

**ALSO INSIDE:**

Developmental  
Disabilities  
Awareness Month  
*By Adilene Guzman*

Fighting Through  
Nagging Injuries  
*By Dylan Glass*

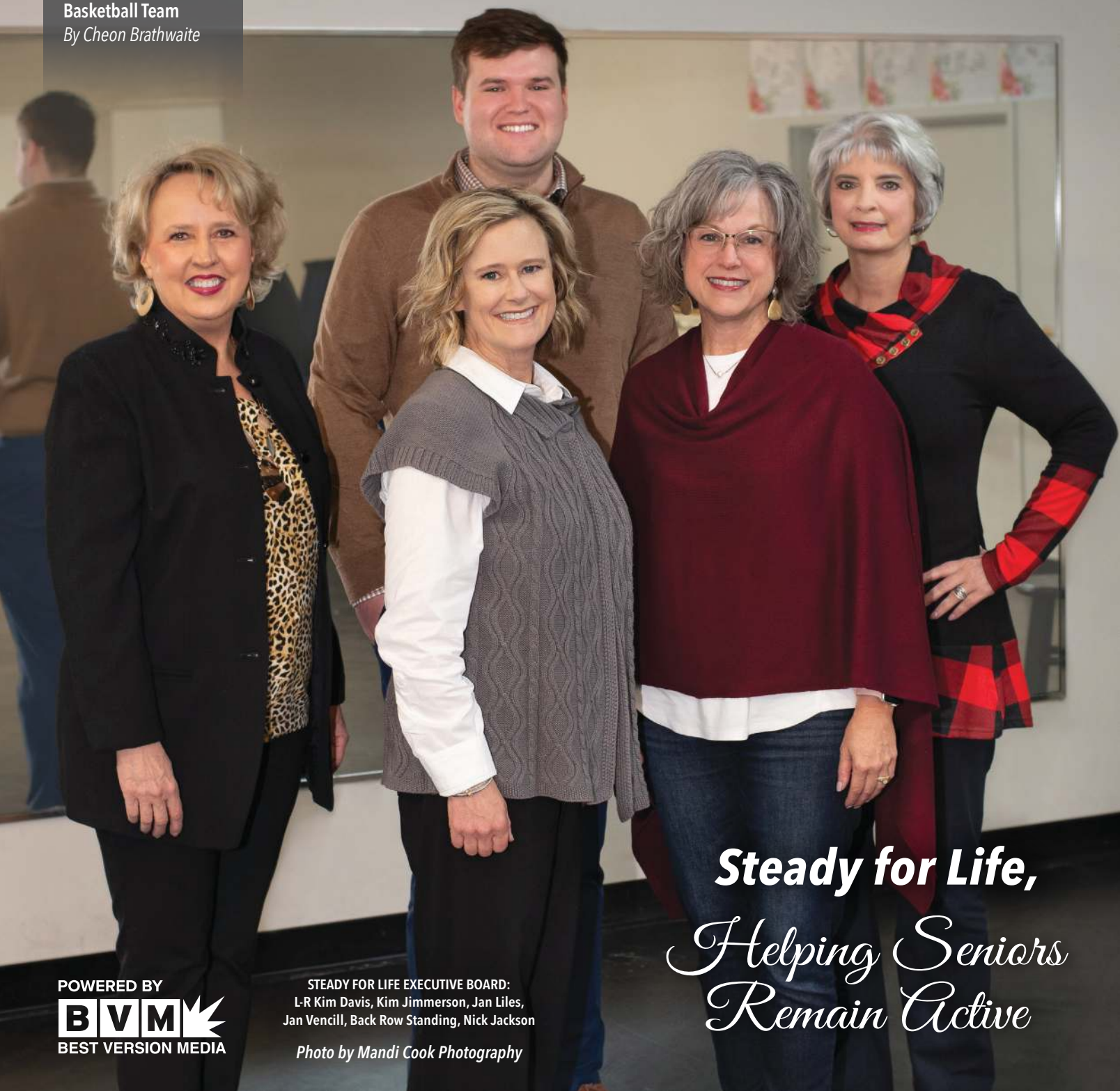
Why a Good Roof  
is Important  
*By Carl Hopper*

New PROFESSIONAL  
Basketball Team  
*By Cheon Brathwaite*

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MARCH 2024

# South HUNTSVILLE NEIGHBORS



***Steady for Life,  
Helping Seniors  
Remain Active***

STEADY FOR LIFE EXECUTIVE BOARD:  
L-R Kim Davis, Kim Jimmerson, Jan Liles,  
Jan Vencill, Back Row Standing, Nick Jackson

*Photo by Mandi Cook Photography*

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STEADY FOR LIFE BOARD:

Front Row L-R Kim Davis,  
Jan Liles, Georgi Bragg,  
Jan Vencill, Kim Jimmerson

Back Row L-R Larry Savage,  
Dolly Collier, Dave Branham,  
Jackie Heard, Nick Jackson

## ***Steady for Life, Helping Seniors Remain Active***

By Kim Davis as told to Bob Druckman, Publisher, Photos by Mandi Cook Photography

In January of 2014, Steady for Life (SFL) began as a church ministry with volunteer instructors. Within a few months, this core group of ninety students and four instructors formed an advisory board, started application for non-profit status, selected a board of directors, and hired an Executive Director. The volunteer instructors were replaced with instructors certified in senior balance and fitness who were then acquired as independent contractors. The non-profit incorporation was completed in August of 2014, and class participants had nearly doubled. By 2015, SFL had leased space in a shopping center and had partnership agreements with five churches providing satellite locations for other parts of Madison County. The very popular Travel Program was launched under the direction of long-time travel director, Kim Davis.

As the program grew and more instructors and locations were added, Steady for Life became a nationally recognized program. Physicians and physical therapists increasingly referred patients to the program after hearing what their patients who were “Steadies” were doing in class to help with balance, strength and flexibility.

### **1) How did Steady for Life come to be?**

My entire career has been in Healthcare Marketing and Public Relations.

Having a natural love and respect for mature-aged adults, the idea of Steady for life would allow me to feed my passion and have a big

impact on the community. Leading programs to keep mature adults active and healthy became a love through leading both the Senior Horizons program at Huntsville Hospital and the Senior Friends program at Crestwood Medical Center for over a decade. I learned invaluable things from loving these mature adults who were full of life. When I began Steady for Life twelve years ago with fifty participants and three instructors in my church fellowship hall, I knew we were on to something that could really grow. We now have 400 class participants all across Madison County and in the city.

### **2) What was your inspiration?**

When I was a little girl, my family was involved in a ministry through our church where we conducted worship services at nursing homes. I was very comfortable in this environment and enjoyed visiting and singing to the residents. I carried this into my college years and adult life.

### **3) How has Steady for Life changed the lives of your clients?**

Seeing our “Steadies” become stronger, more flexible, more confident in their abilities to stay active and independent gives our instructors such satisfaction. One of my favorite comments that I hear over and over is, “I went in for surgery (usually a replacement) and the therapists were so surprised by my quick rehab progress. I gave Steady for Life the kudos for making me strong BEFORE the surgery.” That is wonderful job satisfaction.



STEADY FOR LIFE INSTRUCTORS: Front Row L-R Paula Williams, Jill Chadwick, Chris Irrgang, Robin Engle. Kimberly Brown, Debra Wade  
Back Row L-R Karleen Williams, Sarah Firmiani, Donna Sisk, Kim Davis, Amy Farnsworth, Lebee Meehan



#### 4) How has it changed your life?

Getting to build a wonderful team of instructors has been a joy in my life. Not only do I have a great friendship with many of our Steadies, I also get to witness the instructors building terrific networks of friendships in each and every one of the 57 classes we teach each week.

### REVIEW

*I have never consistently committed to anything exercise-wise. I also cannot tell you how much I love my Balance class. I am committed to this. I arrange appointments so as not to miss it because I know there will be many times I must miss it for travel, etc.*

*I love the class for a couple of reasons. First, and foremost, although I struggle in the class, I see measurable improvement physically and mentally. Second, I am inspired by watching the commitment of the other attendees. Everyone comes to class prepared to try. I know that many of them face greater physical challenges than I do, yet no one quits during class.*

*Where else nearby can you have so much fun for about \$3 per hour. Good chocolate or a good cocktail cost much more, and neither typically lasts an hour.*

– Mitzi

#### 5) What book or books are you reading now?

I am always reading articles and researching travel destinations. During the first year of Steady for Life, some of our folks found out that I had planned and led travel groups for 25 years. They immediately started asking me to TAKE THEM SOMEWHERE. This was the beginning of our Steady for Life Travel Program, another facet of our program to stay active and engaged in our big, wonderful world. We take 7-8 trips each year and many friends are in our travel group whether they take our classes or not. Our travel program is open to all.

#### 6) What is your favorite restaurant?

Mexican – Rosie’s  
Italian – Amerigo  
Fine Dining – Char’s

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