

SERVING *the* CENTRAL TEXAS COMMUNITY for 23 YEARS!

THE Anchor NEWS

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A LOCAL VOICE FOR COMMUNITY: DOMINIC VILLA

BY LINDA CRAWFORD

Dominic Villa is a proud Waco native who has carried his love for the city into every stage of his personal and professional journey. Raised in the Waco Independent School District and a graduate of University High School, Villa credits his hometown roots for shaping his dedication to community involvement.

After graduation, he worked in retail and customer service, experiences that taught him valuable skills in communication and connection. During that time, photography began as a hobby and quickly grew into a passion. With his camera in hand, Villa began collaborating with local businesses and nonprofit organizations, capturing their stories and discovering a greater calling to serve. His growing involvement led him to serve on nonprofit boards and become



DOMINIC VILLA

an active presence in the city he calls home.

Today, Villa balances his roles as a devoted husband to Mariana Juarez and father to their daughter Maya with his work at The Waco Bridge, a nonprofit newsroom. As the community engagement and events manager, he describes

his position as the perfect intersection of creativity and service. Each day brings new opportunities to connect with people, build partnerships, and strengthen local voices.

Education has also been a cornerstone of Villa's journey. He earned his associate degree at McLennan Community College and continues to work toward his bachelor's degree.

"My wife and daughter are the air beneath my wings and a reminder of God's generosity."

– Dominic Villa

For Villa, family remains his greatest blessing. He often shares that his wife and daughter are the air beneath his wings and a reminder of God's generosity. In his spare time, he enjoys pursuing personal photography projects

SEE **VILLA**, PG. 12

ALWAYS READY: THE STEADFAST SPIRIT OF JORDAN RICE

When people describe Jordan Rice, the words most often heard are dependable, committed, and kind. Whether he is lending a hand at community events or quietly taking care of the behind-the-scenes work, Jordan has built a reputation in Waco as someone who shows up and follows through. His service is not about recognition but about doing what needs to be done until the task is complete.

Jordan is a proud member of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs Ombudsmen and a Silver Life member of the Waco NAACP Chapter. Leaders in both organizations speak of his willing spirit and tireless dedication. One story that stands out happened in October of 2023. Dr. Peaches Henry, president of the Waco NAACP, suddenly faced the challenge of filling more than two hundred treat bags in less than a day. She reached out to Jordan's mother, Syrenthia Rice, to ask if he could step in. Jordan immediately put aside his own plans, arrived ready to work, and stayed until every bag was filled. In the midst of the rush, he even paused to ask Dr. Henry how she was doing and offered a hug that reminded her she was not alone.

Before a NANBPW event, Jordan once again demonstrated his quiet determination by carefully arranging tables and setting up chairs until everything was in place. He never seeks attention, but



JORDAN RICE

his consistency makes him invaluable to those around him.

Jordan's roots trace back to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, where he was born into a proud military family. His mother, Syrenthia Rice, and his father, Bobby Rice, both served in the Army, and his brother Justin has been his lifelong companion. After moving between states during his parents' service, the family eventually settled in Waco in 2004. Jordan graduated from Midway High School in 2016, where he competed in Special Olympics. That same year, he won a gold medal in the 100 meters, following in the footsteps of his mother, who once ran the fastest 100-yard dash in Mississippi during her own senior year.

Away from events and community service, Jor-

SEE **RICE**, PG. 2

MARY BETHEL: SERVING THROUGH UNIFORM AND MINISTRY

Pastor Mary Joyce Bethel of Harker Heights has lived a life marked by service, leadership, and faith. Married to Michael Bethel, a retired Logistics Management Specialist, the couple has raised a blended family of seven children and are now proud grandparents to twenty-three grandchildren. Their legacy of service continues through their family, with three of their grandchildren currently serving on active duty in the United States military.

Pastor Bethel dedicated thirty years and three days to the United States Army, retiring as a Colonel on October 1, 2009. Her career included key assignments at all levels of staff, command posi-



PASTOR MARY BETHEL

tions, and notable nominative appointments such as serving as a Professor of Military Science. She contributed at the Department of the Army lev-

el and held joint assignments, leaving a mark of excellence in every role.

Education has always been a cornerstone of Pastor Bethel's journey. She earned bachelor's degrees in Psychology and Marketing and Public Relations, along with master's degrees in Guidance and Counseling and in Strategic Studies. Her academic achievements also include a Doctorate of Theology and graduation from the United States Army War College.

Today, Pastor Bethel continues her service in civilian life at Fort Hood, where she is a Department of the Army em-

SEE **BETHEL**, PG. 6



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.

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

SMALL STEPS FORWARD AFTER HEARTACHE

BY LINDA CRAWFORD

QUESTION: Dear Linda, I have goals I need to accomplish, but I've reached a plateau. I feel zero motivation. Although I know I need to do what I set out to do, I physically cannot, not even the basic, mundane task of making a call. I am having significant problems with my spouse, and my best friend of 22 years cut me off after I expressed my concern in our working together and friendship (we collaborated in activities at church). She exploded. After she cut me off, I felt an overwhelming feeling of grief and tiredness and, in general, felt taken advantage of by my spouse and my best friend. I felt abandoned. I pray to the Lord and ask Him to help me. I reflect on my behavior and am aware that I need to im-



LINDA CRAWFORD

prove, but I can't help feeling sad that my marriage is uncertain and that my friend of so many years could discard me that easily. I just feel like shutting down and talking to no one, but I'm concerned I will never reach my goals at this pace. What do you suggest?

ANSWER: First, thank you for being so honest. What you've described is not weakness—it is the nat-

ural exhaustion that comes when you're carrying heartache in more than one area of life. Anyone in your shoes would feel worn down.

Here are a few steps that might help you find your footing again:

1. Recognize grief for what it is.

Losing a long friendship and struggling in a marriage are deep losses. Allow yourself to name it as grief. Sometimes, we expect ourselves to "just push through," but the sadness you feel is a normal human response to being let down by people you trusted.

2. Shrink your goals into something possible.

Right now, it may feel impossible to tackle everything. Instead of focusing on the whole mountain, choose one small action each day. That might be writing down one thought, calling one person, or even taking a short walk. Small wins rebuild momentum.

3. Keep prayer simple. You're already turning to

God, which is powerful. Try breathing prayers throughout the day: inhale with "Lord, be my strength," and exhale with "I release my hurt." These little moments can keep you grounded.

4. Stay connected in at least one way.

When pain hits, isolation feels like relief, but it often deepens the ache. Even if it isn't your spouse or lost friend, look for one safe person to lean on (a pastor, counselor, or supportive acquaintance). You don't need a crowd, just one. And you can always call me.

5. Remember this season is not forever.

The thought "I'll never reach my goals" comes from exhaustion, not truth. Goals are still possible. Healing may take time, but step by step, your energy will return.

Hold onto this: God is not finished with you. Broken relationships do not erase your purpose. Each sunrise is a fresh chance to try again, even in the smallest way.

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR...

THE POWER OF THANK YOU

Gratitude shifts the way we see the world. A simple "thank you" can soften conflict, strengthen relationships, and even improve health. Research shows that people who practice grat-

itude daily report more joy and less stress.

When you pause to appreciate what you have, life feels fuller. Gratitude costs nothing but changes everything.

dan enjoys challenges of a different kind. He works through 10,000-piece puzzles and relaxes with his Nintendo Switch. He also stays active in No Limitations, the nonprofit his mother co-founded, which creates inclusive opportunities for individuals with disabilities in Central Texas. Through this program, Jordan participates in flag football, basketball, soccer, cheer, and sensory-friendly

holiday activities. He also plays baseball in the Little League Challenger Division, a national program for athletes with physical and intellectual challenges.

Jordan's community ties extend further. He is part of Cub Scout Troop 6008, known as The Incredibles, sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars. His dedication has not gone unnoticed. In 2024, he was honored with the Waco NAACP

Outstanding Member Award. The following year, he became the first charter member of the Ombudsmen men's group with the NANBPW.

Jordan Rice's story is one of resilience, service, and steady faithfulness. He is not only dependable; he is an example of how consistent acts of kindness and commitment strengthen the fabric of a community.

RICE | CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

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THE *Anchor* NEWS

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PURPOSE

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

POLICY

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

EDITORIAL POLICY

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

ials reflect the opinions of the editor.

LETTERS & ARTICLES POLICY

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

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

SUBSCRIPTIONS

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

ADVERTISING RATES

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

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SCHOLARSHIP GEMS YOU MIGHT BE MISSING

Looking beyond the usual college aid options can unlock surprising opportunities. From design contests to quirky hobbies, a world of under-the-radar scholarships exists—often with less competition and awards that reward your quirks, passions, or background. Here are some gems worth checking out:

UNIQUE SCHOLARSHIPS TO EXPLORE

- **Signature Hat Scholarship**
Design your dream headwear and submit your artwork for a chance to win \$500. Perfect for creatively inclined students.
- **Book Lovers Scholarship**

Write about a book everyone must read—and why. A thoughtful response could net you \$500.

• Create-A-Greeting-Card Scholarship Contest

Tap into your artistic side by designing a greeting card front—winner takes home \$10,000!

• Debt.com Scholarship for Aggressive Applicants

Prove your hustle—apply for three scholarships and submit proof to earn \$500.

• Vegetarian Resource Group Scholarship

Advocated for vegetarianism in your school or community? You could win up to \$10,000.

• Mann Lake Beekeeping Scholarship

Into apiculture? You might qualify for \$1,000 if you're studying or planning to study beekeeping.

• Foreclosure.com Scholarship

Essay contest analyzing "renting vs. owning"—first place wins \$4,000, with smaller amounts for runners-up.

• Zombie Apocalypse Scholarship

Describe how you'd survive a campus zombie invasion—creative survival plans could land you \$2,000.

• **Superpower Scholarship**
What superpower would you trade places with for a day? A 250-word creative response might win \$2,500.

• Unique Field-of-Study

Scholarships

Explore even quirkier ones:

• **Mycology (fungi) lovers**, apply for up to \$10,000 through Mycological Society scholarships.

• **Planning for a career dressed as a clown?** The Clowns of America Scholarship may be for you.

• **Last name "Gatling"?** NC State offers up to \$60,000 in scholarship funding.

• **Tattoo fans** can write about the "myths and realities of tattooing" for up to \$1,800.

• **Naked honesty?** The Nude Recreation Education Foundation offers up to \$1,500 for essays on nudism.

Scholarships with Upcoming Deadlines (Fall 2025)

• **Alice T. Schafer Mathematics Prize** — \$1,000, due Sept. 15, for female college students in math.

• **Gates Scholarship** — Full tuition for financially eligible U.S. high school seniors, due Sept. 15.

• **StudyCorgi Scholarship** — \$1,000, video-based contest due Sept. 17.

• **Niche \$25,000 "No Essay" Scholarship** — No essay needed, just create an account; deadline Sept. 30.

• Home Depot Founda-

tion's Path to Pro — \$2,500 for skilled-trades students (carpentry, HVAC, etc.) due Sept. 30.

• **Shout It Out Scholarship** — \$1,500; in 250 words, tell what you'd say if you could address the whole world at once; due Sept. 30.

• **Voice of Democracy Audio-Essay Contest** — Up to \$35,000, due Oct. 31. Involves audio and written essays on whether "America today reflects our forefathers' vision."

• **Zombie Apocalypse Scholarship** — \$2,000, due Oct. 31—same creative prompt, highlighting persistent availability.

TIPS FOR STUDENTS LOOKING BEYOND THE OBVIOUS

1. **Embrace your uniqueness:** Whether it's a hobby, personality trait, or background, let it be your edge.

2. **Read guidelines carefully:** Niche doesn't mean sloppy—stick to word counts, formats, and deadlines.

3. **Be bold or funny:** Especially in creative contests, personality can stand out.

4. **Don't ignore small awards:** Even \$500 can add up—books, supplies, fees.

5. **Track due dates:** Keep a spreadsheet or calendar with deadlines—and proof of submissions.

MESSAGE TO MY BROTHERS

BY J.L. CRAWFORD

Young brothers, let me share something with you from a man who has walked this road a long time. Marriage is not a sprint; it is a life-long journey. Along the way, you will discover that love is not just about feelings but about choices. Choose patience when you are tired. Choose kindness when you are frustrated. Choose to listen when you would rather talk.

Your wife is your partner, not your opponent. Learn to pray together, laugh often, and forgive quickly. Do not let pride keep you from saying, "I am sorry." That simple phrase



J.L. CRAWFORD

can heal more wounds than you can imagine.

Remember that respect goes both ways. The more you honor her, the more she will trust you. A strong marriage is not built in the grand moments but in the daily decisions to be faithful, dependable, and present.

Brothers, I have learned in seventy-seven years that when you put God first and your wife second, before work, friends, or hobbies, you will find peace in your home and joy in your heart.

Stand firm, walk humbly, and love deeply. That is the strength of a man.

"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her." Ephesians 5:25

PICKLEBALL TOURNAMENT, FAMILY FUN COMING TO WACO

The Cen-Tex African American and Hispanic Chambers present the StarBridge Pickleball Open & Community Fun Day at Camp Fimfo, 1000 Chickadee Lane Waco, TX on September 27, 2025. Join us for a weekend of fun, community, and competition!

The event kicks off Friday, Sept. 26 | 5:30 PM-7:30 PM with Team Kick-off featuring on-site registration, swag bag giveaways, and a chance

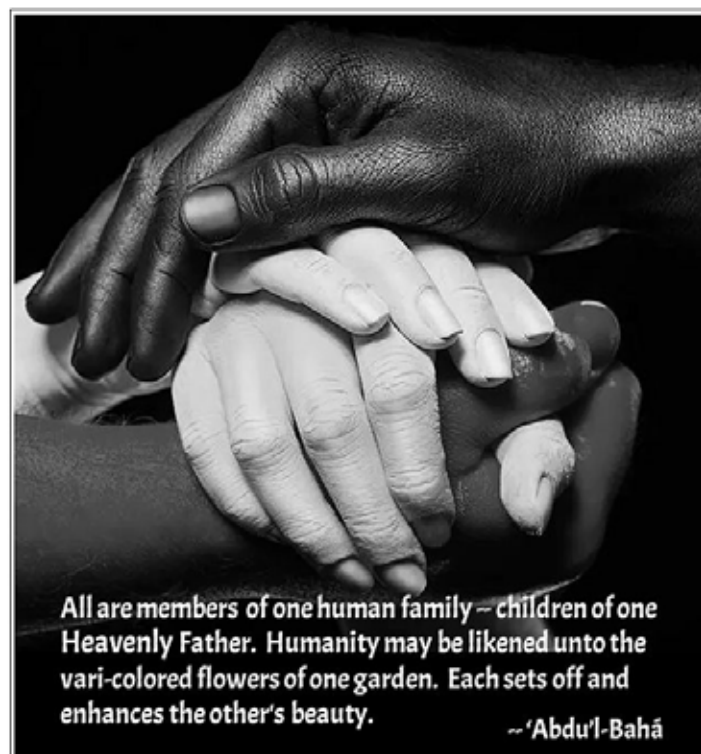
to connect with fellow players. Saturday, Sept. 27 | 9:00 AM-5:00 PM – Pickleball Tournament begins with multiple divisions, cash prizes, and trophies. Enjoy Camp Fimfo's amenities—swimming, fishing, mini golf, laser tag, and more!

Discounted day passes are available at \$20 for adults, \$10 for children under 12, and free admission for children under 2. A discounted weekend stay option is also available

for guests who wish to stay on-site. Please see registration link below for tournament sign-ups and Camp Fimfo campground admissions.

For more information, feel free to contact your local Chambers at info@centex-chamber.com or dytrun@wacohispanicchamber.com.

Register today! We can't wait to see you there! Registration Link: <https://bit.ly/SB-Pickleball25>



All are members of one human family – children of one Heavenly Father. Humanity may be likened unto the vari-colored flowers of one garden. Each sets off and enhances the other's beauty.

~ 'Abdu'l-Bahá

To learn more about the Bahá'í Faith, call (254) 717-7903

or visit wacobahais.org



bahai.org/beliefs

HEALTHY AGING FOR EVERY AGE—ADD LIFE TO YOUR YEARS

BY DR. SHAMONICA TRUNELL

Aging is often seen as something that “just happens,” but the truth is, how we age depends largely on the daily choices we make. From children building strong foundations, to adults balancing busy lives, to seniors focusing on vitality, every stage of life brings opportunities to strengthen health and add not just years to life—but life to your years.

TIPS FOR HEALTHY AGING AT ANY AGE

1. Build Balance & Strength Falls are one of the leading causes of injury in older

adults, but balance training and strength work help at every age. Try simple exercises like standing on one leg, heel-to-toe walking, or bodyweight squats. Children and young adults benefit too—strong muscles protect joints and support lifelong movement.

2. Nourish Your Body with Intention

What you eat today shapes your health tomorrow. Focus on lean proteins, high-fiber foods, colorful fruits and vegetables, and adequate hydration. Don't underestimate protein at breakfast—it helps preserve muscle mass, keeps energy steady, and curbs mid-morning crashes.



DR. SHAMONICA TRUNELL

3. Keep Your Mind Sharp Brain health is just as important as physical health. Read daily, learn new skills, or engage in hobbies that challenge your mind. Social connection

is powerful, too—staying engaged with family and friends can reduce risks of depression and memory decline.

4. Prioritize Preventive Care Routine check-ups and screenings should not be skipped. From vision and dental exams to blood pressure, cholesterol, and bone density testing, preventive care helps catch issues early—when they're most treatable.

5. Practice Gratitude & Joy Aging well isn't only about the body—it's about mindset. Gratitude practices, journaling, or simply writing a thank-you note once a week can boost mood and help you focus on what's going right in your life.

YOUR TAKEAWAY

Healthy aging doesn't belong only to older adults—it's for all of us, no matter our age.

The choices you make today are an investment in tomorrow's vitality. Focus on balance, nourishment, connection, and preventive care, and you'll not only live longer—you'll live better.

So this September, commit to one habit that supports your future self. Remember: healthy aging is about adding life to your years.

MONTHLY SELF-CARE CHALLENGE

Balance Break: Each day this month, practice standing on one leg for 30 seconds (each side). Do it while brushing your teeth, waiting for the microwave, or during a phone call. This simple exercise strengthens your balance, improves coordination, and protects against falls (an easy step toward aging well at any age).

ALL CHURCHES!

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- Commitment: 3 months minimum
- Savings: \$400+ compared to pay-per-visit

NOTES

- Household members only; proof of address required.
- Monthly payments are non-refundable once the month begins.
- Unlimited Plan capped at 12 visits per month, per member.
- Massage included only in Unlimited Plans.

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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



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- Health Care Professionals
- Business Leaders
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- Individuals



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Conducted under the auspices of
Glasser Institute for Choice Theory

DIABETES, HYPERTENSION CHALLENGE AFRICAN AMERICANS

High blood pressure and diabetes are two health challenges that continue to affect African Americans at higher rates than many other groups. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), African Americans are nearly twice as likely to

be diagnosed with diabetes as non-Hispanic whites, and they develop high blood pressure earlier in life and with more severe complications.

WHY THESE CONDITIONS MATTER

Both high blood pressure and diabetes are often called

“silent conditions” because they can go unnoticed until they cause serious health problems. Left untreated, they may lead to heart disease, kidney failure, blindness, and even stroke. These conditions don’t just affect individuals—they ripple through families, workplaces, and entire communities.

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

Several reasons help explain why African Americans are disproportionately impacted:

- Genetics: Family history plays a role in both conditions.
- Dietary patterns: Traditional diets high in sodium, fat, and processed foods can increase risks.
- Access to care: Limited access to affordable health-care and preventive screenings delays early treatment.
- Stress and environment: Economic and social pressures also contribute to higher rates of chronic illness.

STEPS TOWARD HEALTH

The good news is that small, consistent changes can make a big difference. Experts recommend:

- Regular checkups and screenings for blood pressure and blood sugar.
- Choosing more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins.
- Reducing salt and sugary drinks.
- Staying active at least 30 minutes a day, even with simple activities like walking.
- Managing stress through prayer, meditation, or talking with trusted friends and professionals.

A COMMUNITY EFFORT

Health is not only a personal responsibility—it’s a community effort. Churches, schools, and local organizations can play a powerful role by hosting health fairs, offering exercise programs, and providing education about nutrition and wellness. When communities work together, awareness rises and change becomes possible.

High blood pressure and diabetes do not have to define the future of African American health. By staying informed, making mindful choices, and supporting one another, communities can break the cycle and build a healthier tomorrow.

BETHEL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ployee serving as Supervisory Adjutant of Human Resources for the 407th Army Field Support Brigade. Her leadership extends beyond the military sphere into her pastoral calling. Since March 2017, she has faithfully led Bethel Breath of Life Ministries, Incorporated, located at 2300 Schwertner Drive in Killeen.

The ministry has flourished under her leadership. On its campus are several enterprises including BBOLM College of Cosmetology, Mary Joyce’s

Fashions clothing store, and Bethel Breath of Life Ministries College of Divinity and Seminary. The church has also expanded to include two virtual campuses serving communities in San Antonio and Temple.

Pastor Mary Bethel stands as a remarkable example of resilience, service, and vision. Her life’s work reflects a deep commitment to faith, family, and community, values she continues to uphold and share with those around her.

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WHY YOU MAY NEED MORE THAN JUST ORIGINAL MEDICARE

BY MARGARET IVORY

In 2005, I had Medicare booths at three Wal-Mart locations: on Franklin Avenue, in Hewitt, and in Temple. People used to call me “Miss Wal-Mart” because they would see me at the various locations where I knew the staff and the customers of all of the locations.

I was always confused about which location I was supposed to be at, and was continuously whipping up and down Interstate 35 to meet my clients who were already at the correct location.

One day, a Medicare recipient sat down in a chair at my Franklin booth and wept. I got up and put my arm around her, gave her tissues, and let her cry it out. When she composed herself, she told me that she

had just declared bankruptcy earlier that day.

She had Original Medicare Parts A and B. She had a pension from her retirement. She had a monthly Social Security check. She had about \$50,000 in the bank. In 2004, she was in the hospital four times.

Here she was at my booth physically healthy but financially sick. Since she only had Medicare Parts A and B, she was subject to a Part A deductible and Part B 20% coinsurance. In 2004, the Part A deductible was \$876. The Part A deductible had to be paid each time a person was out of the hospital more than 60 days between admissions if all they had was Original Medicare (Part A + Part B). Worst of all, there wasn't any stop-loss or maximum out-of-pocket. You could keep paying until



MARGARET IVORY

the cows came home.

In her case, she was in the hospital each season with more than 60 days elapsing between admissions. Paying the \$876 four times was bad enough, but what destroyed her funds in the bank was the 20% Part B coinsurance. Her

worst bill was \$65,000, so she had to pay \$13,000 + \$876 (\$13,876) for that one bill. But remember, she had four bills. \$13,876 x 4 bills equals more than \$52,000.

All of her precious hard-earned savings was sucked up in one swoop, and there she was at my booth financially bankrupt. I taught her about Part C Medicare Advantage Plans plus Part D Prescription Drug Plans. I was able to sign her up that day for a great plan that had a maximum out-of-pocket, which was about \$3,000.

If she had a Part C plan in 2004, she would not have had to file for bankruptcy. She could have paid the maximum out-of-pocket and perhaps done a part-time job to reimburse her savings account or saved that amount up from her pension

and Social Security check.

When she left my booth, she was very calm and composed. She knew that she would never have to be in that position ever again—the horrible possibility of losing all of her savings due to medical bills.

I recommend that you receive a Medicare Analysis to see if a Part C plan with a Part D plan attached would be good for you. Are you turning 65 years old soon? Are you retiring soon from your job?

My goal is for all Medicare recipients to understand Medicare options and how to make Medicare work best for them. I represent UnitedHealthcare and Humana in McLennan County. Call today to set up an appointment.

Praying this is a great day for you. Margaret Ivory, Medicare Plans Broker, 254-313-7413.

YOUTH COOKING WORKSHOP SET FOR OCTOBER 11 IN WACO

Kids in the Kitchen
Saturday, October 11, 2025
9am-noon
McLennan County Extension Office
4224 Cobbs Drive
Waco, Texas 76710
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service of McLennan

County, along with McLennan Community College Continuing Education will be conducting the Kids in the Kitchen class on Saturday, October 11, 2025, from 9am – noon, at the McLennan County Extension Office located at 4224 Cobbs Drive, Waco TX 76710.

In this one-day program, instructor Rachel Esquivel will guide youth ages 8-16 as they explore foods from around the world and gain hands-on cooking experience. Participants will learn basic kitchen skills, food safety practices, knife skills, and how to prepare simple,

delicious meals. This fun and engaging class encourages culinary creativity and builds kitchen confidence.

The cost of this class is \$25.00. For more information, call Rachel Esquivel at (254) 757-5180 or email Rachel.esquivel@ag.tamu.edu.

Online Registration:

MCC Continuing Education (mclennan.edu) Click Community Programs, Click Kids College, scroll to the Kids in the Kitchen class.

Registration by phone: Call MCC Continuing Education at (254) 299-8888. Space is limited. Please register by October 9th.

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Public Meeting

BU 77 and SL 484

From I-35 to FM 434 (University Parks Drive)

YOU'RE INVITED!



In Person

Tuesday, Sept. 30, 2025
5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Texas Sports Hall of Fame
The Great Hall
1108 S University Parks Drive
Waco, TX 76706

Virtual

Tuesday, Sept. 30, 2025
by 5:30 p.m.
www.txdot.gov, keyword
search "BU 77 Blvd"

TxDOT invites you to a in-person meeting with a virtual option. The purpose of this public meeting is to present the proposed project, engage with the community and gather feedback. This project would convert the existing Business (BU) 77 access-controlled facility into an urban boulevard with pedestrian/bicycle accommodations. Improvements for this project include replacing the existing pavement, providing pedestrian/bicycle accommodations, and replacing existing bridges. Intersection alternatives are being analyzed for safety and traffic operation improvements. SL 484 would be realigned into SL 574 (South MLK Jr. Boulevard).

The public meeting will be held in an open house format, where attendees may come and go at their convenience. Attendees will be able to view a prerecorded video presentation, review hard copies of project materials, ask questions of TxDOT staff and consultants, and leave written comments. The same information will be available at the in-person and virtual options.



We invite you to:

- Learn about project updates and the process TxDOT follows
- View a prerecorded presentation and supporting project exhibits
- Provide feedback on the project
- Ask questions and submit comments

WE WANT YOUR INPUT

Please submit or postmark your comments by Oct. 15, 2025.

Project questions? Please contact:

Lisa Deitemeyer, P.E.
ldeitemeyer@jmt.com | 469-678-3200

To submit comments by email:

ldeitemeyer@jmt.com

If you have special communication or accommodation needs please contact:

Mitzi Ellison
Mitzi@nancyledbetter.com | 512-761-2711

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried-out by TxDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated July 17, 2025, and executed by FHWA and TxDOT.

Reunión Pública

BU 77 y el SL 484

Desde la I-35 hasta la FM 434 (University Parks Drive)

¡ESTÁ INVITADO!



En Persona

Martes, 30 de septiembre de
2025 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Texas Sports Hall of Fame
The Great Hall
1108 S University Parks Drive
Waco, TX 76706

Virtual

Martes, 30 de septiembre
de 2025 a las 5:30 p.m.
www.txdot.gov, búsqueda
de palabra clave
"BU 77 Blvd"

TxDOT le invita a una reunión presencial con opción virtual. El objetivo de esta reunión pública es presentar el proyecto propuesto, interactuar con la comunidad y recabar opiniones. Este proyecto convertiría la actual instalación de acceso controlado de Business (BU) 77 en una avenida urbana con instalaciones para peatones y bicicletas. Las mejoras de este proyecto incluyen la sustitución del pavimento existente, la creación de instalaciones para peatones y ciclistas y la sustitución de los puentes existentes. Se están analizando alternativas de intersección para mejorar la seguridad y la circulación del tráfico. La SL 484 se realinearía con la SL 574 (South MLK Jr. Boulevard).

La reunión pública se llevará a cabo en formato de reunión a puertas abiertas, donde los asistentes podrán entrar y salir cuando lo deseen. Los asistentes podrán ver una presentación en video pregrabada, revisar copias impresas de los materiales del proyecto, hacer preguntas al personal y a los consultores de TxDOT, y dejar comentarios por escrito. La misma información estará disponible tanto en la opción presencial como en la virtual.



Le invitamos a:

- Conocer las actualizaciones del proyecto y el proceso que sigue TxDOT
- Ver una presentación pregrabada y exhibiciones de proyectos de apoyo
- Proporcionar comentarios sobre el proyecto
- Hacer preguntas y enviar comentarios

QUEREMOS SU OPINIÓN

Por favor, envíe o mataselle sus comentarios antes del 15 de octubre de 2025.

Si tiene una pregunta sobre el proyecto comuníquese con:

Lisa Deitemeyer, P.E.
ldeitemeyer@jmt.com | 469-678-3200

Comentarios por correo electrónico:

ldeitemeyer@jmt.com

Si tiene necesidades especiales de comunicación o adaptación, póngase en contacto con:

Mitzi Ellison
Mitzi@nancyledbetter.com | 512-761-2711

La revisión ambiental, la consulta y otras acciones requeridas por las leyes ambientales federales aplicables para este Proyecto están siendo, o han sido, llevadas a cabo por TxDOT de conformidad con 23 U.S.C. 327 y un Memorandum de Entendimiento con fecha del 17 de julio de 2025, y ejecutadas por FHWA y TxDOT.

THE POWER OF UNITY IN DIVERSITY

BY MICHAEL JONES



MICHAEL JONES

The phrase “unity in diversity” will usually produce enthusiastic support among most people in a random group—but too many will privately neglect to add that another aspect of diversity work must come first: Justice.

Justice requires that we understand the problems of our community, and to do so, we need to study all aspects of its history, preferably together. Listening to each other is how we comprehend the struggles of people of different races, the injustices that minorities suffered in the past and still suffer in the present. Then, if we're truly committed to a just society, we must be willing to make sacrifices to ensure that everyone has opportunities to thrive.

To build a truly unified society, the Bahá'í teachings say everyone needs to have a voice, and everyone has a right to expect and receive justice.

It can be challenging, particularly for those in power, to conflate diversity with justice, because doing so requires admitting the inequalities in our society and the ways in which some have benefited over others, both historically and at present. Getting to unity requires doing the hard work of fighting for justice by creating opportunities for the marginalized and disenfranchised.

Diversity strengthens humanity. When we view diversity not as a problem, but as an opportunity, when we see minority groups as resources rather than problems, then we can begin to effect true power sharing and start to harness the potential of a diverse, many-faceted, problem-solving society.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, son of the Bahá'í Faith's founder, beautifully described diversity as a net benefit to everyone: “Con-

sider the flowers of a garden: though differing in kind, colour, form and shape, yet, as they are refreshed by the waters of one spring, revived by the breath of one wind, invigorated by the rays of one sun, this diversity increaseth their charm, and addeth unto their beauty. Thus, when that unifying force, the penetrating influence of the Word of God, taketh effect, the difference of customs, manners, habits, ideas, opinions and dispositions embellishes the world of humanity.

“...How unpleasing to the eye if all the flowers and plants, the leaves and blossoms, the fruits, the branches and the trees of that garden were all of the same shape and colour! Diversity of hues, form and shape, enricheth and adorneth the garden, and heighteneth the effect thereof.”

Affirming and celebrating racial diversity will require getting comfortable with being uncomfortable—by accepting that achieving true diversity won't be easy but is an important and worthwhile process for a just society.

Please visit our local Bahá'í website at wacobahais.org or the global information site at bahai.org/beliefs. Our Facebook page is Bahai Faith of Waco.

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ANGELS OF MERCY CHAPTER #18 NAMED 2024–2025 CHAPTER OF THE YEAR



ANGELS OF MERCY CHAPTER #18 OF WACO WAS NAMED 2024–2025 CHAPTER OF THE YEAR AT THE NORRIS WRIGHT CUNNEY GRAND CHAPTER OF TEXAS GRAND SESSION IN FRISCO.

BY LINDA CRAWFORD

Waco, Texas — Angels of Mercy Chapter #18 of Waco has received the distinguished honor of being recognized as the 2024–2025 Chapter of the Year at the 28th Annual Grand Session of the Norris Wright Cuney Grand Chapter of Texas, Order of the Eastern Stars, held June 27, 2025, in Frisco, Texas. This award is one of the highest honors bestowed within the Order of the Eastern Stars, recognizing outstanding service, leadership, and dedication to both the organization and the broader community.

The Order of the Eastern Stars is one of the largest fraternal organizations in the world that admits both men and women. It was founded in the mid-1800s and is dedicated to charity, truth, and loving kindness. The Norris Wright Cuney Grand Chapter of Texas, named for the prominent African American political leader and philanthropist, carries forward this legacy across the state, encouraging chapters to be shining examples of community engagement and spiritual devotion.

Angels of Mercy Chapter #18 has long been known in

Waco for its active role in service projects, charitable donations, and mentorship programs. Members regularly support scholarship funds, provide assistance to families in need, partner with local churches, and volunteer in civic initiatives. Their consistent presence and willingness to serve embody the motto of the chapter, “Working Together Works.”

This recognition affirms the hard work, unity, and compassion of the members, officers, and leadership of Chapter #18. By modeling fellowship and faith in action, the chapter

has distinguished itself among its peers across Texas. Leaders of the chapter expressed their gratitude for the honor, noting that the acknowledgement of this award has encouraged them to remain dedicated, steadfast, and committed to serving the community.

With this recognition, Angels of Mercy Chapter #18 re-

mains inspired to expand its outreach, strengthen bonds of friendship and service, and continue reflecting the values of the Order of the Eastern Stars. Congratulations to the members of Angels of Mercy Chapter #18 for a job well done. May their light continue to shine brightly throughout Waco and beyond.

PREPARING YOUR HOUSE FOR THE MARKET

**SUBMITTED BY
LINDA MCDONALD**

Putting your home on the market is more than just planting a sign in the yard. A little preparation can make a big difference in attracting buyers and getting the best price for your property.

Start with curb appeal. First impressions matter, and a freshly mowed lawn, trimmed shrubs, and a clean entryway set the right tone. A new welcome mat and a few potted plants by the front door go a long way.

Inside the house, decluttering is key. Pack away personal items such as family photos and knickknacks. Buyers want to imagine themselves living in



LINDA MCDONALD
REALTOR, CRS, GRI, PMN, SRS

the space, and a clean, neutral look helps them do that. Consider giving walls a fresh coat of paint in light, neutral colors.

Do a deep clean from top to bottom. Shine the windows, scrub floors, and make sure every room smells fresh. Minor repairs also make a big impact, whether it is fixing a leaky faucet or replacing a burned-out lightbulb. Small details tell buyers that the home has been well cared for.

Finally, stage the home to highlight its best features. Arrange furniture to make rooms feel open and inviting. Let in as much natural light as possible, and if you can, add small touches like fresh flowers or a bowl of fruit in the kitchen.

Taking these steps helps your house stand out in a crowded market. A well-prepared home often sells faster and closer to the asking price.

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THEY WERE OFFENDED

BY MATTHEW REED

The Pharisees were offended at a saying of Jesus: "Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?" (Matthew 15:12).

Jesus' reply was, "Leave them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind." Now, the Pharisees were supposedly a people of God. They were like many in the church today, rejecting the teachings of Jesus.

This article is written so that we, the readers of it, might self-check ourselves (judge



PASTOR MATTHEW AND LADY HELEN REED

ourselves, that we be not judged). The Bible-believing church should never question the teachings of Jesus. Jesus came to make peace between Jew and Gentile.

It is written in Ephesians 2:13: "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. 14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man,

so making peace; 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: 17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. 18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. 19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."

There are those who claim to be disciples of Christ who are teaching another gospel. For clearly, in the gospel of Christ, we are not instructed to

take sides nor to advocate for war, but to be peacemakers. Those who advocate for war, and those who follow these teachings, are the blind and leaders of the blind—and they are sure to fall into a ditch.

In the gospel of Jesus the Christ, we are taught that God is no respecter of persons (Jew nor Gentile). If we are going to be saved, we must accept Jesus and His teachings without question.

Let us resolve not to be offended at the teachings of Jesus. Whatsoever He teaches, let us receive it and become doers of His teachings

WHEN THE D IS DROPPED

Getting insurance can already be a challenge, but it becomes even more complicated when the language around medical conditions changes. For example, what used to be called PTSD, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, is now often referred to as PTS, Post-Traumatic Stress. At first glance the difference may seem small, but dropping the "D" can affect the kind of care and coverage a person receives.

Insurance companies rely heavily on diagnostic terms. The presence or absence of a word like "disorder" can



WANDA GUNTER

determine if a condition is seen as a medical necessity or merely an emotional difficulty. This, in turn, shapes whether treatment is covered, how long it is covered, and what type of providers are included in the network.

For those seeking help, it is important to ask clear questions when reviewing policies. Find out what terms your insurer recognizes. Ask specifically about counseling, medication, and long-term therapy options. Document conversations and keep copies of correspondence, because wording matters in the world of insurance.

When the "D" is dropped, care should not be. The need for treatment remains the same. Awareness of these changes empowers you to advocate for yourself, find providers who understand the terminology, and secure the coverage you deserve.

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WANDA B. GUNTER

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

NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY SET FOR SEPTEMBER 16

National Voter Registration Day is upon us. Next Tuesday, Sept. 16 organizations around the country will register voters on school campuses, in libraries, at salons and barber shops, churches--you name it. Also, please note that National Voter Registration Day is now National Voter Registration Week, because we recognize that some sites

are better on different days. The Project VIER Coalition and the NAACP will lead the way in McLennan County. If you already have a site in mind, please let me know. I have a number of sites which I will list below. You need only reach out and let me know if you would like to register voters at one of those sites. If you have a space you

would like to donate for registering voters, let me know. National Voter Registration Days Sites Available: MCC Michaelis Academic Center Foyer--Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Learning Technology Center Foyer-- Science Building Foyer-- Outdoor area beneath Student Services Building-- Voter Deputy Registrars

Finally, do not allow people to glibly tell you that they are registered to vote. Voters, especially in Texas, are being removed from the voting roles

for all kinds of reasons. To ensure that they are registered, people need to re-register with their drivers license numbers and the last four of their SSN. Registering this way is crucial for all voters.

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If you re-certified to be a deputy register after January 1, 2025, you are still a VDR. To recertify, all you need do is complete the voter deputy registrar application and mail it or take it to the Elections Office. There is a VDR guide provided, but no testing is required. Simply complete and return the form. I have provided the link to the VDR application for you below. Here is the link to the VDR Application: <https://tx-mclennancounty.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/11307/VDR-Application>

VILLA
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and spending time outdoors with his family. Inspired by the longstanding impact of publications such as The Anchor News and El Tiempo, Villa is proud to contribute to the legacy of local journalism. As a Wacoan working in his own community, he views his role not simply as a job but as a mission to amplify stories and strengthen the fabric of the city he has always called home.

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YOUR CONFESSIONS BECOME YOUR POSSESSIONS, PART 4

BY EVANGELIST
RUBY MCCRAY

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

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

"The tongue can bring death or life; those who love to talk will reap the consequences." If you love to talk like I do, say positive things only. Here is the background that leads to the account of the assistant to the king of Israel who made a negative confession and reaped his negative results.

Continuing with 2 Kings Chapter 7, beginning with Verses 10 through 20:

"So they went back to the city and told the gatekeepers what had happened. 'We went out to the Aramean camp,' they

said, 'and no one was there! The horses and donkeys were tethered, and the tents were all in order, but there wasn't a single person around!' Then the gatekeepers shouted the news to the people in the palace.

"The king got out of bed in the middle of the night and told his officers, 'I know what has happened. The Arameans know we are starving, so they have left their camp and have hidden in the fields. They are expecting us to leave the city, and then they will take us alive and capture the city.'

"One of his officers replied, 'We had better send out scouts to check into this. Let them take five of the remaining horses. If something happens to them, it will be no worse than if they stay here and die with the rest of us.'

"So, two chariots with horses were prepared, and the king sent scouts to see what had happened to the Aramean army. They went all the way to the Jordan River, following a trail of clothing and equipment that the Arameans had thrown away in their mad rush to escape. The scouts returned and told the king about it. Then the people of Samaria rushed out and plundered the Aramean camp. So it was true that six quarts



EVG. RUBY MCCRAY

of choice flour were sold that day for one piece of silver, and twelve quarts of barley grain were sold for one piece of silver, just as the Lord had promised. The king appointed his officer to control the traffic at the gate, but he was knocked down and trampled to death as the people rushed out.

"So, everything happened exactly as the man of God had predicted when the king came to his house. The man of God had said to the king, 'By this time tomorrow in the markets of Samaria, six quarts of choice flour will cost one piece of silver, and twelve quarts of barley grain will cost one piece of sil-

ver.'

"The king's officer had replied, 'That couldn't happen even if the Lord opened the windows of heaven!' And the man of God had said, 'You will see it happen with your own eyes, but you won't be able to eat any of it!' And so it was, for the people trampled him to death at the gate!"

Confessions! Genesis 29:1-35 states that Jacob married two sisters, Leah and Rachel. When God saw that Leah was unloved, He opened her womb so that she could have children but closed Rachel's. In Chapter 30, Rachel became angry with Jacob and accused him of not giving her children. Jacob told her that it was God who had kept her from having children. In Verse 22, God remembered Rachel, who gave birth to Joseph. At that time, she confessed that God would give her another son. Her confession became her possession.

Genesis 35:16-20 records that Rachel had another son and named him Benoni, which means "son of my sorrow," because she had such hard labor pains and died giving birth. However, Jacob named him Benjamin, which means "son of my right hand."

Precious people, let me tell you why I think Rachel died. Genesis 31 records that Jacob took his wives, all his children, animals, and everything he had and left his father-in-law to return to his own country. Laban got some of his relatives to pursue them. Unbeknownst to Jacob, Rachel had stolen one of his idols.

When the angry Laban found them and accused someone of stealing his idol, Jacob, the head of his household, told Laban to search, and the guilty one must die. Laban searched. When he came to Rachel, who was sitting on the idol, she gave an excuse why she couldn't get up. Although Laban didn't find it, God knew and heard Jacob's curse. Parents, stop speaking curses on your children, but blessings! They can amount to something!

This concludes the series concerning our confessions. May the Lord help us to speak positively. 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 rubbyacorm@yahoo.com or write to: A City of Refuge Ministries, P. O. Box 2025, Waco, Texas 76703.

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CHOICES AND ATTITUDES

BY MONA DUNKIN

Who has not had an experience when your back was against the wall? What to do? As with most things in life, the array of choices and attitudes is vast. In a rush-rush, worry-worry world, one may become blind to options.

There is always a choice. Even in extreme limits, one always has a choice and can make things better or can make things worse. I find this insight effective in dealing with the residents at the sanction center. When they rebel against limits, I ask, "Is there anything you can do to make the situation worse?" Although coming from a negative perspective, it seems to empower them to realize they are "in control." I continue, "Conversely, is there anything you can do to make the situation better?" Reluctantly, most agree that when their back is against the wall they still have the power to make things better or worse.

Attitude is the deal-breaker. What could make a seemingly impossible situation a little bit better? The key is attitude. Attitude comprises words used,



MONA DUNKIN

tone of voice, sounds made, facial expressions, and body language. Without a word being spoken, a simple shift from rebellion to resistance is noticeable. And in most cases, that shift is visible enough to affect a lowering of defenses so communication and negotiation can be re-established. Privileges are subject to change depending on one's attitude.

Choices are empowering. When keys are misplaced, an initial response is "No!" That is denial. In a state of denial,

vision is narrowed, thinking is decreased, and stress rises. A seemingly illogical decision is to choose to accept the lost keys! Yet that frees the mind to remember where they might be. It activates the eyes to see rather than overlook. It also releases creativity to solve the problem. The choice of keeping a good attitude amid an inconvenience frees you to have a good day regardless.

Choices can be crippling. Too many choices can have a negative impact. In a study of consumer purchases, a ven-

dor offering six flavors of jam sold to 30% of those who visited his display, whereas the vendor with 24 flavors had only a 3% buy-rate. Too many choices lead to a stalemate.

Make your attitude your ally. This is done through the power of choice—if not of the circumstance, then definitely of your response to the circumstance. In those no-choice, back-to-the-wall situations, attitude can be a lifesaver.

Mona Dunkin, *Solution Principles*, 254-749-6594, mdunkin@gmail.com.

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