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## LIVING



NOVEMBER 2023

# THE NASH FAMILY

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# DEAR RESIDENTS

The beautiful month of November is upon us and it is a joy to be able to enter the Fall this year. There is so much to celebrate and to commemorate this month with Thanksgiving and Veteran's Day on the calendar.

Speaking of Veteran's Day, I'd like for you to take a look at our charity spotlight feature this issue with Honoring Veteran Legacies. Mark White, our content coordinator, sat down with their co-founder Chris Batté to talk about their mission and the work they do to ensure the stories of those veterans are told and remembered.

Also let's show some love to our newest members of the East Athens Living family, Engel & Völkers (Limestone) as well as Wallace Print Solutions. Remember, it is because of them this magazine can continue to come to your home for FREE.

We hope you have a wonderful Thanksgiving and beginning to the holiday rush season. Please reach out with any thoughts or questions about the magazine or if you'd like to sit down and discuss having your business in these pages. Be well, my friends.



**ARKY SHEA**

**Publisher**

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**WOULD YOU LIKE TO REGAIN YOUR ENERGY, ALL DAY EVERYDAY?**

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Have feedback, ideas or submissions? We are always happy to hear from you! Deadlines for submissions are the 10th of each month. Go to [www.bestversionmedia.com](http://www.bestversionmedia.com) and click "Submit Content." You may also email your thoughts, ideas and photos to: [markwhite@bestversionmedia.com](mailto:markwhite@bestversionmedia.com).

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### CONTENT DUE:

- December 10
- January 10
- February 10
- March 10
- April 10
- May 10
- June 10
- July 10
- August 10
- September 10
- October 10
- November 10

### EDITION DATE:

- January
- February
- March
- April
- May
- June
- July
- August
- September
- October
- November
- December

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# THINGS TO CONSIDER FOR FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYERS

by Josh Winn

Buying your own home doesn't have to be a pipe dream. It's all about understanding your financial situation and what kind of mortgage you'll qualify for. It may seem a little complicated at first, but the process isn't as overwhelming when you take it step-by-step. A good place to start is getting familiar with the requirements to buy a home for first-time buyers.

## KNOW YOUR CREDIT SCORE

Your credit score plays a large part in getting a home loan. Usually the higher your score, the lower the interest rate you can get on a loan. Understanding what goes into your credit score starts with evaluating your credit report. Consider getting a free copy of your credit report, then keep an eye out for any issues, such as a wrong address or errors on account balances. You can dispute anything that looks amiss. Minimum credit score requirements vary by lender and the type of loan.

## CONSIDER YOUR DOWN PAYMENT

Among all your financial responsibilities, figuring out a realistic down payment toward a first home can be challenging. Your credit score may also affect how much your loan requires as a down payment. Some loan programs need a down payment of at least 5% of the home's sale price, while other loan programs, such as FHA loans, only ask for 3.5% down and allow for lower credit scores. There are many government entities and non-profit organizations that offer down payment assistance and help with closing costs, especially for first-time homebuyers.

## PLAN A BUDGET

In addition to thinking about your down payment, you may also want to consider your long-term financial plan. You'll want to make sure that you can afford the upkeep of a home. Starting an emergency fund for unexpected issues such as a new roof or your car breaking down can help to quell your worry in the future.



Contact me today for any home loan needs!



# Josh Winn

NMLS #219148 | Loan Consultant

## (256) 214-2573

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**SUPPLY PROOF OF INCOME**

Lenders will almost certainly ask you to provide documents to help them evaluate what monthly mortgage payment you can afford. These documents may include W-2 statements and paycheck stubs from your employer or 1099s if you're self-employed, two years of tax returns and a couple months of bank statements. Each lender might also ask for other items to get a thorough picture of your income and ability to pay a mortgage.

**GET PREAPPROVED**

Having a letter from a lender that states you're preapproved for a home loan lets real estate agents and sellers know that you have the financial ability to purchase a property. This can make you a more attractive buyer.

**SELECT A REAL ESTATE AGENT**

You can buy a home without an agent, but using a real estate agent can

make your search for the right home easier by managing scheduling and streamlining your options. Agents understand the neighborhoods, market values and amenities in your desired area. According to the National Association of Realtors, 87% of buyers purchased their home through a real estate agent or broker in 2022.

**MAKE AN OFFER**

Once you find the home that's right for you, it's time to make an offer. You and your agent can decide on a sensible offer and add in any contingencies, such as when you'd like to close on the home. You also put down earnest money, a deposit that shows the home's seller that you're serious. When you're just getting started, it may feel like there are a lot of requirements to buy a home for first-time buyers, but by going through all the steps and understanding what's needed from you, you may find that things go more smoothly than you expected.

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# THE NASH FAMILY

by Mark White | photos by Fly Leaf Photography

## Born and raised in the Clements area in Limestone County, Aubrey Nash chose to join the Army Reserve after high school.

"My experience in the military was great. I was still very young and malleable. They molded me into what I needed to be. I traveled a lot. Being in the Army Reserves, that's normally every other weekend, but they kept me in different schools and training. The next four years, I was active most of the time. I really think it set the path for my life," said Aubrey.

In 2010 to 2011, Aubrey was deployed to Amedi, Iraq.

"I went to Amedi after a big downsizing in Iraq. While there, we were doing different patrols, monitoring, training, working with local police forces," said Aubrey.

Instead of using the G.I. Bill for his own education, he chose to defer it to his children.

"After the military, I went straight to working as a civilian. I opted to pass my G.I. Bill down to my children which is a really cool thing. My 14-year-old daughter, Magnolia, has hopes of going into the medical field. Her aunts are all nurses or paramedics, so she's looking toward the nursing side, so we're excited about that," said Aubrey.

Aubrey's work these days is not tied to anything he did in the service.

"When I got home, I went into car sales. I did that for a few years. It was great. I learned a lot and met a lot of great people. I also learned that 60 hours every week on black top is tough, so I moved over to in-home sales, selling windows, doors, vinyl siding, and everything of that nature. Later on, I decided that I wanted to go to training and learn how to do the work and not just sell it, so I made that shift," said Aubrey.

That shift led to business ownership.

"A few years later, I knew I understood the in-home business and I really liked it, so that led me to owning my own companies. I now own Earth Smart Windows and Doors and we take a lot of pride in everything we do. I love windows and doors! I know everything about them and I enjoy working on them and it makes a big difference on a house," said Aubrey.

Along with Earth Smart, which opened around five months ago, Aubrey has other businesses he is involved in as well.

"I have Magnolia Home Remodeling we started about two and half years ago. I have another window company, Nash Window and Door, that we opened eight years ago. Nash Window and Door is more for my contracting with big companies through the years. At Magnolia Home Remodeling, we do everything from the concrete to the roof," said Aubrey.

Owning multiple businesses, Aubrey has to balance his time to be with his children, Magnolia (14), Willow (4), and Bennett (2), and his wife, Jessica, as well.







"My queen, Jessica, helps me with that a lot. Often times, I come home, get to hang out a little bit, and see everybody and then, I get to head out again. In the morning, I try to get to see the kids before they go off to school and I do try to make sure I am at home a few days a week before it gets dark. We like to focus on Saturdays. This past Saturday, we went to the Fiddlers Convention. On Saturday, we might drive around, go get dinner, or whatever we can find to do. I learn everyday how to make family

and work balance, because it is a tough one. Both things require lots of love and attention and obviously family is more important," said Aubrey.

Jessica, who was raised in Hartselle, is a stay-at-home-mom.

"We've lived in Athens for four years and I love it here. A lot of our family support lives here and we decided that moving to Athens was the best choice for us. Our kids go to Lindsey Lane Christian Academy and they started Mother's Morning out there. We love it there. The teachers are great and the principal is really good," said Jessica.

Aubrey appreciates many aspects of raising his family in Athens.

"We're growing and we have everything you could ever need in Athens. At the same time, when you run to Publix, you still see somebody you know. It's still a small town, but it's going to get big soon. We have the green way, the walking trails, the kids dugout, the sportsplex, and the little small things that people may forget about. We go to Big Spring Park and we love the downtown square, too. On Friday or Saturday night, we might go to dinner at the square, walk around, and let the kids run wild," said Aubrey.

Being centrally located in Athens was important to Aubrey.

"We're roughly an hour over to Monte Sano, an hour to Fayetteville, Tennessee, an hour to Cullman, and an hour to Florence. We drive around that hour to an hour and a half radius. It's also very helpful to my employees who may live in Huntsville," said Aubrey.

Having family nearby is very important to Aubrey and Jessica.

"We have five households of my family within a five mile radius of us. It's super important to be able to lean on your family when you need them and they can all lean on us. Grandmother could pull up and knock on the door right now, because she lives just five minutes away. It's important for the kids to be around their cousins. We try to get together and have Wednesday night dinner," said Aubrey.

For those who may be considering moving to Athens, Aubrey has some suggestions.

"I would say, definitely keep an open mind and high expectations. We have people from all walks of life here. There are a lot of transplants here in Athens. We have military families and government families. I would tell them to come to Athens. It's a great place, east, west, south, and north, all of Athens and Limestone County is fantastic," said Aubrey.

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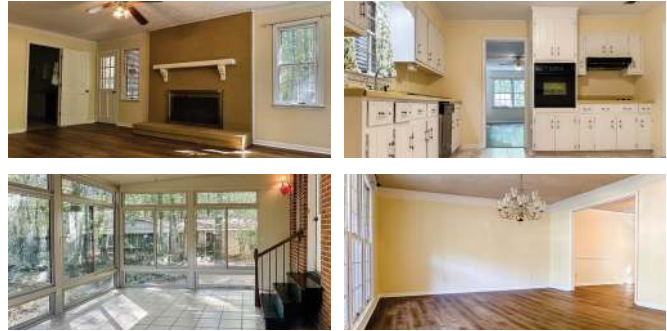


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**619 Norton Dr · Athens:** Beautiful wooded lot in coveted subdivision. This brick home offers spacious living down stairs to include living, dining, eat in kitchen and den. Owner's suite is on the main level. New flooring throughout the main level with walls being freshly painted. The upper level has two large bedrooms and a full bath. Sunroom off the den has tile floor, separate heating and cooling unit and lovely view of the treed backyard.

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**\$345,000**



**103 Clubhouse Ln · Madison:** Conveniently located off of ORRB, This lovely brick home offers 4 bd, 3 baths and large sun room. The living room features hardwood flooring, tray ceiling with crown mold and fireplace with gas logs. Large breakfast area in kitchen plus formal dining. Nice laundry with pantry closet. Owner's suite offers glamour bath and walk in closet. HVAC is 2017, R/O and MW 2022, DW 2019. Water heater 2015. Sun room has separate heating and cooling unit. Attached double garage. Large back yard with privacy fence and detached building for storage.

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**7723 Allison Loop · Athens:** Starter home on 0.5-acre lot, recently remodeled: HVAC, granite, appliances, flooring. Open living room, flex room, large laundry, oversized garage. Additional room, Storm shelter.

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**708 Norton Dr · Athens:** 3BR, 2.5BA Brick Home: Custom kitchen, stainless appliances, tray ceilings, wood/tile floors. Master bath with garden tub, separate shower, double vanity, walk-in closets and more!

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**FESTIVE FLEX ROOM:**

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**COZY GREAT ROOM:**

Enhance the warm and inviting atmosphere in the open concept Great Room by adding luxuriously soft throws and beautifully adorned seasonal pillows.



**POWDER ROOM ELEGANCE:**

Extend hospitality to your guests by stocking the Powder Room with sumptuously soft hand towels, delightful holiday-themed hand soap, and an array of thoughtful extra toiletries. Illuminate the space with the inviting glow of a fall-scented candle, creating a harmonious and welcoming ambiance.



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**ENCHANTING OUTDOOR SETTING:**

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**KITCHEN'S GRAND CULMINATION:**

Complete the Thanksgiving experience with a sublime finale by bringing out a freshly baked pumpkin pie from the oven in your large open Kitchen, a delightful treat that will warmly welcome your family and friends with its irresistible aroma and delicious taste.

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by Beth Medley

Listing your home with an expert realtor can be a crucial decision when selling your property. Here are some compelling reasons to consider listing your home with me as your realtor:



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**MARKET KNOWLEDGE**

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**NETWORKING**

My network of contacts includes other realtors, lenders, inspectors, and contractors that can be instrumental in facilitating a smooth process for the sale of your home.

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**STAGING AND PRESENTATION**

The current market has made this a priority in listing a home and I can offer advice on how to stage your home to make it most appealing to buyers. Properly prepared and well-presented homes often sell faster and at a higher price.

**PEACE OF MIND**

Selling your home can be stressful. With an expert realtor on your side, you can have peace of mind knowing that a professional is handling the details, providing guidance, and working to protect your interests through the entire process.

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**HONORING VETERAN LEGACIES**

by Mark White



**A**s we honor veterans on November 11th through Veterans Day, we wanted to highlight a special veteran focused effort in our community. Honoring Veteran Legacies and their great work came to mind. The founders of Honoring Veteran Legacies are Elaine Oakes and Chris Batté. I was able to sit down with co-founder Chris Batté, to have her share about their work. For Batté, the Honoring Veteran Legacies effort is personal.

“For me, I had a great-uncle, Oliver Joel Bowen, I grew up knowing. He was lost in the North Sea during WWI. He was a tail gunner on a B-17. It devastated his mother, brothers, and sisters to the point that he was memorialized in our family. I understood sacrifice because of that. When I got married, I married an Air Force officer and we were Air Force for 20 years. It blows my mind that we don’t value our veterans even more. It’s going to get worse and worse if we don’t teach the next generation about what our veterans did and why they have their freedom. That is what we’re all about,” said Batté.

Honoring Veteran Legacies has a mission statement to honor veterans age 65 and older. This includes veterans from WWII, Korea, and Vietnam. The effort serves multiple purposes in the community.

“Our main mission is an educational website and our secondary mission is trips. One of the reasons that we wanted to continue to do trips when we started this organization was because

we’re adding a legacy element to it. When we go on a trip, each trip we’re going to have at least one or two students who win our essay contest judged by the veterans. These trips are absolutely life changing,” said Batté

With the educational website, Honoring Veteran Legacies is supplying a tool to teach students about our veterans.



“Our educational website is a resource for teachers. With all the YouTube videos and testimonies people are doing, teachers just don’t have time to go and make a lesson plan out of that, so they go with whatever the book says. What we decided to do was create a website that has lessons in every subject and grade level and each lesson has the story of the sacrifice of a veteran in video form. This will allow the student to have a little tap on the shoulder and a message of ‘look what’s been done for you,’” said Batté.

The veteran relationships that are established through Honoring Veteran Legacies are a very important aspect of the effort.

“Those relationships on trips develop fast. Those who go on trips together get connected and stay connected. A lot of times, it’s a younger veteran connecting with an older veteran. They become buddies and they can talk about their experiences. They understand and serve each other in a different way,” said Batté.

Honoring Veteran Legacies depends on the support of the community.

“This community is amazing, but there are many veteran non-profits also raising money in the area, so that’s a challenge. To my knowledge, other than Legacy for Korean War Veterans, we’re the only organization serving the 65 and older population specifically. Most of the emphasis because of the Army post is going to be on the young guys coming home. A lot of times, we forget that we still have veterans 70 years later still dreaming every single night. They’ve really seen a lot and these trips really heal them. They build those relationships, they go back to where they once served, and they see it at peace. That helps them a lot,” said Batté.

In 2024, Honoring Veteran Legacies has a trip to Normandy, France, planned.

“If people would like to find opportunities to support the trip to Normandy, they can go to our website, [honoringveteranlegacies.org](http://honoringveteranlegacies.org). We’ll also be hosting some fundraisers, so watch our website,” said Batté.

Honoring Veteran Legacies meets once a month and everyone is welcome to attend.

“We invite everyone to our meetings, because these guys change lives. We meet the first Tuesday of every month at Hope Church on Balch Road in Madison. We cancel very seldom, but for that reason, you need to check the website,” said Batté.

If you would like to check out the educational website, you can go to [eternalsalute.org](http://eternalsalute.org).

You can go to that website and watch videos. It takes roughly \$800 to create the videos. It’s very expensive. The mailing address for Honoring Veteran Legacies is P.O. Box 1124 Madison, Alabama, 35758. We are a 501(c)(3) and we are an entirely volunteer organization. No one gets paid,” said Batté.

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## Empower Champions: Your Gift Unlocks a World of Possibilities

This year, November 28, 2023, marks a special day of gratitude and community spirit. Join me and my colleagues at @evamericas in celebrating the dedication of the coaches, mentors, volunteers, and supporters who enrich the lives of @specialolympics athletes. With over 5 million global athletes, the tireless efforts of these remarkable individuals make possible the year-round sports training, inclusive health programs, and education initiatives provided by Special Olympics. Their work goes beyond sports; it's about nurturing life-changing programs and opportunities.

We are immensely grateful for every individual who contributes to making Special Olympics a beacon of hope and empowerment. The impact of your commitment is seen in every athlete's smile, every goal achieved, and every life positively transformed. Your efforts not only inspire the athletes but also motivate us all to build a more inclusive and supportive community. Thank you for being an integral part of this incredible journey, creating a ripple effect of positivity and change that resonates across communities worldwide.



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At the time this magazine went to print, all events and locations were accurate. Please check event websites for the most current information as some events may have been postponed or canceled.

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3**

**MERCHANTS ALLEY HAPPY HOUR MUSIC SERIES FEATURING BREZ**

Patrons who visit Downtown Athens can now enjoy music every Friday this Fall in Merchants Alley.  
**COST:** FREE **TIME:** 5:30pm  
**LOCATION:** Merchants Alley, 107 N. Jefferson St.

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7**

**LIMESTONE COUNTY BAMA CLUB SCHOLARSHIP FUNDRAISER**

Join us for an evening of delicious food and drinks and an opportunity to hear Tyler Watts, color analyst for Crimson Tide Sports Marketing and former Alabama quarterback. Your presence will make a difference in the lives of deserving students.  
**COST:** \$50 per person, dinner included  
**TIME:** 6:00pm  
**LOCATION:** 114 Pryor Street West

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10**

**MERCHANTS ALLEY HAPPY HOUR MUSIC SERIES FEATURING DREW CLEMONS**

Patrons who visit Downtown Athens can now enjoy music every Friday this Fall in Merchants Alley.  
**COST:** FREE **TIME:** 5:30pm  
**LOCATION:** Merchants Alley, 107 N. Jefferson St.

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11**

**ATHENS-LIMESTONE VETERANS DAY PARADE**

Support our veterans by entering or attending the parade.  
**COST:** FREE **TIME:** 11:30am  
**LOCATION:** Starts at Athens High School and goes downtown and to end at the library

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14**

**CHRISTMAS GATHERING SPONSORED BY STACY WOLFE BREAST CANCER FOUNDATION**

Get ready for our second annual Christmas Gathering! Join us for a night full of fun, laughter, food and gifts as we prepare for Christmas!  
**COST:** \$35 **TIME:** 6:00pm - 8:30pm  
**LOCATION:** Lindsay Lane Baptist Church, 1300 Lindsay Lane South

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17**

**CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE**

Featuring Merry Market Vendors on Marion Street (4pm-8pm) Ice Skating Rink (4pm-8pm), the Merchants Alley Tree Lighting (5pm), Christmas Photos at Fly Leaf Photography (6pm-8pm, NO SANTA) and an Athens High School Choir Performance on Marion Street (6:30pm)  
**COST:** FREE (Christmas Photos \$25 extra)  
**TIME:** 4:00pm - 8:00pm  
**LOCATION:** Downtown Athens

**SATURDAY NOVEMBER 18**

**CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE**

Featuring Merry Market Vendors on Marion Street (11am - 4pm) Ice Skating Rink (12pm-4pm), Christmas Photos at Fly Leaf Photography (1pm - 3pm, NO SANTA) and performances from Drew Clemons (12pm) and Matt Prader (2pm) on Marion Street.  
**COST:** FREE (Christmas Photos \$25 extra)  
**TIME:** 4:00pm - 8:00pm  
**LOCATION:** Downtown Athens



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**SUNDAY NOVEMBER 19**  
CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE

Featuring Merry Market Vendors on Marion Street (12pm-4pm) Ice Skating Rink (12pm-4pm), Christmas Photos at Fly Leaf Photography (1pm-3pm, NO SANTA) and an performances by Athens State University Choir (12pm), Oasis Worship and Praise (1pm) and Southern Splendor Chorus (2:30pm) on Marion St.

**COST:** FREE (Christmas Photos \$25 extra)

**TIME:** 4:00pm - 8:00pm

**LOCATION:** Downtown Athens

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28**  
'TIS THE SEASON WITH ANDY LEFTWICH & FRIENDS

Andy Leftwich & Friends will be performing a special holiday concert.

**COST:** \$5 - \$15 **TIME:** 7:00pm - 9:30pm

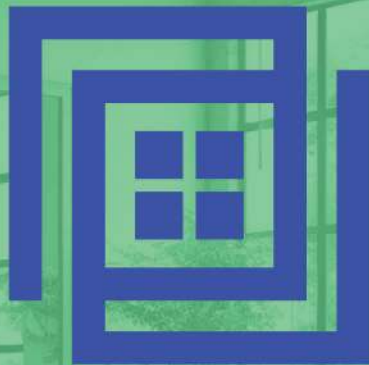
**LOCATION:** Athens State University - McCandless Hall, 300 N. Beaty Street



## KATHERINE HORTON CELEBRATES 100TH BIRTHDAY

by Shannon Oakley

**100 YEARS!!** Residents, family and friends gathered at the Goldton to celebrate Katherine Horton's 100th Birthday on October 2nd. She wore a sash that said, "100 & Fabulous" and looked beautiful. It all began with Mayor Ronnie Marks presenting Mrs. Horton with a key to the city. Everyone sang "Happy Birthday" and wished her many more. There was line dancing provided by Kay Burlingame and her troupe and many of the guests joined them and Mrs. Horton was tapping her feet the whole time! Quite a few of Mrs. Horton's great-grandchildren joined in, too. Of course, there was a HUGE cake, beautiful flowers, and wonderful food (that was provided by Kay as well). The Goldton staff had to stay busy to keep up with all the visitors and excitement. It was a beautiful day and a very special celebration!



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