

# MONDAY MESSAGE

## FROM DR. MCFARLAND



### Digging For Diamonds

May 14, 2018

This weekend, I had the opportunity to attend the Horn Memorial Trail Ride in my hometown. Four wheelers, horses, dune buggies and all kinds of other vehicles paraded through the community and ended up in the Horn pasture in Gilgal. We had a great time fellowshiping with each other and reminiscing about times past. We played dominoes and listened to music until late into the night.

It was great to reconnect with my cousins and childhood friends. Many of us have grown and moved away, but others appear to be stuck in neutral. I was happy to see everyone, including my cousin Leo.

Leo always has an interesting story to tell. He is a couple of years younger than I am, but he has changed jobs every 18 to 24 months. He has the gift of getting a job, but he always manages to find something wrong with the working conditions, the character of his colleagues or some other issue that makes him decide to look for what appears to be greener pastures.

Leo shared with me that he is in the middle of finding a new job due to the lack of vision of his current supervisor. I listened to Leo, but I was thinking about a story my dad told me when I was considering transferring schools my freshman year.

As we are ending the school year, I know some of you are making decisions about whether to stay or go. The “Acres of Diamonds” story by author Earl Nightingale may give you some insight:

*There was an African farmer who heard tales about other farmers who had made millions by discovering diamond mines. These tales so excited the farmer that he could hardly wait to sell his farm and go prospecting for diamonds himself. He sold the farm and spent the rest of his life wandering the African continent searching unsuccessfully for the gleaming gems that brought such high prices on the markets of the world. Finally, worn out and in a fit of despondency, he threw himself into a river and drowned.*

*Meanwhile, the man who had bought his farm happened to be crossing the small stream on the property one day, when suddenly there was a bright flash of blue and red light from the stream bottom. He bent down and picked up a stone. It was a good-sized stone, and admiring it, he brought it home and put it on his fireplace mantel as an interesting curiosity.*

*Several weeks later a visitor picked up the stone, looked closely at it, hefted it in his hand, and nearly fainted. He asked the farmer if he knew what he'd found. When the farmer said, no, that he thought it was a piece of crystal, the visitor told him he had found one of the largest diamonds ever discovered. The farmer had trouble believing that. He told the man that his creek was full of such stones, not all as large as the one on the mantel, but sprinkled generously throughout the creek bottom.*

*The farm the first farmer had sold, so that he might find a diamond mine, turned out to be one of the most productive diamond mines on the entire African continent. The first farmer had owned, free and clear ... acres of diamonds. But he had sold them for practically nothing, in order to look for them elsewhere.*

*The moral is clear: If the first farmer had only taken the time to study and prepare himself to learn what diamonds looked like in their rough state, and to thoroughly explore the property he had before looking elsewhere, all of his wildest dreams would have come true.*

In Crowley ISD, it is clear to me that we are in the midst of acres of diamonds. The challenge is that each of us must be able to recognize diamonds in the rough and realize the preparation and pressure necessary to produce the diamonds.

Many people are blind to the opportunities that are currently present due to an unyielding focus on finding something better. They miss the diamond because they are looking at the coal or the current circumstances. As educators, we all have the capacity and ability to turn our coal into diamonds. It is simply about what we perceive and how we interact with our environment.

Our students are like diamonds in the rough. They have exceptional potential and our mission is to ensure that each student achieves their full potential and that we are intentional about unleashing their brilliance.

When a miner goes digging for diamonds, they know they will likely have to move tons of coal to get to the diamond, but they don't go in thinking about the coal. It is the thought of uncovering precious diamonds that fuels their efforts. As we wrap up the school year, recognize that we are surrounded by acres of diamonds. They may look like coal, but don't be deceived by what you see. There is a diamond depending on you.

With something to think about, I'm Mike McFarland, challenging you to keep digging.

**Dr. Michael D. McFarland**  
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