recites her graduation Valedictorian speech to family and friends. Her love for sports afforded her the opportunity to compete in track and field as well as play basketball and to travel to the UIL competitions at Prairie View A&M College.

Annie's Academic achievement led to her being offered a full scholarship to Tuskegee College & University, Tuskegee, Alabama; however, her father said it was too far away for her to go to school and be



ANNIE PEARL WORTHEY JOHNSON

away from home. She ultimately enrolled in the historical Paul Quinn College in Waco, Texas.

It was while attending Paul Quinn College that Annie Pearl met and married her soul mate, Mr. Velma Lee Johnson. Their first dwelling was in the Carver Park Neighborhood which was a room on Dallas Street. Later, they moved into a duplex on Dearborn Street, and then they were housed at 524 Carver. In 1960 they built a home at 705 Carver Avenue where she and her family have remained for sixty-five years!

Mr. and Mrs. Johnson were

blessed to enjoy fifty-three years of marriage. The love of her life, Velma Lee, transitioned to eternal rest in 2007. They joyfully and lovingly parented and reared their three girls, Dr. Frances C. Worthey, Frankie D. Shaw (deceased, 2005) and Jacqueline L. "Cookie" Brown! Annie continues to be a marvelous "Granny" to Delvin (Tweedy), Alyshia (LeLe) and Johnathan. She is blessed with two sons-in-law, William Shaw and Elvis Brown Jr. Mrs. Johnson has always striven to exemplify that Biblical

Virtuous Woman found in Proverbs 31! And even today, "Her children arise and call her blessed;" (Proverbs 31:28).

Annie Pearl's employment career began at Piccadilly Cafeteria. Furthering her job mobility, she became a machine operator at J. M. Woods Mfg., a receptionist for City of Waco Community Center, and then worked until retirement from Spirit of Love Daycare and Preschool. For sixteen years, she was the managing salesperson for the LeKreg's Millinery and Accessories, a family-owned business. She also

SEE JOHNSON, PG. 3

THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF NANCY JO JOHNSON

BY DELICIA LEBLANC

Nancy Jo Johnson, a proud native of Waco, Texas, will celebrate her 92nd birthday this December—a remarkable milestone that reflects a life filled with purpose, faith, and cherished memories. Born in 1933, she has long been a beloved presence in the Waco community.

Nancy's life has been shaped by her deep devotion to family and service. A graduate of the historic A.J. Moore High School, she went on to dedicate more than 30 years of her career to the Waco Independent School District. Her colleagues remember her fondly for her unwavering commitment and the genuine love she showed the special needs students she worked with each day.

For more than 70 years, Nancy has been a pillar at Pleasant Olive Baptist Church. Her faithful service includes roles as Deaconess President, choir member, youth director, Vacation Bible School art teacher, Women's Minis-



NANCY JO JOHNSON

try Leader, and many other areas of ministry. She also served actively in the Union Baptist District Association and the Missionary Baptist General Convention of Texas Women's Department.

Nancy is the devoted mother of three children, grandmother of six, and great-grandmother of eight. When asked about the secret behind her long and blessed life, she simply replied, "I trust in God, and He brought me down through the years."

THE LEGACY OF LLOYD A. DUGAS

BY WANDA TAULTON

Mr. Dugas was born October 8, 1933 in Jeanerette, Louisiana to the parentage of Amboruse and Julia Dugas.

Mr. Dugas (Dugas as he is affectionately and respectfully called) attended Tyler Barber College in Tyler, Texas in 1956 and as God would so ordain, he met his future wife, Wanda Joyce

Carter, who was attending Tyler Beauty College at the same time. They were married in Tyler in 1958 and soon after moved to Waco, which was Wanda's Home. This was a marriage that lasted 64 years until Wanda's death in 2022.

Upon his arrival in Waco, he began a successful and stellar career as a barber with a loyal clientele at the historic Jockey Club Barber



LLOYD A. DUGAS

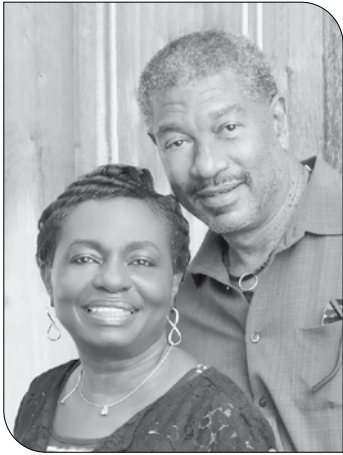
Shop on Elm Street. The Jockey Club was the first black-owned barbershop in Waco. He worked there until his retirement in 2011.

Mr. Dugas joined Toliver Chapel under the pastorage of Reverend A. Charles Bowie and has remained a very faithful member. He is in regular attendance at Sunday Morning Worship. Some of his activities: participation in the Men's Min-

istry and Senior's Ministry, sings in the Male Chorus, was an honorary Men's Day Co-Chairman, and was a part of the prestigious Golden Couples Marriage Ministry.

He is the father of 4 children: Julia, Roderick, Kenneth, and Brian (deceased).

Mr. Dugas is a grandfather, great grandfather and great, great grandfather to many.

**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.

**LINDA CRAWFORD
BY LINDA CRAWFORD****QUESTION:**

I am struggling this holiday

season. My family looks happy on the outside, but behind closed doors we are barely holding things together. There is tension, resentment, and silence that feels heavier during Christmas when everyone else seems joyful. How do I hold on to my peace when everything around me feels broken?

ANSWER:

You are not alone, and your

honesty is already a powerful first step toward healing. Christmas can amplify pain that has been quietly building, but it can also open the door to grace. Begin by giving yourself permission to breathe and acknowledge what you are carrying without guilt. Peace does not come from fixing everything at once but from choosing one grounded truth

at a time. Remember that you cannot control how others respond, but you can control the atmosphere you cultivate within your own heart. If you feel led to explore this more deeply, you are welcome to contact me to schedule a personal session where we can walk through these challenges together.

—Coach Crawford

FROM THE EDITOR...

CHRISTMAS JOY

Christmas is my favorite time of year because it brings us back to the true joy of the season, which is celebrating the birth of Jesus. It is a time filled with hope, gratitude, and the reminder that light still shines in our world.

This month, we are honored to feature more of our

remarkable legacy seniors who are 89 and older. Their stories of strength, love, and endurance continue to bless our hearts and inspire our community.

We pray that this special Christmas issue brings you peace and joy, and we hope you enjoy every page.

THE LEGACY OF VIOLA MYLES

BY WANDA TAULTON

Mrs. Viola Myles is from Reagan, Texas and was the second of seven children born September 15, 1930 to Roy and Ida Laverton.

Viola Laverton and Kennard Myles were united in holy matrimony in August 1955. To this union, two daughters were born—Lubecca and Victoria, who reside in Austin and Waco, respectively.

Mrs. Myles has been a faithful member of Toliver Chapel Missionary Baptist Church for 70 years. Some of her many activities: Star Light Band Director for

**VIOLA MYLES**

33 years, Senior Ushers President for 30 plus years. Mrs. Myles taught Sunday School, Baptist Training Union, and was a Den Mother for the Cub Scouts. Each year she proudly represented Toliver Chapel Ushers at the State and National Conventions. She was honored as Ushers President Emerita in 2023. Mrs. Myles spent 73 cumulative years as a “doorkeeper in the House of the Lord.”

Mrs. Myles served in several capacities for the Waco Independent School District, was a private care worker, and kindergarten teacher. Her hobbies include: sewing, baking, and gardening.

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PURPOSE

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

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also reflect the opinions of the editor.

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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.

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THE LEGACY OF THERESA SIMS REECE

BY WANDA TAULTON

Theresa was born on July 17, 1928 in Waco, Texas to William Sims and Bernice Sims.

She graduated from Mary Allen College in Crockett, Texas in 1949 with a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. She furthered her education, and in 1952 she graduated from Texas Southern University in Houston, Texas with a master's degree in education.

Theresa met and married the love of her life, Beasley Young Reece, Sr. in 1953. They were married for 66 years until

his death in 2019.

The Reeces were avid travelers and their travel is extensive, taking them to all 50 states of the United States and 6 of the 7 continents, with the exception of Antarctica.

Mrs. Reece was an exceptional educator and helped shape young minds in LaVega ISD for 22 years and Waco ISD for 18 years.

She is the mother of 2 highly successful children: Beasley Reece, Jr. (wife, Paula), who is a former professional football player with the Dallas Cowboys, New York Giants, and Tampa Bay Buccaneers;



THERESA SIMS REECE

and Angela Reece Culton (husband, Al) who followed in her parents' footsteps and made a career in education.

She has three grandsons, Brent, Zsabraun, and Blake; and 2 great grandchildren, Dylan and Paige.

Mrs. Reece joined Toliver Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, where Dr. Jimmy D. Hunter is Pastor, at a very young age and has remained a faithful, dedicated, and active member throughout her life. Mrs. Reece has the distinction of being the oldest member in age and the oldest tenured member having been a mem-

ber for over 90 years.

At Toliver Chapel she has served as Youth Ministry Director, General Program Chairperson, Church Clerk, Sunday School Teacher, Deaconess, Chairperson of Baptism, Vacation Bible School Teacher, active in Women's Ministry/Missionary Society, Golden Couples Marriage Ministry, and so many other areas whenever and wherever needed. Mrs. Reece is in regular attendance at Sunday Morning Worship Services, and at 97 years old still drives herself to church.

Mrs. Reece is a member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.

THE LEGACY OF GEORGIA MAE ANDERSON

BY WANDA TAULTON

Georgia Mae Anderson was delivered by a midwife by the name of Mrs. Elsie A. Walker, at home on September 9, 1931 in Bosqueville, McLennan County, Texas to the parentage of Mr. George Anderson, Sr. and Mrs. Allie Anderson Austin. She was one of 6 children and is the only surviving sibling.

Mrs. Anderson is the mother of 3 children of whom she is extremely proud: Cynthia White, Linda McKoy, Jeremiah Simmons. She raised her children in the same manner in which she was raised and "it paid off." Mrs. Anderson confesses that she worked hard to raise her children, sometimes working 2-3 jobs because she

refused to accept government assistance.

Mrs. Anderson attended Bosqueville School for grades 6-10 and then moved to Waco to attend A.J. Moore High School for grades 11-12th. She played and excelled at basketball and track at A.J. Moore and won a basketball scholarship and also won medal for running track. She attended Paul Quinn College for one year and due to financial difficulties she had to discontinue.

Mrs. Anderson's work history is extensive. Some of her employment is as follows:

- Ike's Snack Bar – car hop, kitchen manager
- Waco Public School System – G.L. Wiley School for 12 years (where her sister, Chris-



GEORGIA MAE ANDERSON

tine attended and which she considered the best Black school in East Waco)

- She retired from Waco after 30 years

- Leslie's Fried Chicken for 14 years

- Pete's Hamburger Stand on Bridge Street

Mrs. Anderson is a long time member of Toliver Chapel where Dr. Jimmy D. Hunter is Pastor, and has always been very active! She attended Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, sang in the Sanctuary Choir and Women's Chorus, attended Baptist Training Union, Prayer Service, Bible Study. For many years she was the kitch-

en manager at Toliver Chapel where she cooked, purchased food, made sure the kitchen was always spotless, and treated everyone who walked through the kitchen doors with kindness and respect. She always made sure that the food was hot and did not run out. Many persons would always come to her after a funeral or other event and tell her how much they enjoyed the meal. She says "I serve people like I serve myself, I make sure they have enough to eat. Treat people like you want to be treated."

JOHNSON

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

worked part-time at Mr. Jack's Village Shop and The Hub Men's Clothing Store doing alterations. At age 90, she still skillfully did alterations for the Waco Community and beyond!

Mrs. Johnson is a seventy-plus year member of the Antioch Missionary Baptist Church in South Waco. She served as President of the Deaconess Ministry, Bible Study attendee, and Sunday School attendee; however, she has worked in many other facets of the church, i.e. Vacation Bible School Teacher; Chair of Church Anniversary Committee; Founder, Organizer and Chair of the Senior Choir Annual Day, Prayer Meeting Attendee, Prayer Warrior, faithful Choir member and staunch

supporter of the pastor and work of the church.

She is blessed with continuously attending, working, supporting the Union Baptist District Association, Missionary Baptist General Convention of Texas and the National Baptist Convention of America International Inc. Mrs. Johnson loves witnessing the work of the Women's Ministry of the church, district, convention and various other spiritual organizations.

She enjoys traveling with her family and friends, loves talking early morning and every day with her three living sisters, Elmira, Jessie and Odessa! She loves talking with her numerous cousins all over the land! Her favorite TV sport is basketball with CNN being

her 'go to' channel. In her later years, she enjoys the Spectrum Channel 10, soap operas and game shows.

Her favorite food is just plain 'good ole home cooking', You name it, and she loves it! The people always received requests from family, friends and especially the church culinary ministry for her delicious peach cobbler.

Her favorite Scripture is Psalm 23.

Annie Pearl Johnson has been a resident of Royal Manor Rehabilitation Center in Hewitt since January 2024. She suffered a major home fall just after leaving the 2023 church "Watch Meeting" Worship Service. She remains a joy and a blessing to all around!

**Seek ye refuge in God from
whatsoever might lead you astray
from the Source of His Revelation
and hold fast unto His Cord, for
whomever holds fast unto His
allegiance hath attained and will
attain salvation in all the worlds.**

from the writings of The Báb



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BABATUNDE: A MAN OF CULTURE, LEADERSHIP, AND COMMUNITY POWER

Babatunde's life story is a testament to cultural pride, community leadership, and unwavering dedication to uplifting Black voices across Central Texas and beyond. A native of the historic Washington Heights community in Harlem, New York, he grew up with deep family roots in the southern migrant traditions of eastern North Carolina. His name, which means "the father returns," has proven meaningful as he has spent his life preserving heritage, advancing education, and

strengthening the Black community.

After relocating to Central Texas, Babatunde founded and operated the influential Under One Roof African American Bookstore in Copperas Cove and Killeen. More than a bookstore, Under One Roof became a cultural landmark. It was the region's largest provider of multi-genre Black literature, music, organizational paraphernalia including Divine Nine and Masonic items, spiritual amulets, divination tools, and African



BABATUNDE, WHICH MEANS "THE FATHER RETURNS"

diaspora inspired home decor and hygiene products. For many people, it was the first place they encountered authentic and accessible representations of Black history

and culture.

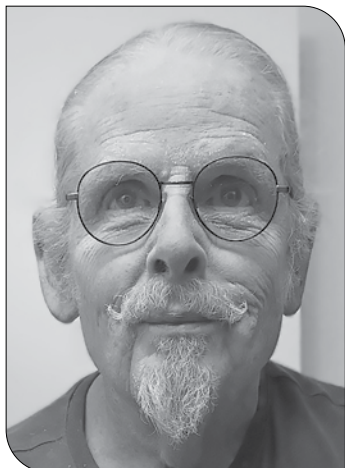
His work expanded in many directions. Babatunde published *The African Posta*, a local newspaper devoted to Black perspectives and community concerns. He also launched Killeen's first Black Chamber of Commerce and founded the Killeen Poetry Slam, which produced state, national, and international spoken word champions. His passion for youth development led him to create Building Children Instead of Repairing Men, a mentorship program for Black boys ages five to thirteen from single mother households. He is also a co founder of the Texas Alliance of Black Educators.

Drafted into the United States Army in 1969, Babatunde served for twenty four years, including tours in Vietnam and Desert Storm. He retired honorably as a First Ser-

geant in 1993. His leadership extended into his home as well. He and his late wife of fifty-four years, Yetunde, may she rest in power, co-founded Under One Roof. Together they raised one daughter, Dr. Ketisha Jones, a Spelman College graduate and member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated. She now serves as Deputy Superintendent of Longview Independent School District. Babatunde is also the proud grandfather of Kahri, an honor student in his third year at Morehouse College majoring in biology.

Today his mission continues as he helps small Black businesses gain affordable access to television advertising. He reminds us of a guiding truth he has always lived by: To whom you give your money is to whom you give your power.

THE PURE HEART IS A MIRROR



MICHAEL JONES

BY MICHAEL JONES

At 79 years old, I am one of the newer members of the Waco Bahá'í Faith community. Born and raised Southern Baptist, I was nevertheless strongly drawn to the major tenets of the Faith: Unity of God; Unity of Humanity; Unity in Human Diversity; Equality of Men and Women; the Elimination of all Forms of Prejudice; Independent, Individual Investigation of Truth; Elimination of Extremes of Wealth and Poverty, among many other wonderful concepts.

The Bahá'í writings are vast, beautiful, exhaustively documented, verified and archived. The prayers, meditations, letters, histories, and commentaries are so rich in meaning, so inspiring in form...and there is no way I will ever be able to fully explore them. But one of the most beautiful metaphors I came across early in my study of the Faith is contained in this bit of writing from a mystical, poetic book entitled *The Seven Valleys*: "O My

Brother! A pure heart is as a mirror; cleanse it with the burnish of love and severance from all save God, that the true sun may shine within it and the eternal morning dawn. Then wilt thou clearly see the meaning of 'Neither doth My earth nor My heaven contain Me, but the heart of My faithful servant contains Me.' And thou wilt take up thy life in thine hand, and with infinite longing cast it before the new Beloved One."

The writer, one of the founders of our Faith, compares God to the sun: exceedingly powerful, life-giving, and incomprehensible. And he compares the human heart to a mirror and its power of reflectivity. Though it has a finite shape, weight, and position, a mirror contains no image of its own and merely reflects the appearance of whatever is placed before it. Likewise, when we empty ourselves of egotism, attachment to selfish desires, and turn our attention to God, our hearts become ready recipients for the rays of the sun, those spiritual attributes of God mentioned in the first passage above. Just as God is merciful, our human hearts will reflect a share of that mercy. Just as God is wise, our human hearts will to some degree manifest that wisdom."

In other words, Bahá'ís believe we are charged to live in such a way that the many attributes of God — mercy, splendor, grandeur, beauty, perfection, power, honor, light— are reflected by the mirrors of our souls. And the more flawlessly we can "polish" that mirror, the more clearly God's love can be seen in us. To learn more, please visit our local Bahá'í website at www.wacobahais.net or the global information site at bahai.org/beliefs.

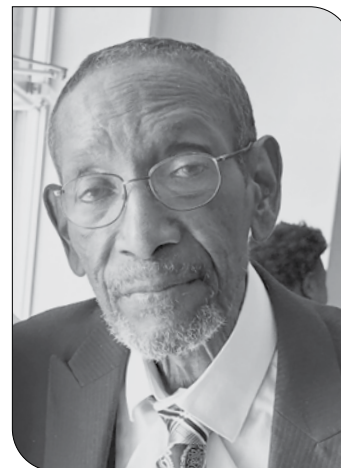
HENRY LEE, JR., A LIFE WELL-LIVED

BY VICKI HENRY

Henry Lee Jr. entered the world in McClennan County on October 1, 1935 — and he's been working hard ever since. Literally. He picked cotton alongside his parents and siblings. According to him, school didn't start until all the cotton was picked, which explains why he side-eyes anyone who complains about "being tired."

He graduated high school, went to Paul Quinn, and joined the chorus — which was the best decision of his life, because that's where he met Dorothy Bryant. After graduation they married, raised five children, and built a 59-year love story, strong enough to withstand strokes, cancers, and Henry's "selective hearing." She passed in 2017, but he still talks about her like she's in the kitchen.

After serving in the Army, Henry worked at Rocketdyne — yes, rocket science. When the company moved to Delaware, Henry stayed in Texas, and began his career with the USPS. For 34 years he delivered mail, making friends, and collecting enough gossip to write a memoir. He retired at age 70, which he claims was "too young."



HENRY LEE, JR.

Henry attends Carver Park Baptist Church. He's a deacon, helps with the finance team, assists with culinary ministry, makes jokes about the men's chorus, and will volunteer for anything except arriving late. He is a beloved church member — mostly because he stands in the doorway after service, passing out compliments.

He is the last active charter member of the Kennedy Kings Elk Lodge, where he helps feed veterans, hand out holiday baskets, and host Easter egg hunts. Basically, he was doing community service before it got trendy.

Henry takes pride in his six children and eight grandchildren, all living lives based on the principles he and Dorothy instilled: be Christian, kind, generous, and keep the family together. After raising four sons, he is now blessed with seven granddaughters, which means he is finally outnumbered and they are all winning.

His son Gary chronicles their adventures online, making Henry social-media famous as "Old School." The family ensures he's present for every trip whether he wants to go or not. Henry likes to say, "Once the man, twice the child," usually right before someone hands him a cookie.

Henry credits his longevity to his relationship with God — and to the fact that he refuses to stress about anything outside his control. Fishing also keeps him relaxed and peaceful. His doctors say he's doing great "for a 90-year-old," which Henry interprets as permission to keep doing whatever he wants. He doesn't remember everything, but the stories he tells are memorable.

His motto these days is: "If I die, bury me and go to work on Monday," which is his way of saying: "Life goes on, with or without me."

STANDING FIRM WITH A NARCISSIST

BY LINDA M. CRAWFORD,
CERTIFIED LIFE COACH

One of the most important lessons in personal growth is learning how to protect your peace when dealing with a narcissistic person. Narcissists rely on manipulation, guilt, confusion, and emotional pressure to keep others off balance. The moment you understand this pattern, you begin to take back your power.

To let a narcissist know you are not someone who can be controlled, you must communicate through your behavior rather than through arguments. Narcissists thrive on emotional reactions. They lose interest when you respond with calm confidence. Speak clearly. Say what you mean. Do not raise your voice. Do not explain your-



LINDA CRAWFORD

self repeatedly. Once you give your answer, let it stand. Quiet strength sends a message they cannot ignore.

Setting boundaries is essential. You can say, "I will not continue this conversa-

tion while you are speaking to me in this way," or "I will decide what is best for me." Then step away if the behavior continues. Boundaries are not punishments. Boundaries are statements of self respect.

Most importantly, remind yourself daily that you do not need the approval of someone who refuses to acknowledge your worth. Narcissists often realize they cannot control you when you stop needing their validation. You become untouchable the moment you stop seeking permission to be yourself.

Stand firm. Protect your peace. Choose clarity over chaos. When you do, the narcissist receives the message loud and clear. You are no longer available for manipulation. You are choosing freedom.

NEIGHBORWORKS WACO OFFERS AFFORDABLE RENTALS

BY KATLEYN SHARP
PROPERTY MANAGER

As Waco continues to grow, so does the need for affordable, quality rental housing. NeighborWorks Waco, a nonprofit organization with a longstanding commitment to strengthening neighborhoods, is helping meet that need by offering rental homes designed for families and individuals seeking stability, affordability, and community.

Founded with the mission of building stronger neighborhoods through homeownership, quality rental housing and community-building initiatives, NeighborWorks Waco also operates a robust rental program. The organization owns and manages a range of rental properties throughout McLennan County, including single-family homes and duplexes. Each unit is maintained with the goal of offering safe, clean, and accessible housing.

We understand that not everyone is ready to buy a home, our rental program provides an affordable and dignified option for those looking to live in quality housing while preparing for future homeownership or simply needing a reliable place to call home. What sets NeighborWorks Waco apart is its com-

mitment to helping tenants move forward financially. One unique feature of the rental program is that tenants who purchase a home, whether through NeighborWorks Waco or elsewhere, can be released from their lease without penalty. This policy is designed to eliminate a common barrier renters face when they're ready to take the leap into homeownership.

Unlike many traditional rental agencies, NeighborWorks Waco is a mission-driven organization. Rental rates are designed to be affordable, often below market value, and the organization emphasizes long-term tenant success. We also offer financial coaching, credit counseling, and homebuyer education to residents interested in eventually purchasing a home.

Homes are available in various neighborhoods across McLennan County, with locations near schools, parks, and public transportation.

In a market where rising rents are a growing concern, NeighborWorks Waco continues to be a reliable option for people looking for more than just a place to live, but a pathway to a stronger future.

To learn more about available rentals or to apply, visit www.nw-waco.org or call 254-730-7176.

A MONTHLY WORD OF WISDOM AND ENCOURAGEMENT FOR MEN...

THE STRENGTH OF A STEADY MAN

BY J.L. CRAWFORD

Brothers, the world measures strength by power and noise, but God measures strength by character, humility, and faithfulness. A steady man does not have to raise his voice to make an impact. His consistency speaks for him. His integrity covers his family. His patience brings peace into his home.

Every day we are called to lead with purpose. Leadership begins with seeking God first, listening before speaking, and choosing wisdom over pride. A strong man is not perfect,



J.L. CRAWFORD

but he is willing to grow, willing to admit when he is

wrong, and willing to stand firm when his family needs him.

Your children watch how you handle pressure. Your wife feels the security of your prayer life. Your community is shaped by the example you set. Walk with God, love your family well, and stay rooted in principles that do not change with the times.

Brothers, let us be men whose actions match our words. Let us be steady, dependable, and courageous. When a man stands on God's truth, he becomes a shelter for the people he loves and a light in a world that desperately needs one.

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MCDOWELL FUNERAL HOME THANKS COMMUNITY FOR ITS UNWAVERING SUPPORT

To our cherished community,
We at McDowell Funeral Home, L.L.C., would like to express our sincere gratitude for your unwavering support and strength as we come together to honor the memories of our loved ones. Your kindness means the world to us, and it is our privilege to serve you during such sensitive times.

We recognize that the trust you place in us during mo-

ments of loss is invaluable. The solidarity and shared experiences within our community are what help us heal and find comfort. Your presence truly strengthens the bond we share, guiding us through life's toughest moments.

The resilience and unity displayed by our community continually inspire us. It's this spirit that drives our commitment to serving you with compassion and dedication.

Thank you for allowing us to be a part of your lives and for the honor of serving such an extraordinary community. We are here to offer care and support whenever you need it. It's people like you who help us continue the McDowell legacy. Remember, it's better to know us and not need us than to need us and not know us.

Warm regards,
McDowell Funeral Home,
L.L.C.

HILLCREST CHIROPRACTIC LAUNCHES DECEMBER WELLNESS INITIATIVE

As the year winds down and holiday festivities begin, many people push their health to the bottom of their priority list. Between long work hours, holiday shopping, travel, and winter stress, December is one of the most common months for aches, fatigue, headaches, and flare-ups. Hillcrest Chiropractic is urging the community to pause, reset, and start the new year on a healthier path.

This month, Hillcrest Chiropractic is launching a December Health & Wellness Initiative focused on helping individuals and families regain control of their spinal health before the new year begins. For a limited time, new patients can receive a complete consultation, chiropractic examination, X-rays (if needed), a personalized Report of Findings and a chiropractic adjustment—all for just \$49.

This comprehensive visit allows patients to understand exactly what is causing their pain or discomfort and provides a clear roadmap to feeling better. Whether you are dealing with neck pain, low back pain, headaches, sciatica, stiffness, or simply want to improve your posture and mobility, this special is designed to give you answers and solutions.

"Many people wait until January to focus on their health," says the Hillcrest Chiropractic team. "But December is the perfect time to take action. Starting early means you enter the new year already feeling better—not trying to recover from months of neglect."

Appointments are filling quickly due to the deeply discounted rate and the high demand during the winter season. This \$49 New Patient Special is available only through December, and once spots are gone, they are gone.

Hillcrest Chiropractic encourages residents not to wait until pain becomes unbearable or limits their holiday activities. A healthier, more energetic, and more mobile version of yourself could be just one visit away.

To reserve one of the limited December appointments, contact Hillcrest Chiropractic today. Your body will thank you—both now and in the new year.

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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 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



LINDA MASON CRAWFORD

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>.

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!"

Dr. Mia Moody-Ramirez



GOD, DESTINY, AND A GLASS OF WINE
AVAILABLE ON AMAZON

PULSE PRO ACADEMY LAUNCHES PREMIER CPR & SAFETY TRAINING SERVICES ACROSS THE COMMUNITY

A new standard in emergency preparedness has arrived with the official launch of Pulse Pro Academy, a professional CPR, First Aid, and safety-training organization committed to equipping individuals, families, schools, and corporate teams with life-saving skills. With a mission grounded in excellence, the academy proudly operates under its core belief: "Excellence in Every Beat."

Pulse Pro Academy provides a comprehensive range of certification programs designed to meet the needs of workplaces, medical professionals, and the community at large. Among their core services is CPR/AED Certification, where participants learn high-quality CPR techniques for adults, children, and infants, as well as how to safely and confidently operate an Automated External Defibril-

lator. In addition to CPR, the academy offers First Aid Certification, covering essential skills including bleeding control, allergic reaction response, seizure care, diabetic emergencies, fracture management, burns, and environmental injuries such as heat exhaustion and hypothermia. Their training emphasizes confidence, clarity, and practical application—ensuring every participant leaves knowing exactly how to respond in a real-life emergency.

Healthcare professionals can benefit from BLS for Healthcare Providers, a clinic-level training program that includes advanced skills such as bag-mask ventilation (BVM), two-rescuer CPR, team-based resuscitation dynamics, and CPR with an advanced airway. Recognizing the unique needs of parents, caregivers, and childcare staff, Pulse Pro Academy also delivers Pediatric CPR & First Aid, focusing on infant and child emergencies—from choking to respiratory distress and pediatric illnesses. This program is a vital resource for families and childcare centers seeking specialized training.

lator.

For businesses and organizations, the academy offers on-site corporate safety training, full workplace certification days, and customized programs for schools, healthcare facilities, gyms, warehouses, and government agencies. Corporate packages include OSHA-aligned safety training, staff recertifications, and AED program support.

Pulse Pro Academy also provides AED readiness services, recertification programs, instructor-level mentorship, and complete mobile on-site training options. With a commitment to professionalism, clarity, and excellence, Pulse Pro Academy is positioning itself as a leader in life-saving education. For more information or to schedule a training, community members are encouraged to contact Dr. Shamonica Trunell, D.C. at 214-223-7559.

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THE CHURCH: LEAD PEACE MAKER OF THE WORLD

BY PASTOR MATTHEW REED

The church's role in all disturbances, commotions, aggressions, wars, or in any uprisings is peacemaker.

Matthew 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

In Mark 9:50 Jesus teaches that we should have influence and have peace with one another (Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltiness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.)

Luke 1:79 It is written that Jesus would come to give light to them that sat in darkness



PASTOR MATTHEW
AND LADY HELEN REED

and death, to guide us in the way of peace. Therefore one of

the duties of the church is to be peacemaker.

To facilitate peace where there is friction one has to know the cause of the friction and address it.

When the cause of the issue is discovered the church is to

go to the Word of God seeking the solution.

When through the Word of God the church has given counsel and it is rejected, then the results that follow are on the head of those who reject godly counsel.

When you are dealing with unreasonable men, they may very well reject God's way. But the church will have kept its salt, having done the will of God, being peacemaker in the situation. That is how simple it is. Amen.

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REST, REFLECTION & IMMUNE RESILIENCE

BY DR. SHAMONICA
TRUNELL, D.C.

Finish gentle, start strong.

As the year winds down, many of us find ourselves racing to the finish line—wrapping up work, holiday shop-

ping, and year-end tasks. But December invites us to slow down, rest, and recharge. Health isn't built in moments of chaos—it's nurtured through consistency, recovery, and reflection.

This month, give your body what it truly needs: rest for renewal, nourishment for strength, and gratitude for growth. When you finish the year gently, you create space to start the next one strong.

Tips for Rest & Immune Resilience

1. Keep Sleep Consistent

Your body thrives on rhythm. Aim for 7–9 hours of sleep each night, going to bed and waking up at similar times—even on weekends. Quality rest strengthens your immune system, improves mood, and restores focus.

2. Protect with Hand Hygiene & Preventive Care

Cold and flu season peaks in December. Wash hands frequently, avoid touching your face, and follow your health-care provider's advice on vaccinations. A little prevention now helps keep you healthy all winter.

3. Eat the Rainbow

Colorful produce isn't just



DR. SHAMONICA TRUNELL

pretty—it's powerful. Bright fruits and vegetables are rich in antioxidants and vitamins that support your immune system. Aim for three colors on your plate at every meal.

4. Reflect Before You Reset

Take a quiet moment to reflect on your health journey this year. What habits helped you grow? What lessons did challenges teach you? Reflection builds resilience—and clarity for what's next.

5. Prepare for a Healthy New Year

Refill medications be-

fore offices close for the holidays, and schedule any January follow-up appointments now. Planning ahead prevents stress later.

Your Takeaway

The end of the year isn't about doing more—it's about doing what matters most. By resting, nourishing your body, and celebrating your progress, you give yourself the best foundation for a strong and vibrant new year.

Remember: finishing gentle is the first step toward starting strong.

MONTHLY SELF-CARE

CHALLENGE

"Reflect & Reset"

Before New Year's Day, make a short list of your "health wins" from this year—big or small. Then, choose one word that captures your focus for the year ahead (like balance, peace, or strength). Keep it somewhere visible as a daily reminder of your intention.

Screening Reminder: Check your prescriptions and refill medications before offices close for the holidays. Schedule your January follow-up visits now so you can start the year prepared and stress-free.

SMART MOVES IN THE REAL ESTATE MARKET

SUBMITTED BY
LINDA MCDONALD

The real estate market continues to change, but opportunities are still strong for both buyers and sellers. Well-maintained homes that are priced correctly continue to attract serious buyers. Simple updates, clean spaces, and good curb appeal can make a big difference.

For buyers, preparation is key. Getting pre-approved and knowing your budget helps you move quickly when the right home appears. Many lenders offer helpful programs for first-time buyers and veterans, making homeownership more accessible than ever.

Investors are also finding success. Rental demand remains steady, and well-managed properties can provide long-term income and stability.



LINDA MCDONALD
REALTOR, CRS, GRI, PMN, SRS

Real estate is one of the most reliable ways to build wealth and create a secure future. With the right guidance and a clear plan, today's market can work in your favor.

HILLCREST CHIROPRACTIC

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"A RETROSPECTIVE" THE PHOTOGRAPHY OF HAROLD LEWIS ON EXHIBIT AT BELL COUNTY MUSEUM

BY W.B. GUNTER

"A Retrospective" is now open on Main Street at the Bell County Museum in Belton. It is a photo exhibit that spans the fifty-year career of Mr. Harold Lewis, a long-time resident of Temple, Texas. The exhibit features both color and black-and-white portraits created with thirty-five millimeter film, a format that is completely non-digital. The exhibit will remain open to the public until February 2026.

Mr. Lewis has traveled the world capturing glimpses of life through his lens. His work has earned national honors and recognition. Even at the age of ninety-one, he wakes up each morning eager to embrace the world around him. As an Army veteran, he has gained a deep appreciation for life, an appreciation that has grown stronger with wisdom and time. He recalls that Waco's history was once neither admirable nor safe for people of color. For that reason, he reluctantly accepted a job in the city. He worked two years at the Freeman's Center and five years at the Heart of Texas Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse. He states, "The twelve years I spent in Waco were the best work experience." Now retired, Mr.



HAROLD LEWIS

Lewis continues to pursue his passion for photography and often says, "Retirement is a time of growth. It has allowed me the opportunity to focus on what is really important."

As an only child, Mr. Lewis describes himself as more of a loner than a joiner. He spent much of his childhood around adults who took time to teach him and nurture his curiosity. Because of their influence, he learned to educate himself in many subjects. He was reading by the age of three, and whenever he had a question, someone took the time to answer it. One of his uncles taught him how the dictionary was organized and how to use it.

Once he understood how to find, define, and apply new words, his world expanded. "I am learning each day, and my mind is exercised," he says. He also reflects on the advantages of self-realization, noting, "Nothing and no one programmed me. Habits are accumulated; they are not prioritized. It is best to figure out what works for you. By knowing that each day is a new day, I learn something new, and that gives me peace of mind. I was never one for pageantry."

Capturing iconic moments requires far more than simply pointing a camera and clicking a button. Film and developing cost money, so careful observation, an understanding of lighting, and technical camera knowledge are essential. Studying photographs, researching, and exercising patience are also important skills. As Mr. Lewis says, "As a photographer, you know what the frame is."

Many photographers inspired and influenced Har-

old Lewis's signature style. Among them are James Van Der Zee, who depicted the Black middle class in Harlem and is associated with the Harlem and Howard University renaissance; R. C. Hickman of the Dallas and Fort Worth region, who photographed local residents as well as visiting dignitaries; Benny Joseph, known for portraits that captured the spirit of Rhythm and Blues; and Ansel Adams, an environmentalist celebrated for his landscape photography.

When asked about his clarity of vision and remarkable memory, Mr. Lewis shared, "I see the practicality in what the Bible says and what you should do."

The Bell County Museum is located at 201 Main Street in Belton. It is open Tuesday through Sunday. For more information, call 254 933 5243. If you or your group would like to schedule a meet and greet session with photographer Harold Lewis, please contact the museum to make arrangements.

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HAPPY HOLY DAYS

BY MONA DUNKIN

December is host to many multicultural celebrations, including Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, Winter Solstice, and Boxing Day. Some events are sacred and some are secular. Few months have more teachable moments of love, joy, peace, and good will to all men.

December is renowned for shopping, baking, decorating, giving, partying, feasting, traveling, entertaining, and stressing. Am I ready for Christmas? Yes, I am. Oh, there is still baking and decorating and other chores to do, but I suggest that being ready for the upcoming holidays is more an attitude than an activity.

It is the attitude of living within your means rather than overspending. It is the attitude of caring for self and others without overextension. It is the attitude of patience with the harried clerk at the store. It is giving a smile and refusing to gripe or complain. It is the attitude of graciousness to stressed fellow travelers. It is



MONA DUNKIN

the attitude of compassion for those with opposing beliefs. It is the attitude of thankfulness for our many freedoms, including worshiping as we choose. It is the attitude of appreciation for the men and women, near and far, who willingly put themselves in harm's way for our protection as well as to bring liberty to the oppressed.

Even with the hustle and bustle, I love holidays. I like to give and to receive "Merry Christmas" greetings, and I am not offended by being

wished "Happy Holidays." It is a quick way of encouraging another to remember that the long celebration season is filled with holy days.

In liturgical Christian churches, the holy days begin with Advent four weeks before December 25 and end with the Epiphany on January 6. This period is for reflection upon the true meaning of the season—a time to prepare our homes with lights and streamers, to entertain family and friends, to give gifts, and to ready our hearts to receive

afresh a baby that has already been born, followed by twelve days to rejoice in the love gift given to mankind.

I believe in Christmas. I believe in the Christ of Christmas. Maybe as one makes every day "holy" during the extended holiday season, he will be better able to keep focus on peace on earth and good will to all men.

This article was written by Mona Dunkin, Motivational Speaker and Personal Success Coach — monadunkin@gmail.com.

Church DIRECTORY

Tree of Life NDC

1612 Austin Avenue, Suite A | Waco, Texas 76701

Pastor/Founder – RT Allen | Co Pastor – Sandra Allen

SUNDAY SCHOOL – 9:30

MORNING WORSHIP – 10:30

WEDNESDAY INTERCESSORY PRAYER – 6 to 6:30

BIBLE STUDY – 6:30 to 7:45

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Sunday School – 9 a.m.

Sunday Morning Worship – 10 a.m.

Tuesday Night Bible Study – 7 p.m.

Friday Night Prayer – 6 to 7 p.m.

Monday through Friday Prayer – 6 a.m.

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A SECOND CHANCE TO FIX YOUR MEDICARE PLAN: JANUARY 1 – MARCH 31

BY MARGARET IVORY

Every year, from January 1 through March 31, Medicare offers a second chance for certain people to make changes to their Medi-

care Advantage plan. This special time is called the Medicare Open Enrollment Period, and it is designed for one main purpose: to help you fix a plan that is not working for you.

Many people enroll in a plan during the fall and then realize after January 1 that something is wrong. Their doctor may not be in the network. Their prescriptions may cost more than expected. Their copays

may be higher than they were told. Or the benefits they expected simply are not there. If that happens, this enrollment window gives you one opportunity to make it right.

You can use this period only if you are already enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan as of January 1. If you qualify, you may make one change. You can either switch from one Medicare Advantage plan to another, or you can drop your Medicare Advantage plan and return to Original Medicare. If you return to Original Medicare, you are also allowed to add a standalone prescription drug plan.

What you cannot do during this time is join a Medicare Advantage plan if you were not already in one. This is a correction period, not a full open enrollment.

Any change you make will begin the first day of the next month. That means you don't have to wait long for your new coverage to



MARGARET IVORY

start.

The Open Enrollment Period exists so you are not trapped in a bad plan for an entire year. If your plan is costing you too much, limiting your doctors, or not meeting your needs, you still have time—but March 31 is the deadline.



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CELEBRATE BLACK HISTORY MONTH!

2nd Annual Black History Month Walk-Through Museum

Sunday, February 1, 2026
2:00 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.

MUSEUM SET-UP TIME:
11:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.

BOTH EVENTS ARE FREE TO THE PUBLIC!

In conjunction with The E-Center
809 Gray Street | Killeen, Texas

For questions, contact:
Babatunde – (254) 371-9532

Black History Month Book Fair & Poetry Event

Sunday, February 22, 2026
2:00 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.

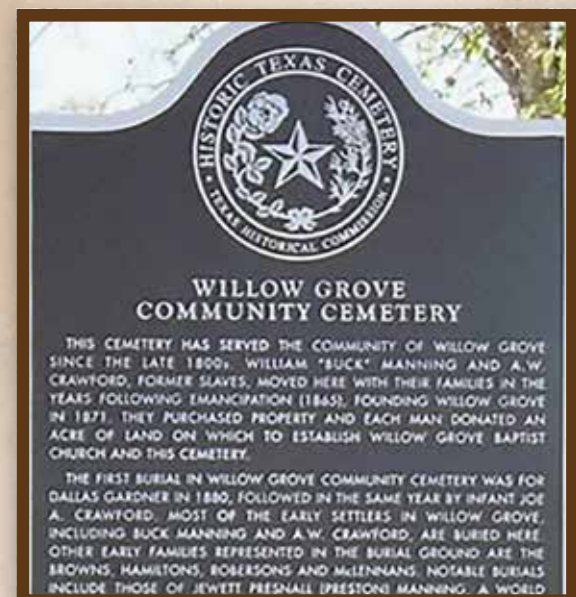
VENDOR SET-UP TIME:
11:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.

Vendor Registration & Fees

- Registration & fee deadline: Tuesday, February 17, 2025 5:00 P.M.
- Vendor fee: \$35
- If we provide table and chair: \$45

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