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THE *Anchor* NEWS

FREE! | JULY 2023

VOLUME 20, NUMBER 12

AN EVENING WITH THE REAL OPAL LEE

BY JOCELYN PIERCE

An opportunity of a lifetime, sponsored and hosted by the Community Race Relations Coalition (CRRC) of Waco and the Delta Upsilon Zeta Waco Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., at St. Albans Episcopal Church Parish Hall, was presented on Thursday, June 23, to an audience of over one hundred Waco community members and citizens from surrounding areas. As the "Grandmother of Juneteenth" took the stage for "An Evening With The Real Opal Lee," there was a sense of pride and appreciation for the sacrifices, struggles and hard work that lead to that moment. At age 96, Dr. Lee is very poignant, sincere, and determined in her charismatic approach to share



JESSICA PIERCE, DR. OPAL LEE, MICHAEL BABERS & JOCELYN PIERCE POSE FOR A PHOTO AT THE REAL OPAL LEE EVENT.

very treasured memories of her quest to make a difference in the lives and living of her fellow Americans.

In a question-and-answer

session, narrated by Delisa Burrell-Smith, a CRRC and

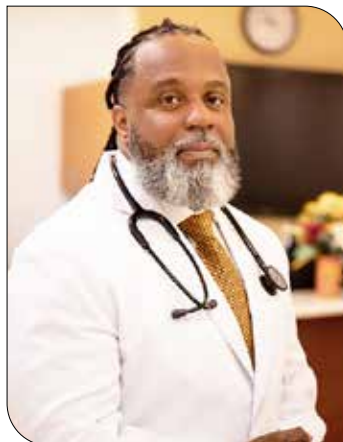
SEE **OPAL**, PG. 2

IMPAC OUTREACH PRESENTS TWO EVENTS IN KILLEEN

BY WB GUNTER

A Taste Of Africa, presented by IMPAC Outreach returns to The Killeen Civic and Conference Center Sunday, July 23, 2023. The family centered event will be diving deep into the African culture from 12:00 PM – 6:00 PM with authentic art, mesmerizing dances, vibrant attire, delicious cuisine, engaging film, literature, and storytelling.

A Taste of Africa encompasses examples of how people of African descent have influenced North America and other continents through traditions, art, and education. Guests are encouraged to participate in special sessions while visiting the marketplace and enjoying the musical rhythms. Meet the artists, authors, speakers, and have conversations. Online influ-



RODNEY DUCKETT

encers, foodies, fashion experts, come out and do what you do!

General admission tickets are available online at Evebt-brite.com. Vendors can take advantage of Early Bird booth reservations before July 22.

This event is supported in part from the city of Killeen, Texas, municipal hotel occupancy tax revenue and other participating sources.

IMPAC OUTREACH and S'CK MODE will be presenting live, the Killeen Poetry Slam August 26 at the Killeen Civic and Conference Center located at 3601 S. W.S. Young Dr. This event is back by popular demand and will feature two of the most dynamic and experienced spoken word poets you'll ever meet, Kas and Shake. Doors will open at 4:30 PM for the Rhythm & Vibes preshow. The show is from 5:00 PM -7:00 PM.

These events provide entertainment, education, social and community engagement opportunities. Rodney

SEE **IMPAC**, PG. 10

A SPECIAL OCCasion - 30 YEARS OF OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

BY DEBBIE QUARLES

We want to invite the community to come out to celebrate 30 years of the ministry Operation Christmas Child in the LIFE CENTER of Highland Baptist Church located at 1900 N. 30th St. in Waco on Sunday, July 16 from 3-5 p.m.

This Special OCCasion will include hearing first-hand from shoebox recipient Edouard Ndecky who received a gift-filled shoebox at the age of 14 in West Africa. Ndecky will share how the tangible contents of the gift-box and the nontangible items such as the love expressed through the gift changed his life.

The Special OCCasion will also include a special packing party where guests will have the opportunity to help fill shoeboxes like the one Ndecky received as a young boy. The event is free and open to the public.

The Heart of Texas Area in Central Texas was one of the first areas to participate in the ministry of Operation Christmas Child. The ministry of Operation Christmas Child is a ministry of Samaritan's Purse which is headquartered in Boone, North Carolina. Operation Christmas Child began in 1993 when shoebox gifts were first delivered to children in war-torn Bosnia. The ministry is one of the largest children's evangelism ministries in the world.

The first collection of Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes from the Heart of Texas Area in 1997 totaled 300 shoebox gifts. Over the past 30 years, the



EDOUARD NDECKY

Heart of Texas Area which encompasses McLennan, Bosque, Hill, Hamilton, Limestone and the northern portion of Coryell Counties, have collected a total of more than 350,000 gift-filled shoeboxes.

"It is amazing to know that from right here in the Heart of Texas Area we have such generous people who faithfully pack gift-filled shoeboxes year after year to be sent to children all around the world," said Debbie Quarles, area coordinator of the Heart of Texas Team. "What began as a collection of 300 boxes a year from our area has grown to more than 21,000 gift-boxes a year. The fact that we have reached a total of more than 350,000 children with the gospel over the last 30 years is beyond amazing. The number of children we have reached compares to filling McLane Stadium almost 8 times with children around the world. That is a lot of children. Our area goal is to reach 400,000

SEE **OCC**, PG. 3

**J.L. & LINDA CRAWFORD**

A co-owner of *The Anchor News*, J.L. Crawford is the director of operations for the paper. He is also an instructor at McLennan Community College, a Bible teacher, and a LegalShield Senior Manager. Linda Crawford is co-owner and editor of *The Anchor News*. She is an instructor at McLennan Community College, a Bible teacher and a conference, workshop and motivational speaker.

MCLENNAN COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND RECEIVES CDFI CERTIFICATION

Waco, TX- 20 June 2023- The McLennan Community Investment Fund (McCIF) recently received its Community Development Financial Institution certification from the U.S. Department of Treasury. The certification is a feather in the cap of the McLennan Community Investment Fund, as only 55 organizations in Texas hold a CDFI certification.

Jane Allen, executive director of the McLennan Community Investment Fund, said certification as an official CDFI Fund would give McCIF access to significant federal grant funds from the U.S. Treasury. In turn, McCIF will lend those funds to small business owners in the area for their businesses' growth and further development. Some funds will also go toward providing financial education to small business owners.

"New business equipment

and new business knowledge is a powerful combination for small business growth," Allen said.

McLennan Community Investment Fund serves small business owners lacking access to traditional banking systems by offering access to capital and financial how-to assistance. Additionally, McCIF acts as an avenue for small business owners to gain the financial strength and necessary skills to successfully enjoy and benefit from traditional banking systems in the long run. Some exam-

ples of assistance from McCIF include skill and knowledge building, loans, and other financial aid forms.

Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) Certification is a designation awarded to specialized organizations that provide financial services in low-income communities and to people who lack access to financing. By building the capacity of a nationwide network of CDFIs, the CDFI Fund works to empower low-income and underserved people and communities to enter the financial

mainstream.

Being CDFI certified makes the McLennan Community Investment Fund eligible to apply for awards through various programs offered by the CDFI Fund. These awards help CDFIs finance a wide range of activities, such as mortgage lending for first-time homebuyers, flexible underwriting for community facilities, and commercial loans for businesses in low-income areas. Each CDFI contributes to cultivating a healthy and stable local economy through varying strategies.

OPAL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

FROM THE EDITOR...

GET PUBLISHED IN OUR AUGUST ISSUE

August is our traditional anniversary and education issue. Celebrating 21 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 or typed as an email) via 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.

Zeta Phi Beta Sorority member, Dr. Lee shared fond memories of growing up amid racism in Marshall, Texas in a household that was loving, stabilizing, and sustaining to her through very critical times. Despite all that she endured during her lifetime, her dream remains for all Americans to experience Equality and Freedom, two key components that are needed for Justice to reign. Making a pledge to walk and gather signatures in a 1, 400-mile walk, 2.5 mile increments at a time, from Fort Worth to other cities in North Texas, Dr. Lee reminisced about her journey and the strides made in her pursuit to gain national recognition for Juneteenth, a celebration of freedom for slaves in Texas, who received the news of emancipation in 1865, two and a half years after the Emancipation Proclamation

was signed in 1863 by President Abraham Lincoln.

Many miles and tremendous challenges resulted in Dr. Opal Lee going to the White House, meeting President Joe Biden, witnessing him sign Senate Bill 475, being named the "Grandmother of Juneteenth", and carrying the banner for her work to establish Juneteenth as the eleventh federal holiday and the latest recognized federal holiday since Martin Luther King Day, observed every year on the first Monday in January, was named as a federal holiday in 1983. For her incredible efforts to make the world a better place, Dr. Lee has also been awarded three honorary doctorates, was named the 2021 Texan of the Year by the Dallas Morning News Editorial Board, the 2021 Unsung Hero of the Pandemic, Fort Worth's 2022 Person of

the Year, and a nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize along with numerous other honors. Added to her honors, the City of Waco proclaimed June 23, 2023, as Opal Lee Day with a proclamation from Mayor Dillion Meek and the Waco City Council.

The energy Dr. Lee displays is inspiring, and her humble but compelling plea is for young people, those under the age of 96, to take the reins and intensify the fight for Justice. She continues to pave the way through her plans to open a seventy-million-dollar Juneteenth Museum in Fort Worth for which forty million dollars has already been raised. To untiringly share her voice and support, Dr. Lee is an author and inspirational speaker who proudly proclaims, "Juneteenth is not a Texas thing. It's an American thing."



The Anchor News is a free, monthly publication of Crawford Publishing, E-T-C, located in Waco, Texas, (254) 715-8943. All rights reserved.

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.

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FREE STUFF FROM MEDICARE

BY MARGARET IVORY

One of the most loved benefits among Medicare recipients is the Over The Counter Benefit. It is also known as the OTC benefit.

In McLennan county, UnitedHealthcare, Humana and Baylor Scott and White offers this benefit through many of their plans; not all plans of their plans but many of their plans.

Please refer to your Summary of Benefits or Enrollment Guide to determine if your plan offers the OTC benefit.

Each quarter, you are allowed to get over the counter items at no charge. Shipping is also at no charge. The plan determines the amount received. If you are not on Medicaid, it varies from \$30 -\$50 per quarter.

If you are on Medicare with Medicaid you could get \$150 each month that you can use for groceries, OTC items and utility bills. This is the benefit that you hear about on ads. No matter what the ad says,



MARGARET IVORY

this is only for Medicare plus Medicaid recipients.

The quarters are as follows: January - March; April - June; July - September and October - December.

Usually, your healthcare company will send you another catalog each quarter so you can order. You may call in your order; mail in your order; order online or shop in-store at participating retailers.

OTC Benefits helps with se-

curing everyday items in the following categories:

1. Allergy and Sinus
2. Cold, Cough and Flu
3. Digestive Health
4. First Aid
5. Pain Relief
6. Personal Care
7. Incontinence
8. Oral Care
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13. Bathroom Safety
14. Braces and Supports
15. Daily Living Aids
16. Home Tests and Monitors

What can be better than shopping for free?

The first thing that I am going to get is a talking floor scale. One of my clients said that the floor scale talks.. too...much! But so do I so we should get along really good... lol!

New to Medicare? Give me a call at 254-523-8978 for a private confidential appointment.

OCC

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

children by the year 2025 and half a million children by 2030."

The Heart of Texas Area

has more than 200 participating churches and groups and many individuals that fill

shoeboxes with toys, hygiene items, school supplies, clothing and other items to bless children in other nations. The shoebox gifts are collected the second week of November each year at surrounding drop off locations and are transported to Highland Baptist Church where they are loaded onto semi-trucks to begin their journey. The National Collection dates for this year are Nov. 13-20. For more information about the ministry Operation Christmas Child visit www.samaritanspurse.org.



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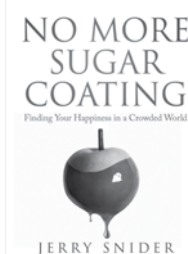
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- Social Workers
- Educators and Administrators
- Criminal Justice
- Health Care Professionals
- Business Leaders
- Pastoral and Parents
- Individuals

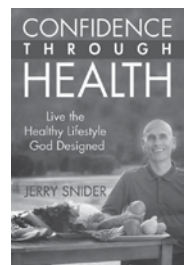


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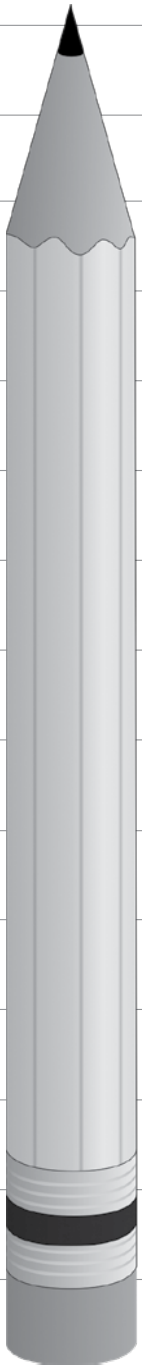
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GETTING OUT OF DEBT

SUBMITTED BY JL CRAWFORD, LEGALSHIELD, SENIOR MANAGER

(NewsUSA) - Sponsored Content - Debt can be a crushing burden in the best of times. And right now, with more uncertainty in the world than we have ever experienced, it can be more terrifying than normal.

Perhaps you've lost your job, you've gotten sick, or you had to stay home to take care of your kids and now you are in debt (or more in debt than you were before.) What do you do now? Many people are dealing with the same issues, but you can take steps to fix it.

First, write down your budget. Having a clear idea of what money is coming in and what money is going out is a huge step in getting out of debt. Be thorough. It is easy to overlook small expenses that add up over time or underestimate what you are spending on groceries or entertainment activities.

Second, look at your spending and think about expenses you can reduce. If you are spending more than you're making, you may need to cut costs to make your rent or mortgage payment. Look at such things as coffee shops when considering your



J.L. CRAWFORD

wants versus needs. That said, it's also paramount to build small "treats" into your budget so you're not constantly feeling as if you're depriving yourself.

Third, give priority to your secured debt. Secured debt is something such as a mortgage or car loan where there is property used as collateral. After secured debt comes interest-bearing unsecured debt such as a store credit card and finally, debt without interest, such as medical bills. All of your debt is important to pay, but prioritizing will help you come up with a plan, such as the debt snowball method.

The debt snowball method is a popular method of paying down debt. If, for in-

stance, you have three credit cards with payments of \$50, \$100, and \$150, stop using the cards altogether so you aren't building up the balances. Keep making the same payments even as the minimum goes down. If the \$50 payment card is paid off first, take that \$50 and add it to the payment for the account with the highest interest rate to get it paid off faster. Instead of paying \$100, you are now paying \$150. Once that account is paid off, apply that \$150 extra towards the final card payment and you will be out of debt far sooner than you would be normally.

For tips on budgeting, saving, talking to kids about money, and even a basic course in personal finance, visit <https://www.family-credit.org/resources>. Family Credit Management is a non-profit credit counseling agency that has 25 years of experience in helping people get out of debt. So if you would like to talk to someone about your debt, feel free to reach out to one of their experts for a free, no-obligation consultation.

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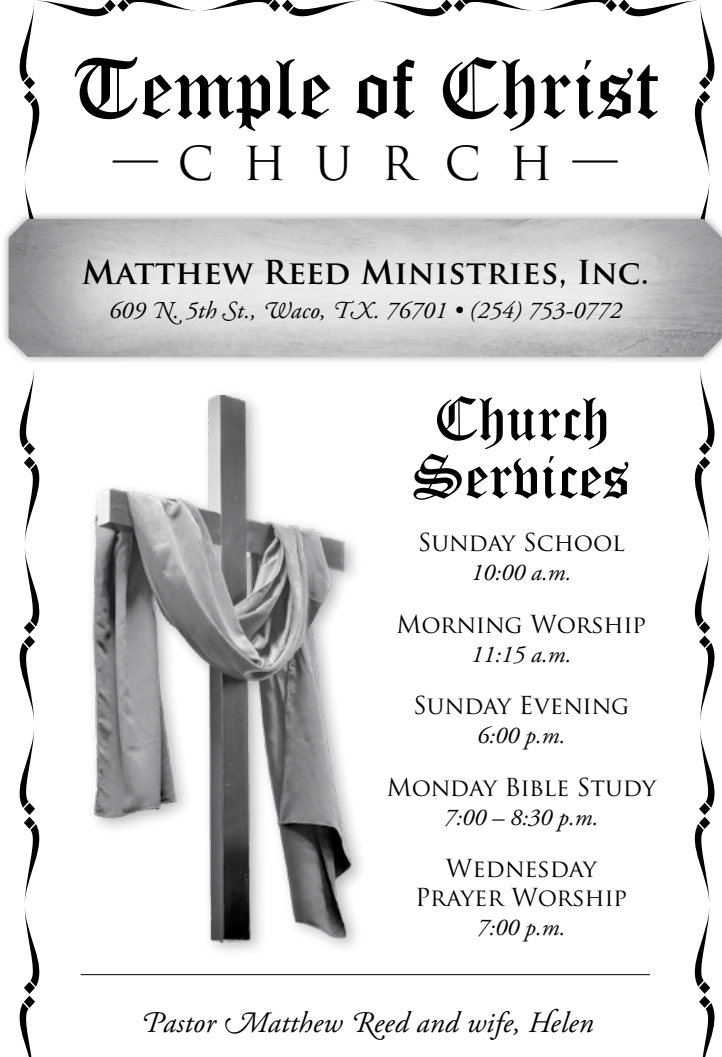
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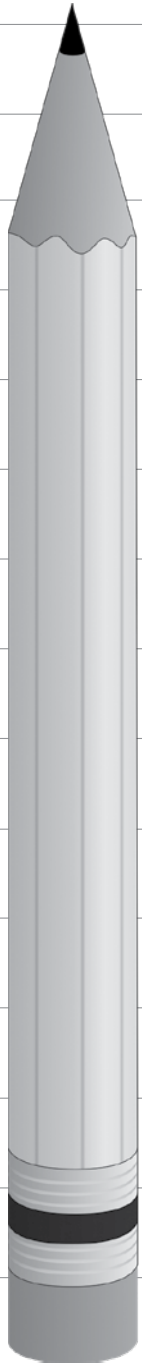
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MIDWAY TEACHER SAVES STUDENT FROM CHOKING



JENNIFER DAVIS AND BRIANNA MARTINEZ

BY KATY DURHAM

Just when a Midway ISD parent thought her admiration for her daughter's teacher couldn't grow any stronger, the teacher's heroic actions helped save her daughter from choking.

Jennifer Davis, a second grade teacher at Chapel Park Elementary School, was lining her class up to go outside for a picnic lunch on the last week of the school year when one of her students, Brianna Martinez, started choking on a grape.

"Brianna came up to me with wide eyes and her hands shaking," Davis said. "I quickly realized she was choking!"

Without hesitation, Mrs. Davis sprang into action.

"I dropped my water bottle and went around behind her so I could do the Heimlich, which I've never had to do before," Davis said. "I was calling out for help while doing the maneuver as there were some other teachers at a nearby table who I knew could help if it wasn't working."

By the time the other teachers realized what was happening and jumped up to assist, the grape was out.

"It all happened so fast, but at the same time seemed in slow motion," Davis said. "I hugged Brianna and reassured her that she was okay and did just what she needed to do to get the help she needed."

"Thanks to Jennifer, Brianna walked away with just feeling dizzy and a little scratchy throat," Brianna's mom Jessica Martinez said, "and thanks to her remaining calm, my daughter remained calm."

"It was hard not to break down in tears right then about the situation and the 'what-ifs' because I had 18 kids staring at me wondering what just happened," Davis said. "I led them outside for our picnic lunch and we had a talk about what to do if that happened to them and ways to possibly prevent it from happening."

In recognition of her exceptional calmness and quick actions, the Midway ISD Board of Trustees presented Mrs. Davis with the Midway Extra Mile Hero Award during the

school board meeting last Tuesday, and Brianna and her mom made sure they were there to help honor their hero.

"I am forever grateful for her," Martinez said. "I don't want to think about what could have happened if Jennifer had not been there."

"Even now, it's hard not to think of the 'what-ifs,'" Davis said, "but it's like I told her mom later that day when we talked about it. Don't dwell on the 'what-ifs,' but on the 'what did.' Brianna is okay and that's all that matters!"

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WANDA B. GUNTER

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

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Evangelist
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Apostle
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DYNAMICS OF CHANGE

BY MONA DUNKIN

It has been said that change is the only thing that is permanent. Yet many rebel at change. The following dynamics may help give you a handle on the inevitable changes of life.

When change is seen as threatening, it causes distress. When change is embraced as positive and welcomed, it can still be stressful yet produces a good stress that pumps you up and keeps you going. Positive changes which can be a combination of 'good and bad stress' include weddings, new birth, graduation, job change, moving, buying new house, etc., etc.

Change represents the end of comfort and predictability, but it can also be seen as a challenge to embrace. Change should not be approached in a random fashion but seen as an opportunity for personal growth. The following dynamics may help give you a handle on the inevitable changes of life.

Give yourself permission to change. Give yourself permission to become something you have not been before(i.e.

spouse, parent, executive). A friend was a stocker with Wal-Mart, a nice guy, but rather shy and retiring. Failing health necessitated a change. Wal-Mart moved him from stocker to greeter, and he was stressed in a negative way. I encouraged him to "give himself permission to be friendly." Once he saw a positive slant and gave himself permission to become something that had not come naturally in the past, he blossomed in the new position.

Visualize change in small increments. See the new position as something into which you can grow. My father was a builder. As a child I sat at the table with him drawing plans, and at age nine, designed my "dream home". It was fashioned after Tara of Gone with the Wind – large columnar porch, winding staircase, and more rooms than anyone would know what to do with. When I married, we moved into a small apartment, it was difficult to see us as changing into the type of people who would live in a Tara mansion. When we moved to an 1800 square foot home, the possibility became a little clearer.



MONA DUNKIN

When we nearly doubled the size of our house through expansion, the ability to change into a "plantation owner" has become even clearer. We are not there yet, but thorough embracing life changes and

goal setting, it will become a reality.

Look at where you were, to more accurately measure where you are. Because I was good at my job, I was advanced to an executive position, but I felt like a fish out of water. First, I gave myself permission to change. Second, I saw myself changing from staff to executive. Third, I looked at what kind of job I had done in the past that allowed the board to see possibilities in me that I did not see. I knew a young lady who had been in a power position for two years and was still overwhelmed. I encouraged her to look at how much she had grown, how much she had learned, how much she had changed, how many good decisions she had made. When

you recognize past change, future change becomes easier.

"Change is scary because it takes more effort to transition. Change is not the problem, but transition." —John Maxwell

We must continually challenge our thought patterns to see if they are serving us well, and when not, change them. When change is seen as threatening, it causes distress. Change can represent the end of comfort and predictability, but it can also be seen as a challenge to embrace.

Mona Dunkin is a Motivational Speaker, Corporate Trainer, and Personal Success Coach. www.monadunkin.com monadunkin@gmail.com 254-749-6594.

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PUTTING A BAD DIET IN ITS PLACE

BY JERRY SNIDER

As the owner of All In Health and Wellness, I'm excited to offer a Health column for the readers of the Anchor News.

You've likely heard someone say "You can't out exercise a bad diet." Well, I'm going to let you in on a little secret of the health and fitness industry...you can out exercise a bad diet.

It's true on a basic level, if all you are worried about is outside appearances. That's because when you look at weight loss as a formula on paper, it doesn't matter where the calories come from. If you burn more than you consume you will lose weight.

The kicker is that although being overweight or obese is an indication of poor health, being at an appropriate weight does not mean someone is healthy. That's because health is determined by what's going on inside the body, no matter what the outside looks like. Not to mention that the longer we eat poorly, the harder the exercise becomes because the body isn't getting the nutrients it needs.

To achieve optimal health, we must be paying attention to our nutrition. All calories are not the same. Understanding that our bodies need a wide range of vitamins, minerals, enzymes, and other nutrients tells us that our meals



JERRY SNIDER

need to have a wide variety of foods. A point of clarification,

variety doesn't mean the same foods cooked in different ways. It means stepping outside your comfort zone and including fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, and whole grains that you don't typically eat.

Build your meals each week to include 40 different plant foods to go along with the variety of meat sources you like. It's quite a bit easier to do than it sounds but it does take a little planning. It also means not eating fast food very much because those menus rarely have more than 10 different plant foods.

The really cool thing about proper nutrition is your body will respond both internally and externally. You still need to exercise, but it's a lot easier to achieve and maintain

a healthy weight when feeding our cells correctly. You can then change your mindset around exercise, going from "I have to exercise today to lose weight" to "how do I want to move my body today for enjoyment."

Have a 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.

THE WORLD'S PROBLEM IS LACK OF MORALES (INTEGRITY) NOT LACK OF MONEY

BY PASTOR MATTHEW REED

A lack of morals exist because men are without God our maker. Jesus told us in Matthew 4:4, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The world is trying to have life without God. We keep (wrongly) thinking if we had more money more people would have life. What we can't understand is that peace and joy is not of money. If this were so, why are there people who have money but lack peace and joy?

According to man's reasoning, all people with money should have life (be happy, have peace). We know that's not so. This reasoning has found its way into the church. Let's see what life is according to the scriptures. Romans 8:6 says For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 1 John 5:11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son (not money). John 1:4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men. Matthew 6:25 says Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment (there is more to life than tangible things)? John 6:53 says Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son



PASTOR MATTHEW AND LADY HELEN REED

of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. John 17:3 says And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

1 John 1:1-2 speaks of Jesus as being a product of the word. It declares that his coming and all the things he did opening blind eyes, healing the lame, giving hearing to the

deaf, delivering an accused woman from the curse of the law, raising the dead, forgiving sins and etc. to be a manifestation of life that is in the word of God. These He did because he was a doer of God's word. Jesus trusted God, knew God and being found in the fashion of a man he humbled himself and obeyed God. All he accomplished and did, he did by being a doer of the word of God. Proving that life is in the word of God. We the church having the word of God has let the world beguile us and cause us to think that life is of something other than the word of God Jehovah. We've got the word. Let us once again become doers of the word. And that same life that was manifested in Jesus will manifest itself in our lives.

Not only should we be doers of this word but we should teach (encourage) others to be doers of God's word having full faith that if God said it he will uphold it. Amen!

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GENOCIDE, HOMICIDE, SUICIDE...IS THERE LIFE AFTER DEATH? PART 1

BY EVANGELIST
RUBY MCCRAY

To find previous articles about other subject matter, please go to www.theanchornews.org, click "Archives," and you'll find several years.

Jesus said, "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." John 10:10

I can't begin to tell how many times I've heard: "When you're dead, you're done!" They say that there's no life after death; but that's not what the Bible says.

Another thing that I hear, especially at funerals, no matter how wickedly a person lived, somehow the eulogist, or individuals who have remarks, manage to get them into heaven. Sometimes they'll say that he/she is finished with their sorrows and/or sicknesses; they are now looking DOWN on us. But I heard a sister in the faith, voice my same sentiment but added that you never hear individuals say that they're looking UP at us. Since so many people think that they'll be better off dead than to remain alive, they even take their own life. Let's begin at the beginning.

"Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So, God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.'" Genesis 1:27, 28

Since God is the one who created all life; therefore, every human being belongs to God. He says, "Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine; the soul who sins shall die." Ezekiel 18:4

Since ALL souls belong to God, one must get permission to KILL one. He's already said, "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man." Genesis 9:6 It sounds like an oxymoron; mankind must not kill another mankind; if he does, by mankind he must be killed. The explanation is that God has put certain people as rulers in position to be his ministers as avengers to execute wrath on those who practices evil. HE says that they don't carry the sword [gun] in vain. We are to submit to them, not



EVG. RUBY MCCRAY

only because of wrath, but for conscience's sake. Romans 13:1-7

How can people fulfill the mandate of God by being fruitful and multiplying if they are being killed, or killing themselves? When a male is killed prematurely, his entire generation is destroyed with him. Why? Because his seed that is to produce generations is within him. Here is a recorded fact:

When Abram (Abraham) paid a tithe of everything he had to Melchizedek in Genesis 14:18-20, it is recorded in Hebrews 7:9 that Levi, a priest who receives tithes, also paid tithe while he was still in Abra-

ham's loins.

Let's break this down: Abraham is the father of Isaac; Isaac is the father of Jacob and Esau; Jacob (Israel) is the father of Levi; therefore, Abraham is Levi's great grandfather. Jacob had more children than Levi, but Levi is mentioned because he is the priest, and only the priesthood received tithes. Had someone killed Abraham, they would have killed all his generation. Joseph would not have been able to save the lives of the multitude during the famine that was in the land Canaan, Egypt and surrounding countries. There wouldn't have been a Judah to produce Jesse from which King David and eventually Jesus came. I'm sure you see the big picture now.

Twice we belong to God. First, God created Adam, and Adam sold himself along with all mankind to Satan when he disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden. Genesis 3:1-24 Second, God bought us back; but it wasn't with Silver and/or Gold; it was with the precious BLOOD of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. That's why we don't belong to ourselves. We have been purchased at a great price. I Corinthians 6:15-20

Knowing that you don't belong to yourself, how can you take your life by suicide when it's not your own. When females want to murder their babies in the womb, I've heard them chant, "My body, my choice!" Will somebody please ask them when did they create themselves, and with what did they redeem themselves?

The commandments in Exodus 20:13 which states, "You shall not murder," hasn't been abolished. Matthew 5:17-20 If those people don't repent of that gruesome sin, they will lift up their eyes in hell. One of the seven things that God hates is a proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood. Proverbs 6:17 What blood is more innocent than that of a baby?

Please join me in August, the Lord willing, as I continue this series. All Scripture is taken from the New King James Version of the Bible unless otherwise stated. You may not believe me...just what if I'm right!

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

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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 back yard 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>.

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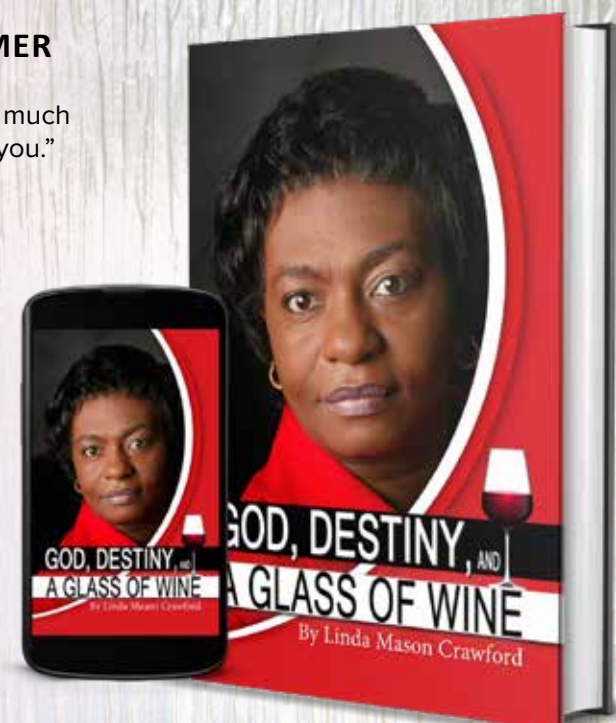
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