

THE Anchor NEWS

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DR. COFFIE: BRINGING HEALING AND HOPE TO KILLEEN

Apostle Dr. Lincoln G. Coffie has built a life and ministry dedicated to transforming lives, restoring hope, and uplifting communities. As Senior Pastor of Open Fire International Fellowship and Overseer of the Open Fire International Fellowship Network, Dr. Coffie has spent more than a decade leading with passion, vision, and unwavering faith. He also serves as Chancellor of Open Fire Bible College and is recognized internationally as a dynamic speaker whose messages resonate with power and clarity.

Known for his compassionate heart and commitment to God's people, Dr. Coffie has made it his mission to nurture spiritual growth and provide healing for those who are hurting. His ministry is marked by the gift of healing and deliverance, with countless testimonies of lives changed both locally and abroad. His reve-



DR. LINCOLN G. COFFIE

latory teaching style consistently points men and women to Christ, bringing encouragement and strength to those in need.

In 2024, Dr. Coffie was affirmed as an Apostle, further confirming his calling as a leader of leaders. With a mandate inspired by Isaiah

54:3 to revitalize desolate cities, he and his wife, Dr. Apryl, have launched several impactful community initiatives. These efforts include the creation of a food truck park, the opening of an automotive repair shop, and the long-awaited establishment of Killeen Urgent Care in September 2025—meeting a critical healthcare need that had gone unmet for two decades.

Dr. Coffie's journey is rooted in both faith and academic excellence. He began his higher education at McLennan Community College in Waco, where he graduated with Highest Honors and was among the first recipients of the prestigious Bill Gates Scholarship. He continued his studies at Baylor University, earning a Bachelor's Degree in Forensic Science, and later completed his Doctor of Medicine at the Univer-

SEE **COFFIE**, PG. 12

MAKING MOMS HAPPY: THE WORK OF TONJA CARPENTER

In the heart of Waco, countless new mothers and families have found comfort, care, and confidence thanks to the dedication of Tonja Carpenter. As an International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC), Registered Lactation Consultant (RLC), Postpartum Certified Doula (PCD, DONA), and Certified Infant Massage Instructor (CIMI), Tonja brings a wealth of expertise to every family she serves.

Her professional journey reflects both depth and passion. She has completed the prestigious Master IBCLC Class, advanced training in Orofacial Myofunctional Therapy with a focus on breastfeeding infants, and specialized coursework in infant massage and myofascial



TONJA CARPENTER

release. With a keen eye for detail, she is trained to assess oral and lingual function in breastfeeding infants using several trusted tools, including the Ha-

zelbaker and Martinelli assessments, the Tethered Oral Tissues Screening assessment, and the Murphy Sweep.

Since 2015, Tonja has been supporting families as a postpartum doula, and since 2017, she has been a trusted provider of lactation care. Today, she leads Postpartum Doula and Lactation Services of Waco, partnering with the Waco Birth Center to deliver skilled lactation support. Families using Superior Medicaid and major insurers such as Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas, UnitedHealthcare, Tricare, and Cigna benefit from these services. In addition, her practice is in-network with Aetna indepen-

SEE **MOMS**, PG. 10

LAJUANA JONES: HEART & COURAGE IN LEADERSHIP

At Baylor Scott & White, leadership is not just measured in titles, but in the lives touched and the culture created. For Chief Nursing Officer LaJuana Jones, her five years at the helm have transformed the nursing experience into something deeper, an environment where caregivers feel valued, empowered, and inspired.

Jones' leadership has already left a lasting mark. Under her guidance, Baylor Scott & White earned the prestigious Magnet designation, one of the highest honors in nursing. Fewer than ten percent of hospitals nationwide hold this recognition, which signifies excellence in patient outcomes, nursing professionalism, and innovation in practice. For her team, the award represents the tangible result of her belief that when nurses thrive, patients benefit.

Colleagues consistently describe Jones as approachable, present, and unafraid to engage in the difficult conversations that healthcare demands. She openly acknowledges her journey as a woman of color in a field where diversity in top leadership remains rare. By doing so, she offers encouragement to others who might feel unseen. "She is courageous, she is transparent, and she is proud of who she is," said one nurse who has worked closely with her. "And that makes us proud to serve under her."

Her leadership ex-



LAJUANA JONES

tends beyond accolades. At a time when hospitals across the nation are facing nursing shortages, burnout, and shifting demands, Jones has focused on building a culture of resilience. She has prioritized mentorship, opened doors for professional development, and created opportunities for her staff to grow. Nurses at Baylor Scott & White often note that she does not simply issue directives from an office but walks the floors, asks questions, and listens.

The significance of her leadership is particularly meaningful in today's healthcare climate, where many systems struggle to retain staff. By showing up authentically and advocating fiercely for her nurses, Jones sets an example of servant leadership. Her impact is seen in both the morale of her staff and the improved care patients receive.

For the Central Tex-

SEE **JONES**, PG. 14

**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—

WISDOM FOR THE JOURNEY

BY LINDA CRAWFORD

"Dreams may start as fragile as babies, but with wisdom and patience, they grow strong enough to change lives."

LETTER TO THE LIFE COACH:

Dear Linda,

I am writing because I feel torn between two paths in my life. I have worked at the same job for over 15 years, and while it provides stability and good benefits, I feel stuck and uninspired. Recently, I was offered a chance to start a small business doing something I truly enjoy, but it comes with financial risks and no guarantees of success.

My family is divided on what I should do. Some tell me to play it safe and keep the job until retirement. Others encourage me to step out on faith and pursue my passion. I feel caught in the middle and afraid of making the wrong

**LINDA CRAWFORD**

choice. How do I decide between security and the possibility of living my dream?

Signed,
Confused but Hopeful
LIFE COACH'S RESPONSE:

Dear Confused but Hopeful,

This is a choice many people face at some point in life. Security offers peace of mind, but passion offers fulfillment. The key is not to see them as enemies but as partners that can work together. You can nurture a dream while holding on to stability until the right season comes.

When I launched *The Anchor News* twenty-three years ago, some urged me to quit my job as a college professor and run the paper full time. But a wise friend, Laveda Brown, reminded me, "Babies can't live on their own, can't pay bills, and can't take care of the family financially. *The Anchor* is a

baby. Think about it." I kept my job while allowing the paper to grow at its own pace.

Many businesses shut down for lack of funds, but because I kept working, I was able to supplement the newspaper's needs. Today, I have retired from teaching, and just as babies eventually grow up, *The Anchor* has become a legend in the community and a ministry that continues to touch lives.

My advice is to pray, plan, and prepare. Sometimes the wisest step is not to leap immediately, but to build your bridge slowly. That way, you walk toward your passion with peace and purpose.

With encouragement,

Your Life Coach,
Linda Crawford

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR...

HONORING BLACK MEDICAL HEROES

JL and I are excited to share this month's issue of *The Anchor* with you. It is filled with stories of medical professionals who give so much of themselves to care

for others. We hope you enjoy reading their journeys and feel the same pride and gratitude we do for the impact they make in our community.

DR. SHAMONICA TRUNELL: SERVING WACO WITH CARE AND COMMITMENT

For more than twenty-five years, Dr. Shamonica Trunell has dedicated her career to the chiropractic field, helping patients of all ages find relief and improve their quality of life. As the owner and lead chiropractor at Hillcrest Chiropractic in Waco, she brings a passion for natural, drug-free healing that focuses on restoring balance and promoting long-term wellness.

Her approach to care is simple yet powerful. She listens closely to each patient, works to uncover the root cause of their pain, and develops personalized plans that support both recovery and education. Whether

**DR. SHAMONICA TRUNELL**

treating neck and back pain,

auto injuries, or chronic headaches, or providing prenatal and pediatric care, Dr. Trunell combines gentle techniques with guidance that empowers patients to take an active role in their healing journey.

Dr. Trunell is certified in the Webster Technique and provides care for patients from infancy through the senior years. She takes pride in making Hillcrest Chiropractic a welcoming environment where families feel supported and encouraged. Her mission is to serve her community with compassion, integrity,

SEE **TRUNELL**, PG. 7

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

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DR. GUNN GUIDES MCLENNAN MEDICAL SOCIETY IN 2025

When Dr. Nadege Gunn steps into a room, her presence reflects both the precision of a scientist and the compassion of a community leader. In 2025, she brings both qualities to her new role as President of the McLennan County Medical Society.

Dr. Gunn is a board-certified gastroenterologist and hepatologist whose career blends clinical expertise, academic leadership, and military service. She serves as Senior Scientific Advisor and Medical Director at Velocity Clinical Research, Inc. where she oversees clinical trials across diverse therapeutic areas. Her work ensures that cutting-edge treatments are tested with rigor, integrity, and patient safety at the forefront. She also directs

the hepatology clinic at Coryell Health in both Waco and Gatesville, where patients find compassionate, specialized care close to home.

Her impact also extends into the classroom. As an Adjunct Assistant Professor and Gastroenterology course director at Texas A&M College of Medicine, she shapes the next generation of physicians, bringing the same high standards of excellence that define her clinical practice.

Dr. Gunn's journey to leadership has been marked by service. After earning her medical degree from the University of Florida College of Medicine, she completed her residency in Internal Medicine at the Greenville Health System in South Carolina. She went on to complete fel-



DR. NADEGE GUNN

lowships in Gastroenterology and Hepatology through the San Antonio Uniformed Services Health Education Consortium while on active duty in the United States Air

Force. Her military career included attaining the rank of Major and serving as Chief of Gastroenterology at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida. This combination of discipline, leadership, and expertise now strengthens her ability to advocate for patients and physicians in Central Texas.

As President of the McLennan County Medical Society, Dr. Gunn is focused on advancing healthcare collaboration, supporting medical professionals, and encouraging healthier lifestyles throughout the community. One new initiative is a community walking program launched by the medical society, which will take place every third Saturday. The effort aims to promote physical activity, build connections, and demon-

strate that healthcare extends beyond clinic walls.

"Health is more than medicine," Dr. Gunn notes. "It is about empowering people to take daily steps, literally and figuratively, toward wellness." With her steady leadership, the McLennan County Medical Society begins 2025 with both vision and action, carrying forward a tradition of service that benefits physicians and patients alike.

The community is invited to participate in the new walking program every third Saturday. All ages are welcome to join, and residents are encouraged to bring family, friends, and neighbors. It is a simple way to connect with others, enjoy fresh air, and take steps toward better health together.

KILLEEN: DR. SUE "NEESY" CROFT: A LEGACY OF HEALING, RESILIENCE, AND EMPOWERMENT

For more than thirty years, Dr. Sue "Neesy" Croft has been a trusted leader in natural health and holistic wellness throughout Central Texas. Based in Killeen, she is the owner of NaturallyMe Alternative Therapies Center, formerly Central Texas Complementary and Alternative Medicine Clinic, which has served the community since 1997. She also directs LifeStyle and Business Consulting Services, formerly Community Care Consultants of Central Texas, founded in 1992 to guide entrepreneurs as they build innovative ventures and step confidently into leadership roles.



DR. SUE "NEESY" CROFT

Dr. Croft's professional achievements are deeply connected to her personal journey. As a survivor of Triple Negative Breast Cancer, she transformed her experience into purpose by founding Survivors and Thrivers On Purpose, a nonprofit organization in Killeen dedicated to providing education, encouragement, and empowerment for individuals facing cancer survivorship. Through this work, she has become a beacon of hope for those walking difficult health journeys.

Her academic and medical background reflects decades of study and service. She earned her ASN from Central Texas College and a bachelor's degree from Northwestern State University. She holds dual MBA and MHA degrees

from the University of Houston-Clear Lake. She became a Family Nurse Practitioner in 2001 and later retired her certification in 2006. In 1995, she earned her Doctorate in Naturopathy from Clayton College of Natural Health, complementing her long career as a Registered Nurse that began in 1985 and took her across Texas, the United States, and Europe. Her extensive certifications include Master Herbalist, Reiki Master Teacher, Iridologist, Sound Therapy Practitioner, Medical Laboratory Technologist, Spiritual Life and Business Coach, Master Business Cardologer, Spiritual Business Consultant, and Ordained Non-Denominational Minister.

Dr. Croft is also a respected author and educator. In 2015, she became an international

best-selling author in the anthology *Empowered Women of Social Media: Finding Global Unity in Social Communities*. She has published numerous manuals and training programs and received recognition from the Texas Nurses Association for her pioneering work in nurse entrepreneurship. Her programs earned CEUs and helped launch more than 300 nurse-owned home health agencies. Since 2014, she has developed over 200 workshops and initiatives, including Young Entrepreneurs N Action in partnership with the City of Killeen. Today her focus includes holistic self-care seminars and teaching the principles of spiritual wellness.

Her community leadership extends well beyond healthcare. She established the Youth Backyard Gardening Initiative by donating an acre of land called "My Wakanda Village USA," where children learn sustainable gardening and self-reliance. She also introduced Soulful Vibrations Sound Therapy as part of the Hooah for Reiki movement, offering new methods of healing for individuals living with PTSD and depression.

Currently serving as an appointed member of the Texas Massage Therapy Advisory Board through 2029, Dr. Croft continues to bridge traditional medicine and holistic care. She remains committed to guiding health professionals who as-

pire to move from the bedside into leadership roles while expanding her reach in natural healing.

This December, Dr. Croft will celebrate her seventy-fifth birthday, marking a lifetime of resilience, healing, teaching, and empowerment. She re-

mains devoted to her mission of helping others live healthier, fuller, and more purposeful lives. She may be reached through her Facebook page at facebook.com/naturallymeatc, by email at fnp.cardio@gmail.com, or by phone at 254-338-4893.

"So free must be your thoughts and actions of any trace of prejudice -- racial, religious, economic, national, tribal, class, or cultural-- that even the stranger sees in you loving friends."

Bahá'í Universal House of Justice,
2008 Rídván Message



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ANDREANNA CALHOUN: ER NURSE AT TEMPLE VA

Andreanna L. Calhoun, BSN, RN, serves as an Emergency Room Nurse at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Hospital in Temple, Texas. With nearly two years of experience, she has dedicated herself to providing critical and compassionate care for patients in urgent need. A graduate of Concordia University with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Calhoun has combined academic training and hands-on experience to make a meaningful impact in the lives of veterans and their families.

Before her nursing career, Calhoun built an impressive foundation in health and wellness. She was a profes-

sional competitor with the International Federation of Bodybuilding and served as an advocate for nutrition and fitness for more than seven years. She earned her first degree in Nutrition in 2016, grounding her studies in biology and chemistry. This knowledge continues to shape her perspective as a nurse, as she believes that chronic disease prevention begins with daily habits and healthy food choices.

Her journey into healthcare has also deepened her interest in mental health. Over the past two years, Calhoun has felt a strong calling to specialize in this area. Having worked on the front



ANDREANNA L. CALHOUN, BSN, RN

lines of patient care, she has

witnessed firsthand the urgent need for more mental health practitioners. She is now pursuing a Master of Science in Nursing with a concentration in Mental Health Nurse Practitioner at Walden University. Her goal is to expand healthcare access, bridge critical gaps in mental health services, and reduce the stigma surrounding these issues.

Calhoun's commitment extends beyond the hospital and classroom. She is active in community volunteer work, mental health awareness initiatives, and health and fitness events. She believes that empathy and education are powerful tools for

changing lives.

Outside of her professional and academic responsibilities, Calhoun cherishes time with her five-year-old son and her family. She enjoys outdoor activities, learning new skills, and maintaining her passion for fitness. Through her platform "Fitnesschicka," she shares tips and inspiration to help others live healthier and more balanced lives.

From her service at the Temple VA to her vision for mental health advocacy, Andreanna Calhoun embodies the dedication, compassion, and drive needed to transform healthcare for individuals and communities alike.

A DIFFERENT KIND OF MEDICAL PROFESSION: VICTORIA WILLIAMS' MISSION OF CARE

In Victoria, Texas, healthcare takes on many forms, and Victoria Williams represents a different kind of medical profession—one rooted in public health, social support, and compassion for the most vulnerable. For the past three years, she has served as Program Director at A Better Adult Daycare in Victoria, where she works closely with adults with special needs and mental health challenges.

Her role goes far beyond traditional medical care. Williams provides admission screenings, intake assessments, orientations, treatment planning, and case management for clients who often face overwhelming life circumstances. She guides them through crisis interventions, develops prevention plans, and supports their efforts to reintegrate into society with dignity and stability. These services, known as the "12 Core Functions," are a foundation of her daily work and highlight the critical, though often less visible, medical expertise required in addiction recovery and community health.

Williams' dedication extends well outside the doors of the adult daycare. She works with individuals struggling with drug addiction, supporting them through detoxification and linking them to long-term recovery services. She regularly makes refer-



VICTORIA WILLIAMS

als to organizations such as the Salvation Army and collaborates with local agencies through the Homeless Coalition to address housing and health needs in the community. Her outreach also includes efforts in Houston, where she helps expand access to services for vulnerable populations.

Although she is not a physician or nurse, Victoria Williams is deeply embedded in the medical field through her practice of public health and addiction services. Her work is a reminder that healthcare is not only about treating illness but also about creating pathways to healing for those often overlooked. By addressing immediate crises and developing long-term plans for recovery and reintegr-

ation, she gives clients the tools to reclaim their place in society.

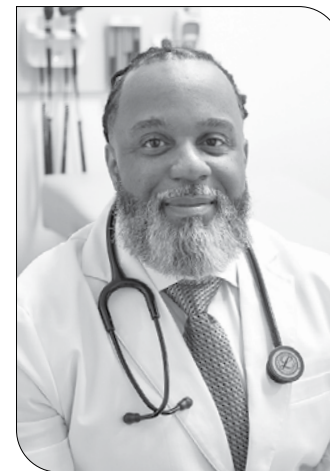
For Williams, this work is not simply a career. It is a calling that combines compas-

DR. RODNEY L. DUCKETT: LEADING WITH INNOVATION AND COMPASSION

Dr. Rodney L. Duckett, DNP, APRN, FNP-C, isn't just a family nurse practitioner; he's a dynamic force combining over two decades of clinical expertise with a passionate commitment to community upliftment and lifelong learning. His deep experience and advanced education, culminating in a Doctor of Nursing Practice, serve as the foundation for a career defined by impactful leadership.

During his time in the U.S. Army, Dr. Duckett earned wide acclaim for his innovative thinking and decisive action in times of crisis. That same proactive, solution-oriented approach defines his current work in emergency care. However, his impact extends far beyond the hospital walls.

Dr. Duckett is a committed community steward, channeling his energy into his nonprofit organization, IMPAC Outreach (Intelligent Minds Proving and Applying Commitment). This vital program is dedicated to mentoring adoles-



DR. RODNEY L. DUCKETT

cents as they transition out of the juvenile justice system, providing them with the guidance and resources needed to forge a successful future.

What truly distinguishes Dr. Duckett is his relentless pursuit of knowledge and adventure. A profound interest in history, anthropology, and archaeology led him to pursue a degree in archaeology. His fervent ambition and adventurous spirit have taken him across three continents and sixteen coun-

tries to study alongside international scholars. This unique global perspective enriches his practice, allowing him to approach healthcare and community issues with a broader, more nuanced understanding.

Beyond his clinical work, nonprofit leadership, and global travels, Dr. Duckett connects with his community as the host of the radio podcast "Lively Art of Conversation," heard on Kiss 103.1 FM every Sunday from 7:30 to 8:30 AM. The show highlights "OurStory through community," using a platform of live, learn, earn, and pass it along to spark meaningful discussion and promote positive social engagement.

Dr. Rodney L. Duckett's life is a powerful testament to combining advanced medical practice with a deeply felt sense of service. He continually demonstrates that true leadership lies in educating, innovating, and actively building a better community—one patient, one mentee, and one conversation at a time.

sion with medical knowledge, public health service, and relentless dedication to those in need. Her story demonstrates that medicine has many faces, and some of the most trans-

formative are found in the quiet, persistent efforts of professionals who walk alongside the most vulnerable, helping them find their way back to stability, health, and hope.

DR. ALLISON ACHILEFU: DEDICATED TO FAMILY AND COMMUNITY HEALTH

Dr. Allison Achilefu was born and raised in the small West Texas town of Monahans. Her love of science and desire to help others led her to pursue higher education at The University of Texas Permian Basin, where she double majored in biology and chemistry. After graduation, she traded the desert for the coast and earned her medical degree from the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston. She went on to complete her residency in family medicine at

the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center.

With nearly fifteen years of experience in family practice, Dr. Achilefu has built a career centered on caring for patients across every stage of life. Her special interests include obesity medicine, adolescent medicine, and women's health. She values the opportunity to serve a wide range of patients and finds great joy in caring for multi-generational families, where she can provide continuity of care and build strong rela-



DR. ALLISON ACHILEFU

tionships that span decades.

Currently, Dr. Achilefu practices at the Baylor Scott and White Clinic in Waco. Her patients appreciate her compassionate approach and her dedication to both preventive and comprehensive care. She takes pride in offering services that meet the needs of diverse individuals and families throughout the community.

Outside of her practice, Dr. Achilefu enjoys spending time with her family and friends, many of whom she

describes as family in spirit. She also stays active through different types of exercise and is deeply committed to her faith community at Mosaic Waco, where she serves alongside others with the same heart for people.

Dr. Achilefu's story is one of service, dedication, and a genuine passion for improving lives. Through her work in medicine and her devotion to community, she continues to make a lasting impact on the health and well-being of Central Texas.

CHIDI ACHILEFU: DEDICATED TO HEALING AND INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION

Dr. Chidi Achilefu was born and raised in Houston, Texas, as the youngest of four children. From an early age, he valued education and service, which shaped his path toward a career in medicine. He earned his bachelor's degree in Biology from the University of Texas at Dallas, graduating with honors. He then went on to obtain his medical degree from the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston and completed his residency in Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine at the University of Oklahoma.

Anesthesiology appealed to Dr. Achilefu because it is a specialty where physicians routinely relieve pain and suffering, make critical decisions, and en-

sure patients are guided safely through surgery. He believes that every patient has a unique story, and he considers listening to those stories one of the most meaningful parts of his work.

With more than fifteen years of experience in Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine, Dr. Achilefu has developed particular interests in Regional Anesthesia and Cardiothoracic Anesthesia. He is a partner at Mid-Tex Anesthesia Associates and serves on several committees at Providence Hospital, contributing both his expertise and leadership.

Beyond his professional achievements, Dr. Achilefu is a devoted husband and father of



CHIDI ACHILEFU

four young children. He and his family reside in Woodway, Texas, where they enjoy an active lifestyle filled with sports, gar-

dening, and travel. He is currently working toward his goal of visiting all fifty states.

Passionate about education and opportunity, Dr. Achilefu also hopes to inspire underrepresented youth by en-

couraging them to explore the sciences early in their education. Through support of local STEM programs, he is committed to helping the next generation discover a love for learning and a pathway to success.

EVELYN JORDAN: A LIFELONG COMMITMENT TO NURSING AND COMMUNITY CARE

Evelyn Jordan's journey in healthcare began more than four decades ago and continues to inspire those around her. After graduating from McLennan Community College's Vocational Nursing Program in 1981, she earned her LVN license the following year. With a heart for service and a passion for caring for others, she stepped into a career that would span hospitals, nursing homes, home health care, and community programs.

For over 30 years, Evelyn worked in a wide variety of



EVELYN JORDAN

settings. She provided care in hospital units, supported patients in nursing facilities, and brought compassion into the homes of families through home health. She also gave her time and skill to local elementary schools within area districts, making sure students received the health support they needed to thrive in the classroom. Her ability to adapt and serve in so many different roles reflected her dedication to improv-

SEE **JORDAN**, PG. 14



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JACQUELIN THOMPSON-NEAL: NURSING AND HEALTHCARE TRAILBLAZER

Jacquelin Thompson-Neal, born on January 7 in Waco, Texas, has built a remarkable career defined by courage, determination, and a lifelong commitment to advancing healthcare. Her path began in 1978 when she earned her license as a Vocational Nurse. Only five years later, in 1983, she advanced her credentials and became a Registered Nurse. Her drive for excellence and her passion for patient care pushed her further, and in 1991 she achieved certification as an Advanced Nurse Practitioner. In doing so, she became the first African American student accepted into the University of Texas Health Science Center Nurse Practitioner program, and later, the first African American Nurse Practitioner in Waco.

Jacquelin's trailblazing spirit continued as she became the first African American Nurse Manager at Hillsboro Hospital and the first African American Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner in Waco. Her work with survivors of trauma reflected not only her medical expertise but also her compassion and advocacy for those most in need.

Her tenure at Hillsboro Hospital was one of the most challenging and defining seasons



**JACQUELIN
THOMPSON-NEAL**

of her career. At that time, only five African Americans were employed at the hospital, and none had ever served in a managerial role. She faced opposition, prejudice, and open hostility. Remarks such as "five is enough," "you will not last a year," and "we do not need you here" were directed at her during her first months as manager. Yet Jacquelin refused to be discouraged. Listening to Bishop T. D. Jakes on her morning drives and relying on her faith, she entered each day with confidence and strength.

Eight months into her role,

a surprise corporate inspection from the Memphis office gave her an opportunity to expose disparities in care and cleanliness between white patients and patients of color. The evidence she presented could not be ignored. Within months, 16 nurses were terminated for insubordination and patient neglect. Jacquelin redirected the resources to raise pay, add shift differentials, and provide overtime and holiday incentives. She also recruited and hired 12 nurses of color. The changes created an immediate transformation. The hospital's workforce grew more diverse and committed, emergency room wait times decreased, bilingual staff improved communication with Spanish-speaking patients, and hospital admissions quadrupled. These improvements led to the construction of a new 30-bed medical-surgical unit.

When Jacquelin resigned after seven and a half years to care for her ailing husband, she left behind a hospital workforce that included African American and Hispanic nurses, along with a strong team of nursing assistants of color. Her leadership reshaped the culture of the institution and opened doors that had long been closed.

Throughout her career, Jacquelin Thompson-Neal has embodied resilience, vision, and courage. Her accomplishments reflect not only personal achievement but also historic progress for minority representation in healthcare. Patients, colleagues, and future generations of nurses continue to be inspired by her service and her willingness to break barriers. Today, she remains a respected leader, mentor, and advocate, with an enduring legacy that has left a permanent mark on nursing and on healthcare in Texas.

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TRAILBLAZERS ON THE SIREN: THE UNSUNG BLACK HEROES WHO INVENTED MODERN EMS



FREEDOM HOUSE PARAMEDICS WITH THEIR AMBULANCE, PIONEERS OF THE NATION'S FIRST EMS SYSTEM

On this day of recognizing the enduring contributions of Black Americans, we shine a spotlight on an extraordinary chapter that not only saved countless lives but also fundamentally shaped modern public safety. Born out of necessity and ingenuity, Freedom House was a powerful response to systemic racism and woefully inadequate healthcare, ultimately laying the foundation for the 911 and EMS systems we rely upon today.

The Genesis of a Lifesaving System

The story begins in Pittsburgh's Hill District, a predominantly Black community where a medical emergency

often signaled death. Before the late 1960s, a call for an ambulance usually resulted in police officers arriving in a paddy wagon; vehicles with minimal equipment, no trained medical personnel, and often staffed by individuals who were discriminatory or outright hostile to the Black residents they were meant to serve. This broken system was a profound example of health inequality.

This new service was founded by Freedom House Enterprises, a local Black-administered nonprofit. Its recruits were African American men and women from the Hill District, many of whom were previously unemployed, in-

cluding returning Vietnam veterans. It was officially established in 1967 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, with operations beginning in 1968.

Like any great idea, the visionaries responsible for driving the Freedom House was social reformer Phil Hallen, Dr. Peter Safar, the internationally renowned "Father of CPR," and James McCoy, Jr., an influential community member. Their ultimate aim was to create jobs while demonstrating a new standard of emergency medical care.

The World's First Paramedics

Dr. Safar and his colleagues crafted an unprecedented and rigorous 300-hour training course. This was not basic first aid; this was university-level medical instruction, including anatomy, physiology, and extensive clinical rotations in hospital emergency rooms and operating suites.

The graduates of this program became the world's first comprehensively trained paramedics. Their mission was to bring the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) to the patient.

Freedom House paramedics pioneered life-saving techniques never before performed outside of a hospital. They were the first to regularly use defibrillators, administer IV fluids and medications, monitor EKG machines, and

perform endotracheal intubation.

Recruited from the community, the paramedics were known for their respectful, non-escalatory approach, a model of public health response that is still an effective approach today.

Their success was undeniable. In their first year, they responded to almost 5,800 calls and based upon Dr. Safar's data, their advanced interventions were credited with saving approximately 200 lives, further cementing the efficacy of this innovative approach.

As paramedic John Moon, one of the original 25 recruits, recalled, they provided a level of care that "did not exist in any other Pittsburgh neighborhood, or for that matter, the United States."

The Undeniable Legacy of Innovation

Despite their groundbreaking success and acclaim from the medical community, the service faced a painful political reality. In 1975, when the City of Pittsburgh decided to create a municipal EMS service, they refused to renew Freedom House's contract.

Despite an agreement, many of the original Black paramedics were systematically excluded, reassigned, or forced to pass discriminatory re-certification exams for the new city-run system.

Yet, their contributions could not be erased. The high-quality, advanced training protocol developed by Freedom House, and refined by its medical director, Dr. Nancy Caroline, was adopted by the U.S. government. The Freedom House curriculum became the definitive template for the national standard of paramedic training across America.

Today, every time an ambulance arrives with highly skilled, certified first responders, they are operating under a system directly derived from the intelligence, dedication, and innovation of the Freedom House heroes. Their story is a powerful reminder that the true American lexicon of innovation is inseparable from the ingenuity of Black Americans, who took a situation born of negativity and transformed it into a legacy of positive, life-saving change for nations to come.



DR. HILL-ALLEN: GUIDING HEALING WITH HEART AND EXPERTISE

In the heart of Texas, Dr. Brooke Hill-Allen is making a lasting impact through BHA Counseling. With over 15 years of clinical experience, she brings a deep well of knowledge and compassion to her work as a Licensed Professional Counselor and Supervisor in Texas and a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in Washington. She is also an AAMFT Board Approved Supervisor and a Board Certified TeleMental Health Provider, offering flexible care in an ever-changing world.

Dr. Hill-Allen's approach is eclectic, blending Person-Centered Therapy with Family Systems to meet the unique needs of each client. Her career spans community agencies, university counseling



DR. BROOKE HILL-ALLEN

centers, and private practice, where she has collaborated with multidisciplinary teams to support diverse populations.

Beyond the therapy room,

Dr. Hill-Allen shares her expertise in the classroom. She has served as an adjunct professor in several clinical programs, most recently at Tarleton State University. Her academic journey includes a Doctorate in Marriage and Family Therapy from Texas Tech University, a Master's in Counseling from the University of Houston Victoria, and a Bachelor's in Sociology and Social Work from Baylor University.

A proud Texas native, Dr. Hill-Allen finds joy in family life. When she is not guiding others toward healing, she cherishes time with her husband and their two young sons. Her work reflects a commitment to resilience, connection, and the belief that every person deserves a path to wellness.

TRUNELL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

and care that truly makes a difference.

Beyond her practice, Dr. Trunell is an accomplished educator and mentor. She holds a Doctor of Chiropractic and a Bachelor of Science in Anatomy from Parker College of Chiropractic, along with a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Alcorn State University. She is licensed in Texas and certified through the International Chiropractic Pediatric Association. Her professional background includes private practice ownership, rehabilitation work for auto accident patients, and teaching roles with Kaplan College and the Dallas Independent School District, where she contributed to curriculum development and student mentorship.

At Hillcrest Chiropractic, Dr. Trunell continues to specialize in spinal and extremity adjustments, rehabilitation, and soft tissue therapies, while fostering collaborative healthcare partnerships in the community. She is also a strong advocate for leadership and education within her profession and remains committed to mentoring the next generation of healthcare providers.

When she is not caring for patients, Dr. Trunell enjoys exploring wellness practices, mentoring others, and spending time with her family. Her life's work reflects a deep commitment to health, education, and community, making her an inspiring figure in both Waco and the chiropractic profession.

UNITY, JUSTICE AND THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

BY MICHAEL JONES

The Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, Bahá'u'lláh, identified the single most important human need in all of his books and writings: Unity. He said to all humanity: "Ye are all the leaves of one tree and the drops of one ocean."

This core Bahá'í teaching takes a step beyond the Golden Rule. That law, basic to all major religions, teaches us to treat others as we would want to be treated ourselves. But the primary principles of our Faith calls us to a higher understanding – that we are all part of one unified reality, like the individual cells in all living things. When we harm others, we harm ourselves. Bahá'u'lláh compared the human race to the human body. Afflicting one part of the body can threaten the entire organism. This awareness links unity and peace with justice. In his words, "The light of men is Justice. Quench it not with the contrary winds of oppression and tyranny. The purpose of justice is to establish unity among men."

Bahá'u'lláh extended and expanded the Golden Rule, asking us all to focus on mercy towards others, writing: "O son of man! If thine eyes be turned towards mercy, forsake the things that profit thee and cleave unto that which will profit mankind. And if thine eyes be turned towards justice, choose thou for thy neighbor that which thou chooseth for thyself."

Bahá'u'lláh's teachings charge Bahá'ís everywhere to work for justice and what it must accomplish – removing the barriers of oppression, tyranny, hatred, and boundaries, bringing us to-



MICHAEL JONES

gether as one world and one people. In one of his great works, Bahá'u'lláh wrote, "The essence of all that We have revealed for thee is Justice, for man to free himself from idle fancy and imitation, to discern with the eye of oneness His glorious handiwork and look into all things with a searching eye."

"Justice hath a mighty force at its command," he also wrote. "It is none other than reward and punishment for the deeds of men. By the power of this force, order is established throughout the world, causing the wicked to restrain their natures for fear of punishment." This glorious ideal invokes the vision of the poets and the great prophets throughout time. For Bahá'ís, this is not just some pipe dream – we see it as a reality that we can accomplish, as the inevitable outcome of the centuries of progressive religious revelation given to humanity by God. If you'd like to learn more, please visit our local Bahá'í website at www.wacobahais.org or the global information site at bahai.org/beliefs. Our Facebook page is Bahai Faith of Waco.

THINGS NARCISSISTS OFTEN SAY TO CONTROL YOU

BY LINDA CRAWFORD

People can hurt us deeply without ever laying a hand on us. The words they use can tear us down, make us question ourselves, and even leave us feeling powerless. A person with narcissistic traits often uses words in this way. Their goal is to control, confuse, or keep the focus on themselves. I want to share some common phrases they use so you can spot the signs, protect your peace, and not fall into the trap.

1. "You are overreacting" or "You are too sensitive."

This line dismisses your feelings and makes you question your own emotions. It shifts the blame to you instead of them.

2. "No one else will ever love you like I do."

They want you to feel like you cannot do better, so you will stay no matter how they treat you.

3. "I was only joking" or "You know I was kidding."

They say hurtful things, then hide behind humor to avoid responsibility.

4. "You are crazy" or "You are imagining things."

This is gaslighting. They



LINDA CRAWFORD

make you doubt your memory and even your sanity.

5. "I am doing this for your own good."

They present control as if it were love or care.

6. "If you loved me, you would ..."

They use love as a tool to get what they want from you.

7. "You are worthless" or "You cannot do anything right."

Insults chip away at your self-worth until you start to believe them.

8. "You will regret this."
Threats and ultimatums

are meant to keep you fearful and silent.

9. "Everyone else thinks you are ..."

They claim other people see you the same negative way, which isolates you from support.

10. "I never said that."

They deny past words or actions and insist your memory is wrong.

11. "I am sorry, but ..."

The apology is never real. They follow it with an excuse that takes the blame off themselves.

What You Can Do

- Recognize the behavior for what it is.

- Pause and give yourself space before responding.

- Set clear boundaries to protect yourself.

- Lean on trusted friends, family, or a counselor.

- Keep a record if you notice a pattern of manipulation.

Words can wound as deeply as actions. But once you see the tactics clearly, you can choose not to let them take root in your spirit. Stand firm in your truth and protect your peace. And remember what I always say: when you run into a negative person, keep running.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MEDICAL PROFESSIONS: CELEBRATING DR. LINCOLN COFFIE

Medical professions are among the most vital callings in society, touching lives through compassion, knowledge, and service. The dedication of healthcare providers ensures that communities remain healthy, strong, and supported in times of need.

Few stories illustrate this better than that of Dr. Lincoln Coffie. From his days as a student at McLennan Community College, where he excelled academically, to his time at Baylor University, Coffie's commitment to medicine was clear. Attending his medical school



J.L. CRAWFORD

graduation was a proud milestone for us as we fol-

lowed his journey. Today, he continues to make history by opening his own urgent care facility, where he offers healthcare services free of charge to those in need.

Dr. Coffie's calling extends beyond physical care. As a pastor, he and his wife, Apryl, minister to the soul, reminding us that true healing touches both body and spirit. His life's work is a testament to the power of medical professions and the profound difference they make in communities.

Linda and I are so proud of Dr. Lincoln Coffie!

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Mother Daughter TEA

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2025 2:00 PM.

Daughters must be 12 to 17 years old. Free participation but must register and get specific details.

To register, send an email to nanbpw.waco@gmail.com. Include mother's name and cell number, daughter's name and age.

Deadline for registration is Sunday, October 26, 2025 at 8:00 P.M.

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3:00 P.M. – Homecoming Hour

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LIVING WELL MONTHLY

BY DR. SHAMONICA TRUNELL

October: Women's Wellness
Preventive care is power.
October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, reminding us of the importance of women's health at every stage of life. Pink ribbons raise awareness, but what truly makes a difference are the choices we make each day to protect and strengthen our bodies.
Women often juggle family, work, and community, but preventive screenings and self-care cannot be overlooked. This month is about honoring the body you live in and giving it the

care it deserves.

TIPS FOR WOMEN'S WELLNESS

1. Know Your Screening Schedule
Breast cancer is most treatable when caught early. Talk with your healthcare provider about when to begin mammograms, often starting at age 40 or earlier if high-risk. Do not skip clinical breast exams and learn your normal so you can report any changes.
2. Strengthen Your Body
Resistance training supports bone density, boosts metabolism, and lowers injury risk. Aim for two to three sessions a week,



DR. SHAMONICA TRUNELL

endar

Block time for activities that restore joy such as reading, walking, or connecting with a friend.

YOUR TAKEAWAY

Women's wellness is about whole health. This October, remember that preventive care is power. Early detection saves lives and self-care fuels resilience.
Monthly Self-Care Challenge
Schedule your wellness visit and, if recommended, a mammogram. At home, practice a month-

ly self-breast exam and add one strength-building exercise each week.

WOMEN'S WELLNESS SPOTLIGHT

- One in eight women will be diagnosed in her lifetime
- Mammograms can detect cancer up to three years before it is felt
- Know your normal and report changes
- Prevention paired with healthy habits saves lives

MOMS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

WACO NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF NEGRO BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S CLUB

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TEA

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SATURDAY,
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2:00 PM.

even with simple bodyweight exercises at home.

3. Nourish with Balance
Include iron, calcium, vitamin D, and protein in your meals. Choose colorful produce, lean proteins, and healthy fats to support energy and long-term wellness.
4. Manage Stress with Intention
Chronic stress raises inflammation and weakens immunity. Add short breaks to stretch, journal, or enjoy quiet moments to protect your peace.
5. Put "Me Hour" on the Cal-

dently from the birth center, expanding access to care.

Tonja doesn't work alone. She has built a team of doulas through the nonprofit she founded, Community Doulas of Waco, ensuring that more families have the help they need. At Lactation Services of Waco, she works alongside fellow IBCLC Laura Jouret, combining expertise with compassion to surround families with comprehensive support.

Her credentials are impressive, but what truly sets Tonja apart is her heart. A proud Bay-

lor University graduate, she has been married for over 28 years to Vincent Carpenter, Sr., who has faithfully served in pastoral ministry for more than three decades. Together, their lives reflect a deep commitment to community and family.

Tonja's guiding passion is simple, yet powerful: to support the whole family, surround them with care, and make moms happy. In Waco, that mission is changing lives one family at a time.

For more information, visit www.HappyWacoMoms.com or call 254-753-1987.

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WHY FALL MIGHT BE THE PERFECT TIME TO BUY OR SELL

SUBMITTED BY
LINDA MCDONALD

As the summer rush fades and the holidays approach, fall quietly emerges as one of the most strategic seasons in real estate. The market tends to cool down just enough to give buyers and sellers breathing room, but not so much that opportunities disappear.

For sellers, autumn offers a chance to showcase homes in a cozy, inviting light. A well-staged home with seasonal touches like warm lighting and tasteful décor can create an emotional connection with buyers. Curb appeal also matters—think tidy landscaping and a welcoming front porch.

Buyers benefit from less competition and more motivated sellers. With interest rates still fluctuating, locking in a deal before winter can be a smart move. Homes that didn't sell over



LINDA MCDONALD
REALTOR, CRS, GRI, PMN, SRS

the summer may now be priced more attractively, and there's often more room for negotiation.

Whether you're looking to make a move or simply exploring your options, fall is a season full of potential. If you're ready to take the next step, I'd be honored to guide you through the process. Let's make your real estate goals a reality.

THIS IS MY BELOVED SON. HEAR YE HIM

BY MATTHEW REED

Matthew 3:17 says, "And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. In Matthew 17:5 it is written While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." In Mark 9:7, Luke 9:35 and 2 Peter 1:17, "God commands the same thing. You cannot hear from God reading and teaching the old testament prophets."

Father God now speaks to us through his son Jesus (God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets.)

Verse 2, "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds); The new testament is where God speaks to today's church."

Trying to receive a word of life in this present time from the prophets of the Old Testament is impossible. You need to understand they are dead and God is not speaking



PASTOR MATTHEW
AND LADY HELEN REED

to them anymore. In the New Testament is where you find God speaking to the church.

Jesus is the mediator of the New Testament. He gives instructions to life (John 6:63 the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life).

The intent of this article is to cause all that read it to search the scriptures and see whether or not the things written in it are correct/valid. If it is the truth, repent and receive truth and walk in it (obey). Have life!

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WANDA B.
GUNTER

Author, Artist &
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for *The Anchor News*

GET READY FOR THE 2025 MEDICARE ANNUAL ENROLLMENT PERIOD

BY MARGARET IVORY

Every year, Medicare gives you a short window to review, compare, and make changes to your coverage. For 2025, the Annual Enrollment Period (AEP) runs from October 15 through December 7, 2025. This is your time to make sure your plan still meets your health and budget needs for the new year. Any updates you make will start January 1, 2026.

Medicare plans can and do change each year. Your premiums, copays, drug lists, and even your doctor network may look different from what you had before. If you don't review your coverage, you could end up paying more or lose access to the medications or providers you trust. A quick yearly check can help you stay pro-



MARGARET IVORY

tected and save money.

What You Can Do During AEP

During this time, you have the power to:

1. Move from Original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage plan, or switch back.
2. Change from one Medi-

care Advantage plan to another.

3. Add, drop, or switch your Part D prescription drug plan.

Before making any moves, take a moment to:

Read your Annual Notice of Change — it shows what's changing in your current plan for next year.

Compare plans — costs, coverage, and benefits can differ, so it's worth a look.

Check your doctor and medications — make sure they're still covered under your plan.

Start early — don't wait until the last minute to make your decision.

The 2025 AEP is your chance to make sure your Medicare coverage still fits your life. Don't leave your health or finances up to chance — take a few minutes to review your options.

If you'd like personal help comparing plans, please contact me. I am an experienced and caring Medicare Broker who is here for you. I will take the time to walk you through your choices and help you find the right plan to match your health needs and your budget.

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

COFFIE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

sity of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston. His career has included serving as Medical Director for the Killeen Free Clinic, blending medical expertise with his heart for service. He also holds a Doctorate of Divinity from Real Knowledge Bible College, reflecting his deep devotion to spiritual scholarship. Beyond his public minis-

try and professional achievements, Dr. Coffie treasures his role as a husband and father. He and his wife, Dr. Apryl, are the proud parents of four children—Lincoln Jr., Lindel, Lael, and Ethan. Together, they continue to serve as examples of faith, family, and perseverance, leaving a legacy that inspires all who encounter them.

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JONES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

as community, her presence symbolizes hope. She represents what is possible when compassion meets determination and when leadership is rooted in both strength and humility. As one nurse put it, "We serve our communities better because of leaders like her. And I am beyond blessed to call her my CNO."

For those at Baylor Scott

& White and beyond, LaJuan Jones is more than a Chief Nursing Officer. She is a trailblazer, a mentor, and a living reminder that strong leadership can transform health-care from the inside out.

Jones has been married to Lenoy Jones Sr for 27 years. Together they have 5 grown boys, 2 grandchildren and 2 beautiful daughters-in-law.

JORDAN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

ing lives at every stage.

In 2013, Evelyn furthered her education by earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in Health and Human Services. This achievement underscored her commitment not only to her profession but also to the communities she serves.

For the past 22 years, Evelyn has been a steady and caring presence at EOAC Head Start and Early Head Start. There, she has invested her skills and compassion into the lives of children and families, ensuring they re-

ceive the health services and support so vital in the early years of life. Her long-standing service is a testament to her belief that health and education go hand in hand in building strong futures.

Evelyn Jordan's career is more than a list of accomplishments. It is a story of dedication, perseverance, and a calling to care for others. From her earliest days as a nurse to her current role with EOAC, she has left an enduring mark on the Waco community and continues to be an example of service in action.



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TAKE THE MYSTERY OUT OF SCHEDULING

BY MONA DUNKIN

To the uninitiated, scheduling may seem like a daunting task. Truth is, what is scheduled is more likely to get done.

It is that simple. What seemed like a mystery becomes magical as the secrets are discovered and applied. Finish the day off right. Plan tomorrow before leaving the office and plan life before going to bed at night. Prepare for the next day today; then set everything aside and get a good night's rest. Awake refreshed and raring to go.

Seven is considered a complete number; it cannot be divided. There are seven major aspects of life that encompass our whole being. Each area should be considered and joyfully incorporated into your daily living. In a nutshell, they are the following:

- Survival – health, rest, exercise, nutrition, protection, relationships
 - Spirituality – appreciation of the sacred, connectedness with God, morality and ethics
 - Purpose – drive, calling on your life, the reason for being on planet earth
 - Family – relations, descendants, ancestors, lineage
 - Financial – means of exchange, career choice, spending habits and attitude toward money
 - Community – the public, society, neighborhood, co-workers, the world
 - Mental – attitude, education, interests, outlook
- Tame a racing mind. People frequently say, "I have a million things to do". No, you do not. Do not exaggerate. You



MONA DUNKIN

may have a lot of demands, but a million? A million is not doable; six to ten are. Take all the scattered thoughts running through your head and put them on paper. Just write them down. Organize this random list by separating the main tasks from elements needed to accomplish the main task. This makes things more manageable.

Teach others to cooperate. To teach is to stimulate the appetite for. If you are telling, demanding or coercing others, I suggest the wish to

please you has not yet been kindled. Work on relationships by being a good finder – notice and comment on positives. Be sincere, not coercive.

A word about deadlines. Some declare that deadlines motivate because they work better under pressure. I suggest it is not the pressure but rather the limited time frame forces focused attention. Choose to devote focused attention at the beginning and revel in the flow of completing the project before

deadline. A missed deadline is probably not fatal so cut yourself some slack and commit to improved time management. Feel good about what you have accomplished so far and recommit to the goal.

You will never rise above your calendar. Get more accomplished by scheduling in the task and outlining steps. Take the pressure off by going for 80% completion.

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

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