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THE GAZETTE IS "THE VOICE OF REASON"!



# September 11, 2001

## We Will Never Forget

### Remembering 9/11: A Day That Changed Everything

The morning of September 11, 2001, started like any other Tuesday. People were heading to work, children were in school, and the sky was a clear, brilliant blue. But by the end of the day, the world had irrevocably changed. The coordinated terrorist attacks on the United States, carried out by 19 al-Qaeda hijackers, left an indelible mark on the nation and the world.

Remembering 9/11 isn't just about recalling a tragic event; it's about honoring the victims, understanding the global shifts that followed, and reaffirming the resilience of the human spirit.

#### The Events of That Fateful Day

The attacks began at 8:46 a.m. EDT, when American Airlines Flight 11 struck the North Tower of the World Trade Center in New York City. Just 17 minutes later, at 9:03 a.m., United Airlines Flight 175 hit the South Tower. The sight of the iconic Twin Towers engulfed in smoke and fire was surreal and horrifying. What initially appeared to be a horrific accident was soon revealed as a deliberate act of terror.

As the nation watched in disbelief, a third plane, American Airlines Flight 77, crashed into the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, at 9:37 a.m. The Pentagon, the symbol of American military might, was also a target. But the courage of ordinary Americans was also on display that day. On United Airlines Flight 93, passengers, having learned of the other attacks, fought back against the hijackers. Their heroic struggle caused the plane to crash in a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, at 10:03 a.m., preventing it from reaching its intended target, believed to be the U.S. Capitol or the White House. The brave actions of those on Flight 93 saved countless lives.

In New York City, the unthinkable happened. At 9:59 a.m., the South Tower collapsed, followed by the North Tower at 10:28 a.m. The collapse sent a massive cloud of dust and debris through the streets of Lower Manhattan, a scene of utter devastation. The attacks claimed the lives of 2,977 people from over 90 countries, including 343 firefighters and paramedics and 72 police officers who rushed into the burning buildings to save others. Their selflessness and sacrifice are a testament to the best of humanity in the face of the worst.

#### The Aftermath and Global Impact

The immediate aftermath of 9/11 was a time of profound grief and unity. The attacks sparked a national and global outpouring of support for the United States. The phrase "We are all Americans" was heard around the world. The events led to a swift and significant shift in U.S. foreign policy, with the launch of the "War on Terror" and military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq. The attacks also led to the creation of the Department of Homeland Security and new security measures at airports and public places worldwide.

The attacks also had a lasting impact on civil liberties and privacy. The USA PATRIOT Act was passed in October 2001, giving law enforcement agencies broader powers to conduct surveillance and search for potential terrorists.

This led to a contentious national debate about the balance between security and individual freedoms.

#### Honoring the Victims and the Legacy

Today, we remember the victims of 9/11 at memorials across the country. The National September 11 Memorial & Museum at the World Trade Center site stands as a powerful tribute to the nearly 3,000 victims.

The memorial features two reflecting pools in the footprints of the Twin Towers, with the names of every person who died there inscribed on bronze panels. The Pentagon Memorial and the Flight 93 National Memorial also serve as solemn places for remembrance and reflection.



Remembering 9/11 is about more than just a historical event. It's about recognizing the enduring pain of the families who lost loved ones. It's about honoring the first responders who ran towards danger. It's about acknowledging the sacrifices made by service members in the wars that followed.

It's also about understanding the complex geopolitical landscape that emerged from that day.

As we approach each anniversary, we are reminded of the importance of unity, compassion, and vigilance. It is a day to reflect on the fragility of life and the strength of the human spirit. The memory of 9/11 serves as a stark reminder of the threats we face, but also as a powerful testament to our collective ability to overcome tragedy and rebuild. The dust of that day has long settled, but the memory of those lost, and the lessons learned, will never fade.



On Sept. 11, 2001, America was forever changed. It has been 24 years since the horrific attacks on America, but that tragic day served as a true test of the American spirit.

We will never forget!

So on this day, we observe Patriot Day and all that it represents—we honor the value of life, those we loved and lost, our country's resilience, and the strength of the American spirit.







## INSIDE THE STATEHOUSE With Steve Flowers

Steve Flowers is Alabama’s leading political columnist. His weekly column appears in over 60 Alabama newspapers. Steve served 16 years in the state legislature. He may be reached at: <https://steveflowers.us/>

### Three Down-Ballot State Offices Will Be Filled by Three Competent Republicans



This is a big election year in Alabama. All of our constitutional offices are up for election on May 19, 2026, and the races have begun. Included in the cavalcade are Governor, Lt. Governor, Attorney General, Agriculture Commissioner, State Treasurer, Secretary of State, and State Auditor. All of our statewide elected officials are Republicans, and all will be after the dust settles next year. We are a one-party state when it comes to statewide offices. Our legislature, House and Senate, are overwhelmingly two-thirds Republican. By the way, all 140 Legislative Seats are up for election in this gigantic election year.

We will discuss the down-ballot races of Treasurer, Secretary of State, and Auditor this week. The Secretary of State and Auditor are open and incumbent free, just like Governor, Attorney General, and Lt. Governor.

Our veteran State Treasurer, **Young Boozer**, is up for election and will be re-elected to an unprecedented fifth term as Treasurer of the State. Young Boozer is not only the longest serving State Treasurer, he is the most qualified, and bona fide, and successful Treasurer in state history. It is as though he was born to be and his life scripted to be Alabama’s most remarkable Treasurer.

Our Young is actually Young Boozer, III. His father, Young Boozer Jr., was an ultra-successful businessman who founded several major Alabama corporations including Cotton States Life Insurance Company which he sold to ALFA in the 1980’s. This Young Boozer, Jr. came out of Dothan High School and played football with Paul “Bear” Bryant at Alabama. They were both stars on Rose Bowl and National Championship teams in the 1930’s. Bryant and Boozer remained close friends throughout their lives and Boozer included Bryant on several business ventures he founded. One of which was Ziegler Meats in Tuscaloosa.

Our current Young Boozer III, our Treasurer, graduated from Tuscaloosa High School and matriculated on to the West Coast and attended and graduated from the prestigious Stanford University. He went on to get an MBA from Wharton. He had a super successful career in banking, which began in California, then on to New York and then back home to Alabama where he was one of the top executives with the old Colonial Bank in Montgomery.

Young Boozer was first elected Treasurer in 2010 and served with much success. He was re-elected in 2014 serving eight years from 2011 to 2019. Due to state

law, he could not run for a third consecutive term. In 2021, he returned to the office via appointment by Governor Kay Ivey. Upon completion of that term, he was elected to the position overwhelmingly in 2022. We are fortunate to have him be able to run for another term this year. He has actually made the State money as Treasurer. Under Boozer, the State treasury has become self-funded.

The Secretary of State race will be one of the closest contests of the year in 2026. Current State Auditor **Andrew Sorrell** is looking to move next door to Secretary of State. Sorrell is a very conservative young man and an extremely effective one-on-one retail politician. He has crisscrossed the state nonstop and enjoys it. Andrew Sorrell is also a good family man. He will be pitted against the brightest rising star on the Alabama GOP stage, **Caroleene Dobson**. Dobson is an outstanding candidate who is a Monroe County native, Harvard graduate, accomplished lawyer and quality wife and mother. She ran a sterling race for the Republican Party in the new Democratic 2nd Congressional District last year.

Youthful **Derek Chen** will be favored to win the open State Auditor post in his first venture on the ballot, although he is not new to politics. At 28, he is the most connected person to Alabama Republican politics at that age that I have ever seen. He is a member of every major conservative business group in the state. He is the largest contributor to conservative Alabama Republican legislative candidates in the state. He is a major donor to President Trump. He started supporting Trump in 2015 when he first came down the elevator at Trump Tower in New York. Derek has stuck like glue to Trump through thick and thin and is a constant guest of Trump’s at Mar-a-Lago. My guess is that Trump will return Derek Chen’s loyalty by endorsing him in his race for State Auditor. Derek has a law degree from Cumberland School of Law and an MBA from the University of Alabama. He is more than qualified to keep up with the state’s desks, chairs, computers, and pencils, which is essentially what the State Auditor does.

See you next week.

Steve Flowers is Alabama’s leading political columnist. His weekly column appears in over 60 Alabama newspapers. He served 16 years in the state legislature. Steve may be reached at [steve@steveflowers.us](mailto:steve@steveflowers.us).

The views of submitted editorials may not be the express views of The Alabama Gazette.



### Perry O. Hooper Jr.

Founder Let the People Speak  
Founder Patriots First  
Former Alabama State Representative  
Alabama State Republican Executive Committee



## From Chaos to Control: The Trump Crime Crackdown Already Working in D.C. *What’s Happening in Washington Will Be the Model for Every Blue City*

Since President Trump took charge, the nation’s capital is already changing, shopkeepers are standing taller, criminals are on notice, and Attorney General Pam Bondi is proving that law and order can be restored where weak liberal leadership failed.

Since President Trump took over, in a matter of days things have already changed in Washington, D.C. Let’s be honest, before Trump stepped in, our nation’s capital had become more dangerous than ever. Each trip I made in recent years was worse than the last. Streets once filled with tourists and school groups became littered with graffiti, boarded-up storefronts, aggressive panhandlers at every corner, and trash blowing down the sidewalks of what should be the shining capital of the free world.

This trip a mere day after President Trump made his historic decision. I saw something different. The problems aren’t gone, side streets still reek of marijuana, graffiti still scars the walls of historic buildings, and homeless encampments remain. But there is finally a sense that somebody is in charge. Shopkeepers who used to glance nervously at the door now say they feel like they’ve got backup. One told me, *“For the first time in years, I don’t feel like I’m on my own.”* That shift in attitude is real, and it comes directly from President Trump’s decisive leadership.

Last week’s press conferences made it official. First, U.S. Attorney Jeanine Pirro stood in front of the media and demolished their phony “crime is down” narrative. Holding up posters of victims, she said what every parent of every victim has been thinking: *“It’s never enough... You tell the mother of the intern who was shot... ‘Oh, crime is down.’”* She gave the press the reality check they desperately needed, no spin, no excuses.

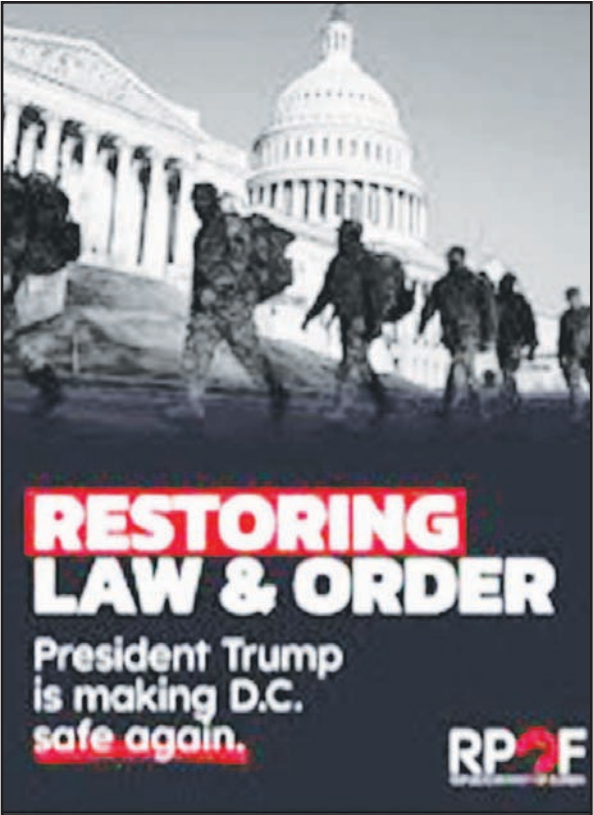
Then Attorney General Pam Bondi delivered the knockout blow. Bondi announced that the days of sanctuary lawlessness in Washington are over. She stripped the D.C. police chief of her authority, appointed DEA Administrator Terry Cole as Emergency Police Commissioner, and rescinded every so-called sanctuary protection. *“D.C. will not remain a sanctuary city,”* Bondi declared. In a matter of days, 150 arrests were made, 60 undocumented suspects taken off the streets, and 27 illegal firearms seized. Local officials who looked the other way are now sidelined, and federal leadership is back in control.

President Trump has also unleashed Tom Homan to do what he does best, deport the criminal illegal aliens that Biden’s open borders allowed to flood into our cities. These predators, gang members, and repeat offenders are finally being removed, one by one, from the neighborhoods they terrorized.

And it’s not just Washington. In California, when ICE agents were physically attacked during lawful arrests, President Trump immediately called out the National Guard. Think about that, federal agents attacked on American soil. The radicals thought they could intimidate law enforcement. Instead, they got

the strongest message possible, this administration will never allow our agents to be targeted or our laws ignored.

Here’s the bottom line: parts of D.C. today were more dangerous than Mexico City, a metropolis of 22 million people in one of the most crime-challenged countries on Earth. But there’s a difference. In Mexico City, the cartels don’t tolerate street crime that interferes with their business. In D.C., local leaders tolerated, even excused, the kind of street crime that terrifies law-abiding citizens. In Mexico City you can walk through central neighborhoods at night. In D.C., you could not even pump gas in broad daylight without looking over your shoulder.



Jeanine Pirro’s press conference and Pam Bondi’s crackdown weren’t just headlines, they were turning points. They signaled the end of coddling criminals and the beginning of putting victims first. And as President Trump said just last week, *“When Washington is safe, America will be safe, because what we do here will be the model for every blue city in the country.”*

Attorney General **Pam Bondi** delivered the knockout blow. Bondi announced that the days of sanctuary lawlessness in Washington are over. She stripped the D.C. police chief of her authority, appointed DEA Administrator Terry Cole as Emergency Police Commissioner, and rescinded every so-called sanctuary protection. *“D.C. will not remain a sanctuary city,”* Bondi declared. In a matter of days, 150 arrests were made, 60 undocumented suspects taken off the streets, and 27 illegal firearms seized. Local officers told me privately they’ve never felt this kind of support from Washington leadership. Bondi has their back, and they know it. She is proving that tough, decisive leadership doesn’t just make headlines — it saves lives

Make no mistake, this is the model. Pam Bondi is showing every failed liberal mayor in America what leadership looks like. You don’t appease crime, you crush it. You don’t ignore the victims, you stand with them. It means telling the mother of the intern murdered in D.C., the shop owner beaten in Los Angeles, the family shattered by fentanyl in San Francisco, and the ICE agent ambushed in California, you are not forgotten, and your government is finally fighting for you.

The cleanup in California has just begun. The transformation of Washington is still underway. But already, in just days, the difference is visible, shopkeepers standing taller, families walking with a little more confidence, and the swamp finally on notice. If Washington, D.C., once more dangerous than Mexico City, can be turned around, then no city in America is beyond saving. That is the Trump promise. That is the Bondi guarantee. And it means every law-abiding American, including every proud Alabamian, will one day be able to walk their streets without fear again.





Rob Tate

# Robservations...

## What Tolerance??

I wrote this Robservations almost 20-years-ago for another newspaper. How things have not changed. Actually, they have gotten worse. After the summer of mass migration in 2015, the entire Western world has been turned on its head. All you have to do is go to YouTube and search for the dozens and dozens of protests that are breaking out all around the world because of the mass migration and countries allowing immigrants in who either have no desire to assimilate into their new culture or in many cases, are actively trying to takeover the country, culture and society they have invaded. To ignore this is to be the cartoon ostrich with your head in the ground.

If you can show me one country that has benefitted socially, economically or culturally by unfettered mass migration, I will be all ears. I love when the president of Poland was asked about mass migration into his country. His answer, **“Nope.”** Today, we are dealing with rape gangs throughout Western Europe, disintegration of established cultural norms, the increasing prevalence of honor killings and disfigurements, and areas in certain parts of a country that it would not be wise to tread if you were not a member to the ethnic minority that has taken over that area.

To be 100% clear, when I write of these groups, I am in no way singling out Muslim immigrants. To be sure, many are part of the problem, but this problem is not just religious. “But Rob, how can you say they are part of the problem?” Well, when you have Imams on verified on tape talking about destroying America, taking over our country, forcing Islam on all Americans and instituting Sharia Law within the United States, I say that is a problem. But beyond mere religion, in many cases the problem is cultural and the uncomfortable truth is this: Not all cultures are compatible inside of other cultures. For example, if you try to convince me that it is okay to throw acid in your daughter’s face because she somehow insulted or disgraced the family, I say it is time for your entire family, except the victim, to leave.

But below is my 2006 Robservations on tolerance. No, things have not gotten better since I first wrote this. Cheers!!

**Tolerance:** a: Sympathy or indulgence for beliefs or practices differing from or conflicting with one's own.

b: the act of allowing something: TOLERATION

I am not quite sure where to start with this column. I know what I want to say but feel compelled to restrain myself and my words. At the same time, however, I feel that I have to address the following issue as clearly as I possibly can. So here goes.

It appears that Muslim taxi cab drivers in Minneapolis, MN have been refusing to allow certain people to ride in their taxis. According to reports, about 100 people are refused service every month. What people, you ask? Well, anybody who is carrying alcohol of any kind or those with dogs. Why, you ask? Because these drivers feel that since alcohol is forbidden according to Islamic law and that dogs are considered “dirty” animals, they have the right to refuse service to these people. Now I’m not talking about drunks carrying knives and dozens of open containers of beer, but I’m talking about a person perhaps carrying a bottle of wine to a friend’s house as a gift for dinner. Nor am I talking about a person with fifteen dogs but blind people who have Seeing Eye dogs or other working dogs performing services to their owners. By the way, drugs are against Islamic law too, but how come the Taliban continue to be the world’s number one exporter of opium?

Now, am I the only red blooded American out here that is pissed off about this? There are so many issues at stake here, my head begins to swim thinking about them. On the radio, one taxi driver from Somalia said that alcohol is against his religion so he should not have to carry someone carrying alcohol. Well first of all, SHUT UP. This is not Somalia or have you forgotten this is America and the reason you are here is because Somalia, let me be as nice and politically correct as possible, is not a real nice place to live. Hmmmm. What a thought. Next, because of your religion, you expect us, in America, to sanction and legalize overt discrimination, something contrary to our values. I am sorry my friend, but that is not what America is about. As a taxi driver, you are required to perform a service to your community. IT IS YOUR JOB. If you don’t like the idea of transporting these people, get another job or hop on a boat and leave. It is that simple. Sit down, shut up and do your job.

Another issue at stake is where does this end? If a Muslim taxi driver sees an obviously Jewish man on the street, is he going to refuse him service just because? What about an uncovered woman? What would happen if a Christian or Jewish driver refused service to a Muslim or homosexual? What if a black driver refused a white customer? What about a Hindu driver refusing

someone carrying a bag from Five Guys? I for one cannot and would not support this behavior. But would this be considered fair to these pinheads? I don’t know what to think about the spineless wimps in this country who will continue to allow this kind of behavior and challenge our way of life to. (In 2025, it has not gotten any better)

For those of you that think this is just an isolated incident, think again. I believe this is just symptomatic of an ever-aggressive effort for people to see exactly what they can get away with. More reports about that this same unacceptable behavior has been reported in Australia, Denmark and Norway with one woman in Oslo reporting that 20 taxis passed her up because she had a dog with her. In Switzerland, a Muslim doctor originally from Palestine, refused service to an American woman because he didn’t agree with US foreign policy. In Norway, a pro-Israel politician has received death threats from the ever-growing Muslim population and if you recall, just before the fall of the Taliban, non-Muslims were going to have to wear yellow pieces of cloth on their clothing in order to readily identify them in public (sound familiar?). (A 2025 update: Just last week in Belgium, a trans-woman was beat up by African immigrants because they did not like her lifestyle).

It is quickly becoming “crunch time” in the West, people. It is more and more evident that many of these immigrants infiltrating Western societies are not the least bit interested in assimilating into their new environments and are in fact becoming ever aggressive in attempting to get their new adopted societies to change our ways of life in order to accommodate them. I think it is time for Westerners to stand up firmly and not just say “no” but “Hell No.” You are here, either assimilate or get out. I find it funny how we are continually bombarded with the words of their alleged **“tolerance”** of others yet it is western society that openly welcomes them and allows them to practice their religion (rightfully so). But it is them, in every corner of the world, which continues to deny equal rights to all its citizens and deny basic religious freedoms we hold so dear. Sadly, once they come to our shores, one of the first things they want to do is urinate on our constitution and begin denying our citizens the rights they wish they had in the countries they immigrated from. Sickening.

**Grow up, America. We all have rights guaranteed in our constitution.** Why in the hell did we fight World War II and defeat Nazism and Fascism just to let (millions) immigrants come to our shores and “give” them the right to discriminate against US citizens. If we allow this behavior to continue, it will get worse. It always does. If we are not willing to stand up now, once Pandora’s box is open, good luck getting it closed again. Their brazen intolerance will strengthen with every sign of weakness displayed by us. You don’t pick up a rider, you are fired. If you are not yet a citizen, you are deported. Questions? If you are a doctor and refuse treatment because of political views, see ya. Bye, bye. Call me from wherever you came from. Questions? There was a time when Americans wouldn’t take foolishness from anybody, where have they gone?

### ISMs: FOR THOSE WITH QUESTIONS

**Communism:** If you have two cows, you give both cows to the government, and then the government sells you some of the milk.

**Socialism:** If you have two cows, you give both cows to the government, and then the government gives you some of the milk.

**Naziism:** If you have two cows, the government shoots you and takes both cows.

**Fascism:** If you have two cows, you milk both of them and give the government half of the milk.

**New Dealism:** If you have two cows, you kill one, milk the other and pour the milk down the drain.

**Capitalism:** If you have two cows, you sell one cow and buy a bull.

*The views of submitted editorials may not be the express views of The Alabama Gazette.*



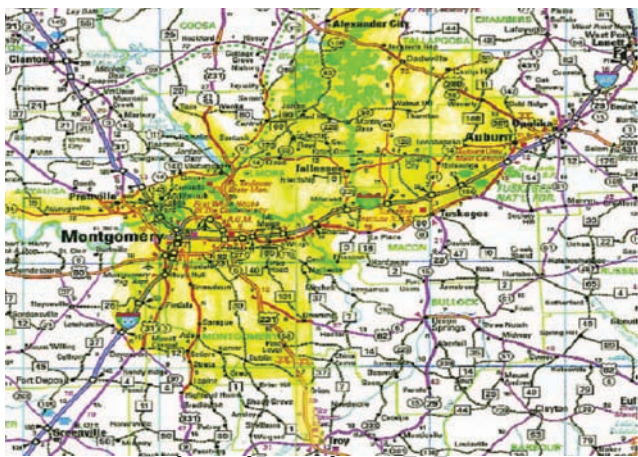
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Ronald A. Holtsford

## I hear the Miranda rights given on television shows all the time. What is the origin of Miranda rights?

Miranda rights rise out of a 1966, United States Supreme Court case of *Miranda v. Arizona*. In March of 1963, Ernesto Miranda was arrested for the kidnapping and rape of an eighteen-year-old girl.

At that time, Miranda was twenty- three years old, was indigent and his educational accomplishment was only as high as one half of the ninth grade. He was examined by a medical doctor who both said he had an emotional illness, of the schizophrenic type but also said he was alert, intelligent within normal limits, competent to stand trial and sane within the legal definition. He had been arrested numerous times and continued to do so after this famous case bearing his name. Miranda actually capitalized on this case by selling autographed Miranda warning cards for \$1.50 each. Miranda eventually lost his life in a 1976 bar fight after he was stabbed.

After Miranda was picked up he was placed into a lineup so that the victim could hopefully identify her assailant. Miranda was identified and taken by two officers into a separate room to be interrogated. The interrogation started at about 11:30 a.m. and though he initially denied guilt for the crime, within two hours or less Miranda had given a detailed oral admission and then wrote out the admission, which was signed by him.

The United States Supreme Court in its majority opinion spelled out that prior to any questioning of a suspect by police that the suspect must be warned that they have the right to remain silent, that any statement that the suspect/ accused makes may be used against them in Court and that they have the right to have counsel (a lawyer) present for questioning whether that lawyer is retained by the suspect or appointed by the Court. The suspect may waive his or her rights if the waiver is made voluntarily, knowingly and intelligently. If he or she has answered some questions, they can still invoke the rights to not answer further questioning. The suspect can await an attorney to consult with them before answering any questions or refuse altogether to answer questions.

The Court stated that interrogation had proceeded from a one time practice of some police to physically beat an admission out of the suspect or to question the suspect at length until they obtained an admission to more of a psychological interrogation rather than a physical one.

The Supreme Court majority opinion went on to say that the Fifth Amendment is extended to suspects or defendants even outside of the courtroom in that they have a right not to incriminate themselves (remember the television adage of “I plead the Fifth”). Even though the Fifth Amendment allows one a right not to incriminate themselves, they can still make a statement and even confess to the crime. It was the opinion of the Court that the statements obtained from Miranda were not done in a manner in which he was protected by the Fifth Amendment.

Of interest were other cases, which considered the Miranda warnings as well as other Constitutional issues. Such a case included the 1977 *Brewer v. Williams*,

Supreme Court case. When Williams was picked up for the abduction (eventually murder charge as well) of a ten-year-old girl, one of the arresting officers was familiar with the defendant. Williams was a mental institution escapee but was also known to be deeply religious. Williams was given the Miranda warnings and upon advice from counsel, Williams refused to answer questions. However the officer knowing of Williams religious convictions tricked him by remarking that the poor weather would cause low visibility and that with several inches of snow being expected it would be difficult to find the little girls body. He went on to say that the girl should be entitled to a Christian burial since she was abducted on Christmas Eve and murdered.

Williams incriminated himself through several statements which allowed police to find the body. The police detective had isolated Williams during the ride to jail and questioned him even though he knew Williams already had a lawyer. The question revolved around whether Williams had waived his rights. After consideration that he had consulted with two attorneys and had stated he did not wish to talk it was enough for the justices to vote in the majority that Williams had not waived his rights and further that he gave no notice to his lawyers of waiver and was protected under the Sixth and Fourteenth Amendments.

Another Arizona case, *Edwards v. Arizona* from 1981 involved defendant Edwards who received Miranda warnings but agreed to answer some questions. Edwards tried to make a deal and when told by police that they had

no authority to do so, Edwards asked for an attorney. Edwards was later told without the presence of an attorney that he had to talk to them and that they had the taped confession of Edwards accomplice. Edwards listened to several minutes of the confession and then said he wanted to talk and he incriminated himself. He was convicted and on appeal the Arizona Supreme Court determined he had voluntarily and knowingly waived his rights. The United States Supreme Court held that he had not waived his right to counsel, believing that such waiver had not been knowingly and intelligently relinquished.

*This article is informative only and not meant to be all inclusive. Additionally this article does not serve as legal advice to the reader and does not constitute an attorney- client relationship. The reader should seek counsel from their attorney should any questions exist.*

*“No representation is made that the quality of legal services performed is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers.”*

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Col John Eidsmoe

## “TO THE SHORES OF - WHERE?”

### “From the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli...”

Most of us know why the Marine Hymn speaks of the halls of Montezuma. It refers to the Mexican War (1846-48) in which the Marine and other American soldiers, led by General Winfield Scott fought a fierce battle from Vera Cruz to Mexico City and stormed Chapultepec Castle.

But what about the shores of Tripoli? That’s another story.

It goes back nearly 1,400 years to the beginning of Muslim Jihad, but let’s start with 1785. Thomas Jefferson and John Adams were serving as U.S. envoys to Europe, and they met with the representative of Dey (ruler) Muhammad of Tripoli, one of the Barbary states on the Mediterranean coast of Africa. The Barbary states (Morocco, Tripoli, and Tunis, had a nasty habit of attacking the ships of the Christian nations of Europe, seizing the cargos and enslaving the crews and passengers. From the 1500s to the 1800s, Barbary pirates enslaved over a million Europeans. Women and boys were forced into harems as sex slaves; men were condemned to toil as galley slaves, mine workers, or other heavy labor throughout North Africa and the Ottoman Empire. In his book *Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters: White Slavery in the Mediterranean, the Barbary Coast, and Italy, 1500-1800* (2003), Dr. Robert Davis details this largely-forgotten chapter of history and suggests the actual number could be higher. Many European countries paid annual tribute to the Barbary states, in return for which the pirates would leave their ships alone.

These seizures included American ships, including one sent by the Pilgrims in 1625 laden with furs and other cargo to pay their debts to the London Merchant Adventurers who had financed their colony. These seizures increased after America became independent and lost the protection of the Royal British Navy. In 1784 Tripoli declared war on the new United States and began seizing American ships. So in London Jefferson and Adams met with Tripoli’s Ambassador and asked why Tripoli would treat a new nation like the United States as an enemy. As Jefferson and Adams wrote to John Jay March 28 1786,

The Ambassador answered us that it was founded on the Laws of their Prophet, that it was written in their Koran, that all nations who should not have acknowledged their authority were sinners, that it was their right and duty to make war upon them wherever they could be found, and to make slaves of all they could take as Prisoners, and that every Musselman who should be slain in battle was sure to go to Paradise.

The fledgling United States grudgingly paid tribute for the privilege of being left alone, but it was not enough to satisfy the Barbary States, and Americans increasingly objected. In 1794, in response to these seizures, Congress authorized the construction of the first six ships of the U.S.

In 1801 the Pasha (lord) of Tripoli increased his demands. Jefferson cut off tribute, Tripoli declared war, and in 1802 Jefferson sent the U.S. Navy and Marines to Tripoli. The U.S. Philadelphia ran aground, and its crew was imprisoned for two years. Commodore Edward Preble sent Lieutenant Stephen Decatur and his crew on a secret mission into Tripoli. The bombardment of Tripoli commenced, and U.S. Counsel William Eaton led a contingent of Marines on a land march toward Tripoli. Fearing defeat, in 1805 the Tripolitans negotiated a peace settlement that included ransom for American hostages but no tribute.

Continued conflict led to the Second Barbary War of 1815 in which now-Commodore Stephen Decatur led a Navy squadron that defeated the Algerian fleet and forced a negotiated peace with Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli.

But as the American sailors and marines returned home in 1805, one man in particular hailed them as heroes. This young lawyer and soldier was a devout Christian, a poet, and a composer of Christian hymns such as *“Lord, with Glowing Heart I’d Praise Thee”* (Trinity Hymnal #80). Using the tune *“To Anacreon in Heaven,”* he composed a song to honor America’s heroes, and nine years later he would write another tribute to American valor, *“The Star Spangled Banner,”* using the same tune. By now you know I’m talking about Francis Scott Key. I urge you to sing *“When the Warrior Returns”* to the tune of our National Anthem:

WHEN the warrior returns, from the battle afar,  
To the home and the country he nobly defended,  
O! warm be the welcome to gladden his ear,  
And loud be the joy that his perils are ended:  
In the full tide of song let his fame roll along,  
To the feast-flowing board let us gratefully throng,  
Where, mixed with the olive, the laurel shall wave,  
And form a bright wreath for the brows of the brave.

Columbians! a band of your brothers behold,  
Who claim the reward of your hearts’ warm emotion,  
When your cause, when your honor, urged onward the bold,  
In vain frowned the desert, in vain raged the ocean:  
To a far distant shore, to the battle’s wild roar,  
They rushed, your fair fame and your rights to secure:  
Then, mixed with the olive, the laurel shall wave,  
And form a bright wreath for the brows of the brave.

In the conflict resistless, each toil they endured,  
‘Till their foes fled dismayed from the war’s desolation:  
And pale beamed the Crescent, its splendor obscured  
By the light of the Star Spangled flag of our nation.  
Where each radiant star gleamed a meteor of war,  
And the turbaned heads bowed to its terrible glare,  
Now, mixed with the olive, the laurel shall wave,  
And form a bright wreath for the brows of the brave.

Our fathers, who stand on the summit of fame,  
Shall exultingly hear of their sons the proud story:  
How their young bosoms glow’d with the patriot flame,  
How they fought, how they fell, in the blaze of their glory.  
How triumphant they rode o’er the wondering flood,  
And stained the blue waters with infidel blood;  
How, mixed with the olive, the laurel did wave,  
And formed a bright wreath for the brows of the brave.

Then welcome the warrior returned from afar  
To the home and the country he nobly defended:  
Let the thanks due to valor now gladden his ear,  
And loud be the joy that his perils are ended.  
In the full tide of song let his fame roll along,  
To the feast-flowing board let us gratefully throng,  
Where, mixed with the olive, the laurel shall wave,  
And form a bright wreath for the brows of the brave.

Colonel Eidsmoe serves as Professor of Constitutional Law for the Oak Brook College of Law & Government Policy (obcLedu), as Senior Counsel for the Foundation for Moral Law (morallaw.org), and as Pastor of Woodland Presbyterian Church of Notasulga, AL (woodlandpca.org). He may be contacted for speaking engagements at eidsmoeja@juno.com.

*The views of submitted editorials may not be the express views of The Alabama Gazette.*



## HISTORY BITS AND PIECES

### THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY

**Justice Will Sellers**

World War II ended 80 years ago. But, before any peace dividend could be paid or the euphoria fully experienced, the Cold War started. Victory in the total defeat of the Third Reich and the Empire of Japan failed to usher in a new world order for peace, prosperity or universal rights.

To the Russians, the defeat of the Nazis was not an end, but an opportunity to assert itself and insert an ideology that used peace as an opportunity for conquest. This shocked many in the West who believed Stalin was a grandfatherly figure, sacrificing his country and his people to defeat Hitler and secure a new Europe. As the war ended, Stalin's ambitions did not. He used his military might to extend his reach to "conquer" other countries and increase his sphere of influence.

Eighty years ago, victory was short lived as countries in Central and Eastern Europe traded the Nazis and the Gestapo for the Soviets and the KGB. For these countries, freedom and liberty were ideas they were not to experience for a long time.

There was a subtle sway that masked Stalin's true intent. He would never overtly state his objectives, and extended his reach and exerted his influence in post-war efforts that didn't appear to be the actual power grab that it was. Stalin had no idea of being content with a win and enjoying peace for either his country or the world.

But 80 years ago, the full extent of Stalin's aim would become clear when a young cipher clerk at the Soviet embassy in Canada defected with proof positive of Stalin's ambitions and objectives to secure a new peace at the expense of his former allies.

The Canadians had been slow to establish diplomatic relations with Russia. Only in 1942 when the war had been raging for 3 years did the Canadians allow the Russians to have an embassy. But the Russians took advantage of Canadian goodwill and turned the embassy into an espionage center. Playing on allied sympathies and mutual interest in defeating the Axis powers, the Russians recruited prominent Canadians to spy.

This spy ring yielded high value intelligence as the Canadians were working closely with the United States and openly shared military and other strategic secrets. The Canadians were also a bit more casual in how they guarded information and the Russians took full advantage of obtaining information than they could never have received from their Washington embassy.

The level of information was so vast that the Russians did not want their ambassador to know the extent of their developing network. To segregate these activities, they sent a high-ranking military intelligence officer to spearhead the effort. And, because of the highly classified nature, the Russians also sent a specialist in codes so that information could be secretly transmitted so no one would know the content of the information.

Igor Gouzenko was only 26 when he arrived in Ottawa on this secret mission to handle coded correspondence between his boss and the Moscow intelligence

office. His wife and small child joined him; while he worked long hours, his family enjoyed their time in Canada.

It was not lost of the young Gouzenkos that the abundance in Canada was not remotely available in Moscow. Their apartment was a luxury compared to their Russian housing. They also saw firsthand all the manifestations of freedom the Canadians enjoyed.

When it appeared he would be recalled to Russia, he decided to defect. Being recalled to Moscow could potentially be life threatening. He knew a great deal about the spy ring and had seen firsthand the contrast between life in Moscow to Ottawa. But he knew that it was not enough to just defect, but he had to show the extent of Russian perfidy and how Canadians were being exploited and the significant state secrets the Russians now possessed.

When his boss was recalled and it was apparent he would be next, he devised a plan to take a trove of secret messages with him. This would provide indisputable proof of Russian illegal activity and would make his defection valuable to the Canadian government. Or, so he thought.

Initially the Canadians were not sure what to do with him. Defecting was not normal and as Russia was still an ally, allowing a defection might cause a significant diplomatic incident. Gouzenko persisted, but after a day, he was desperate and realized the Russians would notice his absence. With his family, he hid in an adjacent apartment and only when Russian thugs came to search for him and ransacked his home did Canadian officials believe him and provide safety to his family.

Upon reviewing his de-coded messages, the Canadians were shocked. It started to dawn on them that the fostering of a Russia-Canada friendship was a total fiction, and all their goodwill was used to obtain secret information to use against them. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police used the information to arrest 39 Canadians. Of these, almost half were convicted and these included members of parliament, military officials and research scientists.

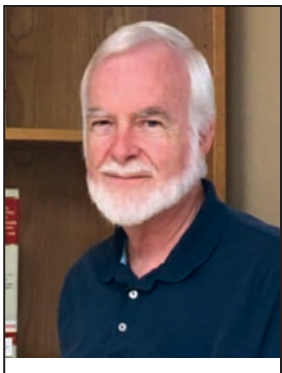
Gouzenko's information was the first time Americans knew that the Russian had stolen secrets about the development of the atomic bomb. British traitors were arrested and this led ultimately to uncovering the work of American spies, like the Rosenbergs, who supplied Russia with the plans and designs for a nuclear weapon.

Until this defection, Russian intentions were unclear and its aggressive behavior grudgingly tolerated. Once Gouzenko's information was further investigated and fully vetted, leaders in the West realized that Russia was engaging in belligerent acts specifically targeted to undermine the peace and stability of the post-war world.

The repercussions from Gouzenko's disclosures marked the beginning of the Cold War and a line of demarcation between a friendly relationship with Russians and an aggressive enemy. The depth of Russian duplicity created a hostile environment that would take years to thaw.

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## EMANCIPATION AS A WAR MEASURE

**John Taylor**

Although not an "abolitionist" in the strict sense, Abraham Lincoln opposed the expansion of slavery. Lincoln's view was common within the Republican Party. Abolitionists were generally despised in both North and South--many would be considered radical even by today's abysmal moral standards. Abolitionists, e.g., Wendell Phillips and Lysander Spooner routinely criticized Lincoln for his tepid anti-slavery views. Lincoln's focus was on maintaining the geographical Union--slavery was a secondary matter.

Lincoln was widely known for making "racial" comments that would now be career-destroying. For example, in his September 18, 1858, debate with Stephen Douglas in Charleston, Illinois, Lincoln said: "I will say, then, that I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of bringing about in anyway the social and political equality of the white and black races—that I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of making voters or jurors of negroes, nor of qualifying them to hold office, nor to intermarry with white people; and I will say in addition to this that there is a physical difference between the white and black races...I, as much as any other man, am in favor of having the superior position assigned to the white race."

Furthermore, Lincoln felt the ideal way to diffuse racial issues was to send Blacks to other areas of the world. In the same Douglas debate, Lincoln said: "Such separation if effected at all, must be effected by colonization: what colonization most needs is a hearty will...Let us be brought to believe that it is morally right, and at the same time favorable to, or at least not against, our interests to transfer the African to his native clime, and we shall find a way to do it, however great the task may be." Lincoln also wondered if he could "get a number of able-bodied men, with their wives and children, who are willing to go to Central America."

After over a year of fighting, the North was unable to subdue the Southern States. This, despite overwhelming advantages in virtually every measurable element of power, e.g., number of men, weapons, an established military, a large industrial base, an already functioning government, a developed transportation network, etc. Frustrated by being unable to force the Southern States back in the Union and, amid hints the South was surreptitiously working on its own form of gradual emancipation, Lincoln devised another strategy that might be construed as a "moral" boost--the Emancipation Proclamation.

Under federalism, the President generally lacks authority to interfere in State matters (including slavery). Lincoln apparently cared little for the constitution and, at times, his knowledge of the document was questionable. He did, however, seek a propaganda advantage, regardless of how spurious it was.

A cursory reading of the Emancipation Proclamation reveals the stratagem. In September 1862, Lincoln said slaves held in the seceded States would be freed on January 1, 1863, unless those States rejoined the Union. If they returned within

that 100-day period, it would be "business as usual." The proclamation clearly affirmed that the Slave States that fought for the Union and areas in the South occupied by Union troops were excluded. Multiple critics lambasted this sleight of hand. This included England's Lord Palmerston, Goldwyn Smith, and Earl Russell, along with New England historian Edward Channing. Even Secretary of State Seward said: "We show our sympathy with slavery by emancipating slaves where we cannot reach them and holding them in bondage where we can set them free." Once the Emancipation Proclamation was issued, Union soldiers deserted in droves--they "signed up" to keep the Union intact, not to free slaves.

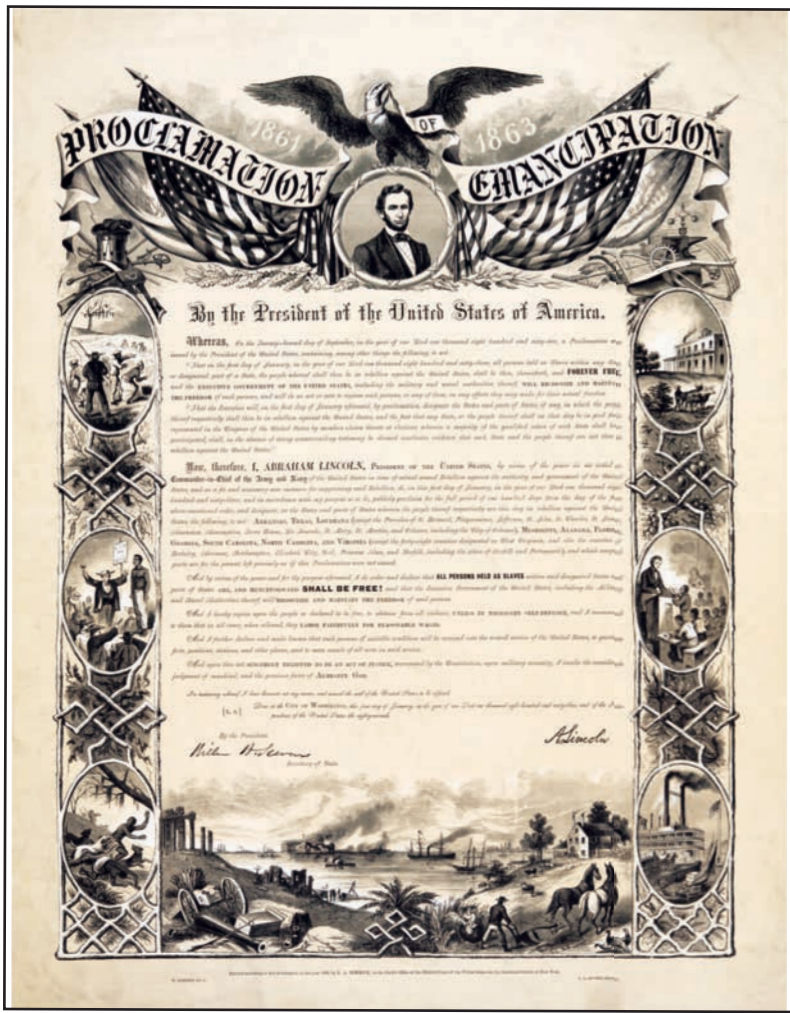
Lincoln understood the dubious nature of the proclamation: "Liberation of slaves is purely political and not within the range of military law or necessity... Can there be a pretense that the Constitution and laws govern... when a general, or a president, may make permanent rules of property by proclamation? I, as a president, shall expressly or impliedly seize and exercise the permanent legislative functions of the government." [13]

During earlier times, Great Britain dominated the slave trade. Lincoln was aware of Britain's about-face regarding slavery. Lincoln saw the Emancipation Proclamation as a propaganda tool to discourage both Britain and France from officially aligning with the Confederate States (with some success). He also understood that such a proclamation could disrupt the Southern war effort as the Blacks that were slaves might seek to leave the farms and plantations and/or react violently against the slave owners. Although some did leave, violent reactions were extremely rare.

Regarding the Emancipation Proclamation, thanks to a concerted effort to elevate "Yankee history," Lincoln appears to have successfully fooled most of the people most of the time. However, some are able to see through the chicanery and are not fooled at any time.

**Sources:** Facts and Falsehoods Concerning the War on the South 1861-1865, by George Edmonds, (Crown Rights Book Company); The South Was Right!, By James Ronald Kennedy and Walter Donald Kennedy, (Pelican Publishing Company); Facts The Historians Leave Out, by John S. Tilley, Twenty-Second Printing (Bill Coats, Ltd.); The Lincoln No One

Knows by Webb Garrison, (Rutledge Hill Press); Emancipation Hell (Kirkpatrick Sale, 2012), by Kirkpatrick Sale; and "Emancipation Proclamation Sesquicentennial (Slavery? Bah, Humbug!)," by John P. Sophocleus, The Alabama Gazette, January 2013. John also explains that the timing of the proclamation was based on Lincoln's anticipation of the blockade being broken. In Colonization After Emancipation: Lincoln and the Movement for Black Resettlement, Phillip W. Magness and Sebastian N. Page researched British archives and found that Lincoln worked on his deportation plans until shortly before his death in April 1865. Note: Lincoln routinely made racially disparaging comments about Blacks, American Indians, Mexicans, and others. Like the overwhelming majority of his contemporaries in both North and South, Lincoln viewed America as a White man's country.

**Emancipation Proclamation**  
Total History.com





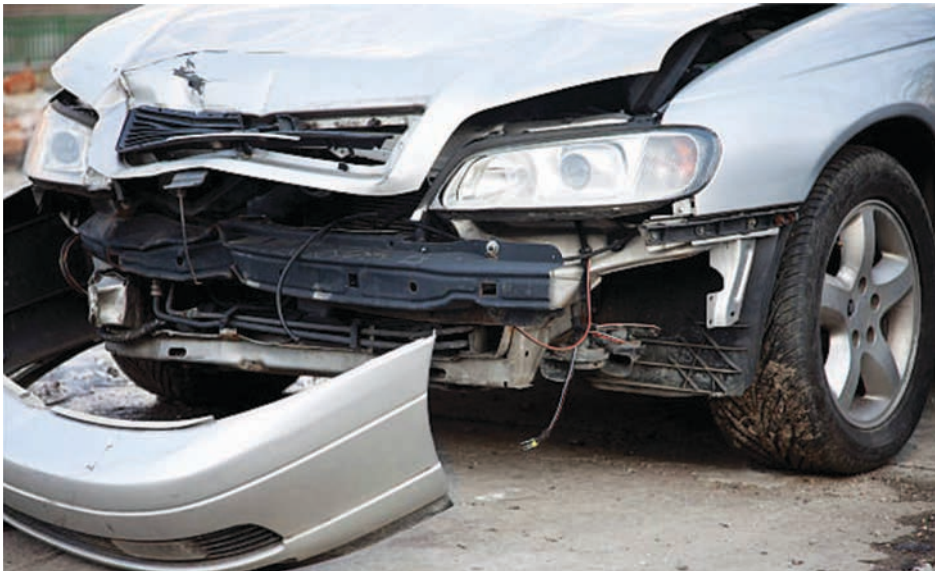
John Martin

## Building Better Bumpers

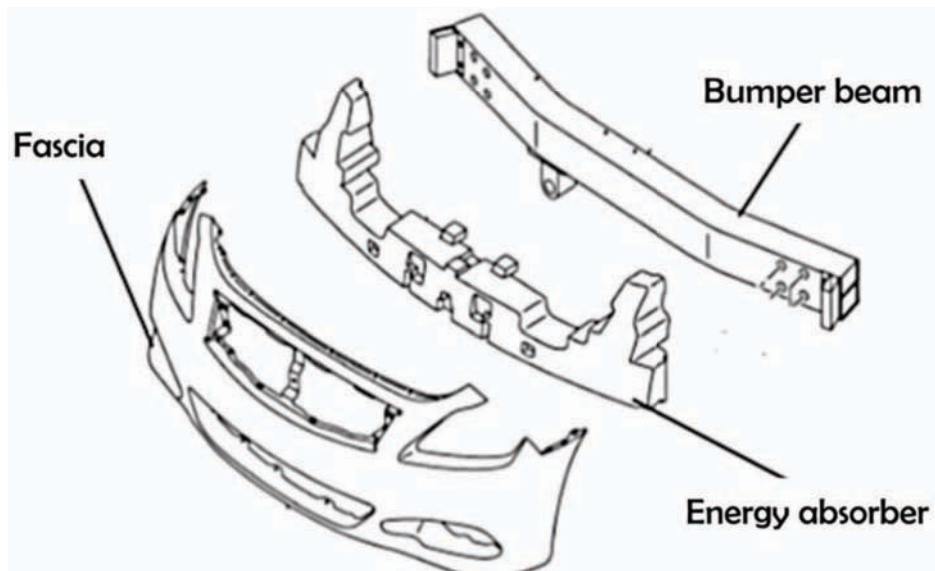
Every passing year, our automobile engineers continue to fail miserably in their production of quality products. In their efforts to build bling, style, and needless options, they are neglecting the basic essentials—durability, dependability, economy, and most of all—SIMPLICITY. That means easy to build, easy and inexpensive to repair, and the ABSENCE of gimmicks that tend to disrupt basic functions.

Among the most neglected car parts are the BUMPERS. Like their names imply, their purpose is to withstand bumps—to protect the car's body behind it, at least to a reasonable degree, and especially on the vital front end. Even the earliest cars had them for that obvious purpose. They were simple and functional, consisting of a strip of spring steel mounted onto projections attached onto the cars' frames. They also protruded several inches from the cars' bodies. Even these crude versions were superior to nearly all of today's modern abominations.

Today's bumpers are absolutely deplorable. Nearly all are made of the thinnest soft steel, or even just plastic or fiberglass with no steel at all. Nearly all are fitted tightly against the bodies, often jammed with nearly zero crush room ahead of the radiator and other functional parts—not even room to attach a tow rope or chain if needed. As expected, a mild impact can total a car or at least cause thousands of dollars in damage.



The most vulnerable part of ANY (ICE) car is its radiator. It is the first item to get hit and suffer damage in most crashes. Once hit and damaged, the car is disabled and becomes an immovable obstacle blocking the road for an hour or more until a tow truck can arrive.



Auto engineers should understand that protecting the radiator is a critical priority in highway safety. I haven't witnessed ANY manufacturer ever stressing radiator protection from impacts with adequate bumpers.

As cars evolved from the early 1900's until the 1970's, bumper technology took a back seat in development. However, they still retained some sturdiness in relation to today's "crushmobiles."

In the late 1960's, insurance companies began to take notice of the large numbers of claims and subsequent costs to settle the damages from minor impacts. In 1973, they pushed for a government mandate to require all automobiles to be fitted with bumpers, both front and rear, that could withstand a 5 mph impact with NO damage. Although some car makers protested, it was not very difficult to accomplish. All it took was two hydraulic cylinders similar to shock absorbers fitted behind each bumper and onto the car's frame to absorb impacts. These bumper designs became standard through the remainder of the 1970's and up until 1982. Claims for minor crash damages plummeted. Insurance companies AND their clients saved tons of money with the 5 mph bumpers.

Then in 1982, our idiot government agencies colluded with the car manufacturers, on the pretense of saving lives, to dispense with sturdy bumpers and substitute soft, crushable ends on all cars. Of course, this made the majority of all vehicles candidates for becoming totaled from minor impacts. This was terrible news for consumers, but manufacturers enjoyed higher sales volumes for new cars to replace the totaled ones. This imposed massive unexpected expenditures onto the numerous victims of minor car crashes.

A few manufactures did manage to continue building sturdy bumpers into the early 1980's—until our bureaucrats mandated that ALL new cars become crushable throwaways, claiming they could save the lives of the drivers, passengers, and reckless pedestrians running into the wrong places.

The entire idea of crushable is an utter oxymoron. Why haven't at least a few automotive engineers objected to the brain-dead idea of totaling a car from a minor impact? Any reasonably competent engineer could design and build a hydraulic bumper system that could withstand even a 10 mph impact with no damage, or at least minimal damage. Every car would have a sturdy FRAME to

support a proper bumper system. Sturdy bumpers would be attached with large hydraulic cylinders and provided with a foot of space behind them to absorb an impact. These would provide up to a foot of "crush"—about equal to the crush capacities in our current flimsymobiles. If two should collide, the crush on both cars combined would double the total to two feet. Damages would be minimal, and injuries and deaths would likely be no greater than with today's abominations.

Lights and turn signals should NEVER be installed onto a bumper. They should always be placed onto the car's body ABOVE and BEHIND it so the bumper can protect them.

This proposed bumper design might be considered ugly by some critics. If that is a concern, dealers could install optional, yieldable plastic covers over their tops.

However, if the above sturdy bumper systems cannot be accepted by argumentative engineers, and especially foolhardy government meddlers (the ones the DOGE should have already fired on day one), manufacturers could build sturdy, slightly shortened car bodies and add INEXPENSIVE, easily replaceable, mostly plastic (even recycled plastic or high density foam) crushable "cushions" about a foot or more in thickness INSTEAD of using the car itself for a cushion. Their one purpose would be to absorb impacts of 10 mph or more and still provide crush zones for safety while leaving the cars intact. ALL wiring, lights, and other functional parts would be ABOVE and BEHIND these expendable crush pads, not on or in them. After a crash, the owner could remove and replace four bolts to exchange the damaged cushion with a new one. It's a quick fix that saves the car without risking any lives.

The cushions themselves could also be made in replaceable layers. In a soft crash, only the first layer or two might be damaged.

Highway safety would also be enhanced. After an accident, the cars would remain functionally undamaged and could be quickly driven aside to clear the road instead of blocking it for hours while waiting for tow trucks.

WHO is going to become the first engineer to adopt an adequate bumper system for automobiles?

We now have the DOGE. Its number one priority is to get government off of our backs and out of our pockets. We must immediately REPEAL all of its idiotic mandates and regulations and go back to the days of the Model T Fords, when we had FREE MARKETS, and the consumers ruled on how cars and trucks should be built INSTEAD of the government.

Please save our car industries. JUST GET GOVERNMENT OUT OF THE WAY.

### SOURCE

#### FIVE FAIRY TALES OF AUTOMOBILE BUMPERS

**FAIRY TALE #1** All Automobiles Manufactured In The United States Have 5 MPH Bumpers.

**FACT:** In 1982, the federal government bowed to pressure from automakers and rolled back impact test requirements from 5 to 2.5 mph for 1983 and later model cars. The 2.5 mph standard also allows unlimited damage to the bumper and attachments – and most of today's flimsy bumpers cost considerably more than the old 5 mph bumpers to fix.

**FAIRY TALE #2** Today's 2½ MPH Bumper Standards Apply To All Vehicles Manufactured In The US.

**FACT:** Federal bumper requirements apply only to passenger cars. There are no federal standards for Minivans, Pickup Trucks, or SUVs.

**FAIRY TALE #3** Bumpers Don't Need To Be More Effective.

**FACT:** Consumers want stronger bumpers and they want them on all vehicle types. In a 1998 Insurance Institute For Highway Safety (IIHS) survey, 77% of respondents said the government should require car bumpers to withstand a 5 mph impact with no damage. Eighty-eight percent said federal bumper standards should apply to all passenger vehicle types, not just cars.

**FAIRY TALE #4** New Bumpers Are Better Than Old Ones.

Generally no. Bumpers used to be stronger. Example: "The 2004 F-150 is all new, but its bumpers are just as flimsy as before and even a little worse," says Adrian Lund of IIHS. "The highest damage total was in the rear-into-pole test. The whole bumper was pushed downward, and the tailgate was crushed. In addition, the left and right ends of the bumper were driven into the rear fenders." But it's not just Ford.

**FAIRY TALE #5** All Bumpers Are The Same.

No. Bumpers vary a lot in terms of both components and performance. In fact, some vehicles don't even have bumpers. According to Adrian Lund of the IIHS; when one Toyota RAV4 was crashed into another Toyota RAV4 at 10 mph, "it didn't engage the rear bumper because this SUV doesn't have a rear bumper. Instead, the striking RAV4 hit the spare tire mounted on the tailgate," Lund says. "This spare tire was the 'anti-bumper.' It didn't absorb any energy. It didn't prevent any damage. In fact, it caused most of the damage to both vehicles.

### Why It Costs You Money...

Bumpers play a significant role in insurance costs because so many physical damage claims are for relatively small amounts of damage involving the front or rear of vehicles—damage that a well designed bumper could prevent. Half of all collision claims are \$1,500 or less. Repair costs for these minor incidents are a major factor in overall collision insurance costs.

So, How Can Consumers Tell If A Vehicle Has A Good Bumper? Consumers cannot tell a good bumper from a bad one by looking at it. The federal government does not require automakers to disclose information about bumper performance.

<https://superbumper.com/five-fairy-tales-automobile-bumpers/#:~:text=FACT%3A%20In%201982%2C%20the%20federal,1983%20and%20later%20m>

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John Sophocleus

## Gerrymander Proliferation and Constitutional Détente

Most of my readers will recall Elkanah Tisdale’s iconic political cartoon evoking "Gerrymander" nomenclature for Massachusetts’ redistricted manipulations following the 1810 census. A July 18, 2024 post by Neely Tucker [<https://blogs.loc.gov/loc/2024/07/gerrymandering-the-origin-story/>] featured former chief of the Rare Book & Special Collections Division guest, Mark Dimunation. He offered the following on gerrymandering which has become part of our lexicon these past two centuries:

“The term, originally written as “Gerry-mander,” first was used on March 26, 1812, in the Boston Gazette — a reaction to the redrawing of Massachusetts state senate election districts under Gov. Elbridge Gerry.

Though the redistricting was done at the behest of his Democratic-Republican Party, it was Gerry who signed the bill in 1812. As a result, he received the dubious honor of attribution, along with its negative connotations.

Gerry, in fact, found the proposal “highly disagreeable.” He lost the next election, but the redistricting was a success: His party retained control of the legislature.

One of the remapped, contorted districts in the Boston area was said to resemble the shape of a mythological salamander. The newly drawn state senate district in Essex County was lampooned in cartoons as a strange winged dragon, clutching at the region.

The person who coined the term gerrymander never has been identified. The artist who drew the political cartoon, however, was Elkanah Tisdale, a Boston-based artist and engraver who had the skills to cut the blocks for the original cartoon.

Gerry was a signer of the Declaration of Independence, a two-term member of the House of Representatives, governor of Massachusetts and U.S. vice president under James Madison. His name, however, was forever negatively linked to this form of political powerbroking [sic] by the cartoon shown above, which often appeared with the term gerrymander.

The Library’s Rare Book and Special Collections Division holds the original print of the image, and the [Geography and Map Division](#) holds Tisdale’s original woodblocks — preserving the origins of a political practice that continues over two centuries later.”

To understand our current hyper-gerrymandering proliferation w.r.t. US House Districts, one must appreciate the ingenious design woven into the letter and Spirit of Article 1, Section 2 of the US Constitution: ***The number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty Thousand, but each State shall have at Least one Representative.*** In 1789 some States had not yet amassed 30,000 persons - i.e., each State was allotted one House member independent of population -- at 12,000; **one** Representative; at 25,000; **one** Representative... at 30,000; **one** Rep. At 59,999 **still** one Rep. At 60,000 persons; two Representatives. A State’s population at 89,999; **still** only two Reps. At 90,000; three Reps, ad infinitum for every additional 30,000 persons... y’all get the idea. Failure to follow Article 1, Section 2 now has some US House members representing over 800,000! By Constitutional design there can be no congressional district exceeding 59,999; as population increases the number within each district will approach 30,000 persons. The sage framers forecasted even the small land mass of Rhode Island would accrue 60,000 persons in the not too distant future.

As an aside, this also distorts the Electoral College (Article 2, Section 1) driving Bush v. Gore type unconstitutional outcomes; expect to see this more often as population further increases without constitutional adjustment. We still observe 3 electoral vote States because the number of Senators [2] exceeds the one House member which has not been allowed to increase as designed – *i.e.*, a House which is NOT very representative and increasingly more oligarchic. Our first census counted 3.9 million people in 1790; some States had not yet amassed 30,000 persons, thus at Least one Representative for each State which Framers understood would quickly increase into many Representatives for each State, making the 2 Senator impact upon Electoral College results moot. Every 3 electoral vote State (along with DC’s 3 electoral votes) is a Constitutional abomination. Alabama’s 2020 Census was just over 5 million [5,024,279] exceeding the entire population of the original 13 States in 1790. Alabama’s population now proffers 167 constitutionally correct Reps under the one for every 30,000 rule totaling 5,010,000; the 14,279 population remainder (which doesn’t constitute **another** 30,000 population district) must be apportioned among the 167 districts to allocate just under 86 more persons to each 30,000 district - *i.e.*, 30,086 persons per district. 167 x 30,086 is 5,024,362.

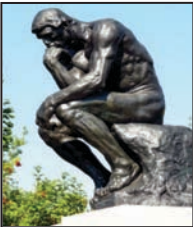
Alabama has one Rep for every 717,754 persons with the politically correct 7 instead of the constitutionally correct 167; about 25 times the concentration of power to each House member of Congress promoting gerrymander proliferation. Remember one can **NOT** find the 435 number [anti-competitive limit set in 1929] capping the US House anywhere in our Constitution. By design, increased populations would shepherd districts closer the 30,000 population provision in the Constitution, chilling ability, incentive and effectiveness to manipulate redistricting via gerrymandering. Little wonder why so few US House races are competitive with duopoly manipulated districts approaching one million persons. Shame on anyone who thinks the framers would find this proliferation permissible and were too short-sighted to design a system (if adhered to) which would thwart such manipulation and concentration of power.

The 1810 [third] census, which led to vulgar gerrymandering in Massachusetts, recorded 7,239,881 people living in the United States. Approximately 1.2 million were slaves the northern/less agricultural States did not want fully counted to distort the proxy between agricultural and industrial activity. State(s) not adjusting their number of councilpersons, county commissioners, representatives, senators, etc. experiencing the fastest, most distorted growth would first exhibit (ceteris paribus) this incentivized phenomenon of politicians picking their voters instead of voters picking their politicians in competitive, representative races. The third census would also be where most States were expected to exceed 60,000 and have more than one Representative. 1810 was the last census recording Virginia as the most populous State; half a century later it will be geographically shrunk by the unconstitutional formation of West Virginia for reasons addressed in past columns.

The 2020 census recorded US population trends redistributing the fixed 435 congressional districts and electoral vote representation. California, New York and Pennsylvania were among the States which lost a congressional seat, transferred mostly to Southern States - *e.g.*, Texas, Florida and North Carolina. California lost a seat for the **first** time in US history... instead of gaining relatively fewer representatives as designed?

Texas line dancin’, California dreamin’ and Ohio buckeye’ huntin’ maps for biased redistricting wouldn’t be an issue under a constitutionally correct result. Texas is within their authority to call a special session to revise their maps; legislators can exercise their right to leave in an effort to impede a quorum. At least this slows politburo members from getting more accomplished which is an integral part of the Constitution’s design - even more so today with Comrades Biden and Trump advancing so many policies/programs outside enumerated powers.

The views of submitted editorials may not be the express views of The Alabama Gazette.



Gavin Newsom, Greg Abbott, JB Pritzker, Kay Ivey, Mike DeWine, *et al* are highly degreed, poorly educated politicians who do not have the intelligence and integrity to get us on the path of Constitutional détente to undo proliferation of hyper-gerrymandered districts. None of those listed above are Gov. Gerry caliber politicians with the courage to sign the Declaration of Independence along with experience as US House member and vice president (as we now install Agnew, Harris, Mondale, Vance caliber pieces of carbon) who allowed party to be more important than principle. Gerry did not veto this despicable redistricting map to be on record against this abomination and defend his once well regarded repute. Now his name is repeatedly evoked in nomenclature for one of the biggest cancers gnawing out the marrow of our once great Republic on the path of more perfect, righteous union enabling today’s political prostitutes who espouse ‘democracy’ in our increasingly concentrated oligarchy under federal hegemony.

Years ago I wrote about this issue in Alabama where federal judges [<https://www.alabamagazette.com/story/2023/10/01/opinion/appeal-to-judges-manasco-moover-and-marcus-mapping-our-future/2643.html>] are similarly ignorant of our Constitution’s design. Imagine how many black, female and other diverse congresspersons would result if we had a representative, constitutionally correct result approaching 170 members sent to DC each session where elections may again have competitive consequences. How many of our ‘magnificent seven’ currently installed politburo members (under the rigged, hyper-gerrymandered districting) would retain their US House seat in constitutionally correct, competitive districts instead of our current politically correct result concentrating DC power that protects duopoly parties under the unconstitutional 435 limit?

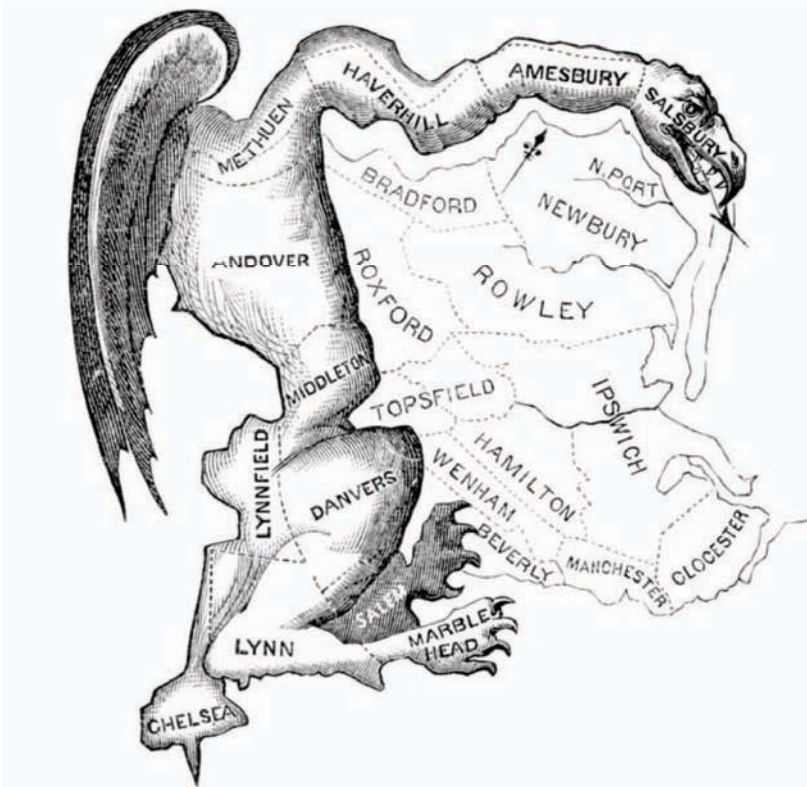
This applies to the White House down to my county courthouse and unrepresentative municipalities. I’ve observed an incompetent probate judge crowing about drawing each district within a one to four person difference between the five districts he’d drawn instead of the much more difficult task of keeping neighborhoods and communities in the county intact as designed by the percentage tolerance allowed. Wouldn’t it be refreshing to see someone map what our future would look like under a Constitutional (one for 30,000) districting result which indeed kept ‘communities of interest’ like counties and municipalities intact and then make clear why they must construct a meager seven districts out of the 167 design because we no longer have a representative US House under the 435 limit of 1929.

The last increase in Lee County Commission District seats to the current five member result was implemented (by the State legislature to avoid Voting Right lawsuits) at just over 60,000 population; approximately one commissioner for every 12,000. County population had tripled from 1870 to 1970. Population has now almost tripled again this past half-century since 1970. With population approaching 200,000 and no change in number of districts, real representation is decaying to one commissioner for every 40,000 with much more to address than those few things States authorized to the federal government enumerated in Article 1, Section 8. Sadly, that incompetent, malicious Lee County judge’s droning on about how wonderful he was getting each District within a few person difference (instead of doing the hard work of keeping areas intact as directed with +/- 5% tolerance allowed) sounds much like his fellow politburo members at all levels of government.

A wise path of détente from gerrymander proliferation is gradual undoing of the 435 limit to the Constitutionally correct result (*e.g.*, increase 500 Reps each census) until accomplishing the one for 30,000 result. It took a century under the 435 cap to get this far off course to witness the absurd Biden/Trump, *et al* results at the executive level and AOC, MTG, *et al* installations to Congress under such heavily rigged, ballot restricted and manipulated election processes. Much time and wisdom is required to get back on course and out of this quagmire.

To those evoking voting rights acts, consider (re)reading a 2022 column [<https://www.alabamagazette.com/story/2022/03/01/opinion/discrimination-via-poor-representation/2319.html>] on how poor representation promotes discrimination. The discrimination progressives championed toward accomplishing their desired, unconstitutional results. Now more than ever is the time for legislators and judges to restore **ALL** voters’ rights and allow more representation and candidates as designed by our wise founding fathers. Weary of folks telling me their ‘feelings’ on how to get out of this swamp, I’ll not listen to anyone’s feelings on what the number ought to be without citing text from the Constitution. In short, I’m all ears to one who exhibits the fortitude, visionary wisdom, integrity and intelligence of our framers. Increasingly clear we do not have this sort of sagacity and conviction in our current politburo members claiming to care about ‘Democracy’ and voters’ rights. Furthermore, orgs like the ACLU have done nothing to fight this discrimination via decreased real representation.

This is how discrimination via poor (unconstitutional) representation works nationally and at the State/local levels. A House unrepresentative cannot stand; how much longer do we have? Census taking has been around since the Old Testament - *e.g.*, Numbers 26 teaches the evil and righteousness it may proffer. Gerrymandering would’ve never evolved and proliferated so malignantly these past centuries if Article 1, Section 2 had been honoured. Little surprise an inspired document like our Constitution provides the path of détente to get us out of this morass.



The Gerry-Mander (1812)

Elkanah Tisdale (1771-1835) (often falsely attributed to Gilbert Stuart)[1] - Originally published in the Boston Centinel, 1812.

Original cartoon of "The Gerry-Mander". This is the political cartoon that led to the coining of the term "gerrymander". The district depicted in the cartoon was created by the Massachusetts legislature to favor the incumbent Democratic-Republican party candidates of Governor Elbridge Gerry over the Federalists in 1812.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia





**HOPE 4 HEROES AND FAMILIES**

**Spirit of Wellness CONFERENCE for VETERANS/MILITARY FAMILIES**

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2025 (FREE)**  
**8:00 AM - 9:00 AM (REGISTRATION)**  
**9:00 AM - 2:30 PM (LUNCH PROVIDED)**

**SOUTH UNIVERSITY, 5355 VAUGHN ROAD, MONTGOMERY, AL 36116**

COSA is hosting a wellness conference for Veteran/Military Families. Planned events include workshops, hands-on activities, resources and information. The conference is made possible by the Staff Sergeant Parker Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant Program.

**SESSION TOPICS:**

- Financial Planning
- Re-Entering Civilian Life
- Reviewing Your VA Benefits
- Shared Experiences Panel
- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
- Wellness Planning

**REGISTER HERE:**



For information, contact Candi Peagler at 334-262-1629 or [cpeagler@cosancadd.org](mailto:cpeagler@cosancadd.org)

**COUNCIL ON SUBSTANCE ABUSE-NCADD**  
 (334) 262-1629  
[info@cosancadd.org](mailto:info@cosancadd.org)  
 5740 Carmichael Pkwy, Montgomery, AL 36177

**STAND DOWN**  
 ★ FOR ★  
**HOMELESS VETERANS**



**Honoring the Service of America's Veterans**  
**September 19, 2025**  
**9 AM - 3 PM. (CST)**

**Cramtom Bowl Multiplex**  
**220 Hall Street Montgomery, AL 36104**

**If you are homeless, please call to pre-register at 1(800) 214-8387 ext. 52549**

**During the Stand Down Homeless Veterans will be able to access these services for free of charge.**

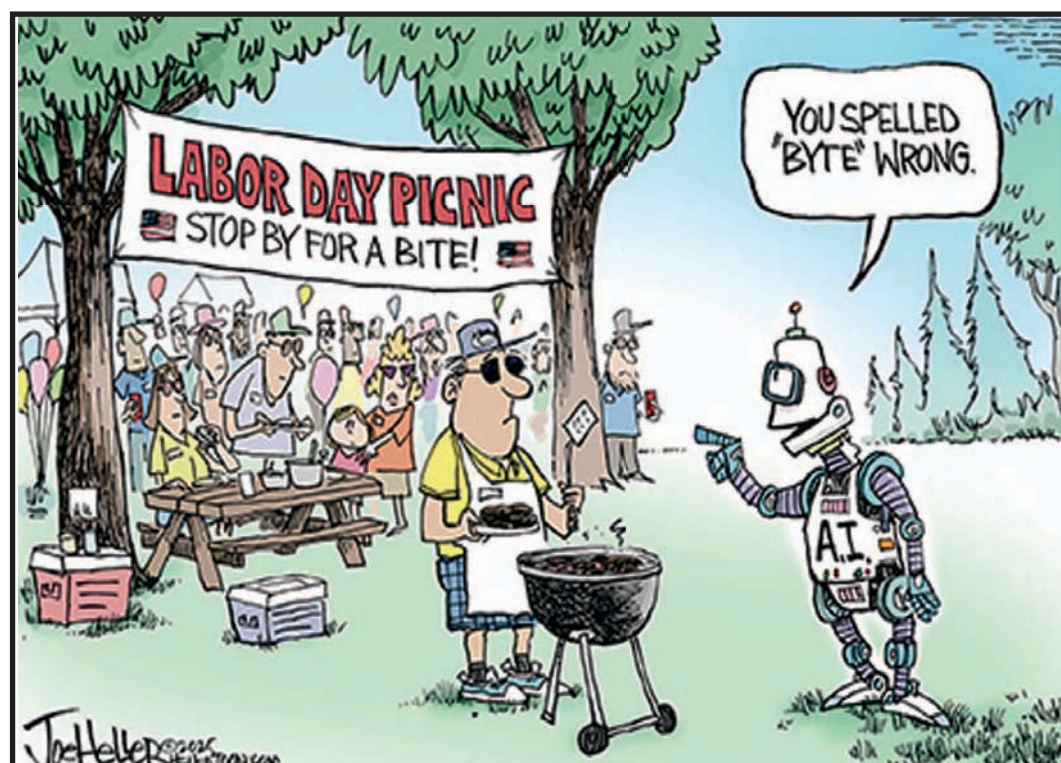
- Health Care Screenings
- Clothing & Hygiene Items
- Legal Assistance
- Employment Assistance
- Substance Abuse Referrals & Domestic Violence Assistance

**VHA Staff and Community Agencies will be present to answer questions and offer services.**

**Enjoy entertainment activities, food, and give-aways!**

**VA**  U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
 Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System

**I CARE**  
 DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS



## Support YOUR Local Law Enforcement



### Montgomery County Sheriff's Office

(334) 832-4980

♦ [www.montgomerysheriff.com](http://www.montgomerysheriff.com)

Sheriff  
Derrick Cunningham



Chief Deputy  
Kevin Murphy



Montgomery County Sheriff's Office is proud to offer Montgomery County residents our Operation Identification Program. This free program enables residents of Montgomery County to create an account (login and password) and access our secure database. The database stores the serial numbers, date of purchase, amount of purchase, etc. of your most valuable possessions. Under this program, whatever you enter into the database is confidential to you or your business and/or church.

This programs main purpose is to assist our citizens in the event they are victimized by crime and need immediate access to the serial numbers of their personal property. It is our goal to utilize this program to assist us in identifying stolen property and assist in prosecuting people that purchase or possess stolen property.



**Autauga County**  
**SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

**(334) 361-2500**  
 162 W 4th Street,  
 Prattville, AL  
[www.autaugasheriff.org](http://www.autaugasheriff.org)

 Sheriff  
Mark Harrell


**ELMORE COUNTY**  
**SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

**(334) 567-5546**  
 8955 US-231  
 Wetumpka, AL 36092  
<https://www.elmoreso.com>

 Sheriff  
Bill Franklin

**Lowndes County**  
**SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

**(334) 548-2222**  
 1 S Washington St  
 Hayneville, AL 36040  
[www.facebook.com/LowndesCountyAlabamaSheriffsOffice/](http://www.facebook.com/LowndesCountyAlabamaSheriffsOffice/)

 Sheriff  
Chris West

#### POLICE OFFICERS PRAYER

Lord I ask for courage  
 Courage to face and  
 Conquer my own fears...  
 Courage to take me where  
 Others will not go...  
 I ask for strength  
 Strength of a body to protect  
 others and strenth of spirit to  
 lead others...  
 I ask for dedication.

Dedication to my job to do it  
 well.  
 Dedication to my community,  
 to keep it safe...  
 Give me Lord, concern for  
 others who trust me and  
 Compassion for those who  
 need me...  
 and please Lord through it all  
 Be at my side.  
 AMEN





NOTICE!

PLEASE GO TO OUR WEBSITE  
AND VIEW THIS ISSUE AND  
UPCOMING ISSUES ALONG  
WITH CURRENT NEWS!  
[www.alabamagazette.com](http://www.alabamagazette.com)

Honoring Our Heroes



VETERAN NEWS

We Hope you enjoy reading the Gazette as much as our Veterans!



Cap Jerry Huffstickler



SGT Theodore Jackson



Col Gilbert Eddy



Dr. Martha P. Simmons

The Alabama Gazette wants to honor Martha for the many years of service to our veterans.  
She has spent countless hours interviewing, showing special attention, writing stories of the many great Veterans in our area that has served in so many of our American conflicts and wars.



Operation ReConnect

Operation ReConnect is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded, operated and managed by current and former service-members with one simplistic Mission: “To provide the ‘GIFT OF TIME’ to the men, women and their families who have dealt with the difficulties from an overseas Combat Deployment.” The mission is executed by providing Post 9/11 combat veterans and their families with a full seven nights of uninterrupted time together in a resort environment typically located in coastal Alabama or northwest Florida.

Operation ReConnect was founded by Ryan Charrier in 2014 while on his first deployment to Afghanistan with the U.S. Air Force. Over the last decade, Operation ReConnect has been able to serve more than 1500 combat veterans and their families. The success of the organization is deeply rooted in “We the People” doing what it has with what it has. Further information can be found online at: <https://www.operationreconnect.org>

There is an annual fundraising with a vehicle giveaway as its main fundraising efforts. Thus far, eight fully-customized vehicles supporting Operation ReConnect have been given away. On this web site, details for registration and tickets can be found for giveaways of a 2025 Jeep and a 1776 Golf Cart. A video on this year’s jeep giveaway details can be viewed online at : [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) at “This Jeep Could Be Your.” The giveaway’s official drawing will be Tuesday, November 11, 2025 at Tacky Jacks, 27206 Safe Harbor Drive, Orange Beach, AL.

Operation We Remember

The Montgomery Military and Veterans Affairs Commission is partnering with the AL Department of Veterans Affairs to honor and remember veterans who lost their lives to suicide. The campaign features a powerful display of American flags at Rotary Park behind Montgomery City Hall on Tuesday, September 2, 2025. The flag laying ceremony will take place at 2:00 p.m., and parking is available in the Municipal parking garage behind City Hall. Veterans and the public are invited to attend this special ceremony.

Operation We Remember is an annual campaign through the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs that serves as a visual reminder that suicide knows no boundaries. The campaign features an American flag display representing the AL veterans who died by suicide the previous two years before. It takes place statewide during the month of September which serves as National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month.

In September 2025, the display will include 139 flags to honor and remember the 139 Alabama veterans who died by suicide in 2023. Operation We Remember features partnerships statewide with colleges and universities, cities and counties through the Alabama League of Municipalities and partnerships created through ADVA Veterans Service Offices. There are 145 partners participating in 2025.

In Memory

Col Hugh David McCracken Jr.  
October 27, 1935 to August 18, 2025

He served 28 years in the U.S. Air Force.  
His article was published in the June 2021 issue of the Alabama Gazette.



God Bless the USA!

Veterans September Birthdays

- |                            |                |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| Robert Clifton Fell.....   | September 4th  |
| Robert E. Dinsmore.....    | September 5th  |
| Robert Wesley Marcus.....  | September 6th  |
| George A. Hill.....        | September 11th |
| Eddie Digby Compton.....   | September 12th |
| Charles A. Bonasera.....   | September 13th |
| Thomas Leon Harrell.....   | September 17th |
| James Earl Jackson.....    | September 17th |
| John Lakeos.....           | September 18th |
| Kent Stephen Kline.....    | September 21st |
| Douglas S. Catchings.....  | September 23rd |
| Roy Franklin Stephens..... | September 27th |





## Col Charles A. Bonasera: Age 64



Col Charles A. Bonasera served 37 years in the AL Army National Guard. His Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) included: (1) Military Police Officer, (2) Quartermaster Officer, (3) Infantry Officer and (3) Aviation Officer. He received the following medals, decorations, badges, commendations, citations and campaign ribbons: Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with one Bronze Oak Leaf, Army Commendation Ribbon with One Oak Leaf, Army Achievement Ribbon, National Guard Achievement Ribbon with one Oak Leaf Cluster, National Defense Service Ribbon with one Bronze Star, Afghanistan Campaign Ribbon, Iobal War on Terrorism Expeditionary Ribbon, Global War on Terrorism Service Ribbon, the Humanitarian Service Ribbon, the Army Armed Forces Reserve Ribbon, Army Service Ribbon, Army Overseas Service Ribbon, Army Reserve Component Overseas Training Ribbon, the NATO Ribbon, the Joint Meritorious Unit Award, the Veterans Service Medal of AL, the National Emergency Service of AL with the 911 Clasp, the Faithful Service Medal of AL with one Saint Andrews Cross, the Active Duty Basic Training Medal, the Senior Army Aviator Badge and the Combat Infantryman Badge.

Col Bonasera was born September 13, 1960 to his parents, Louis and Ann Bonasera, in Birmingham, AL, and he was reared there and in Charlotte, North Carolina, where he graduated from Garinger High School in May 1978. He attended Central Piedmont Community College for one year, and he graduated from the University of Alabama in 1994 with a B.S Degree in Business Administration in May 1994.

His military service began when he volunteered and enlisted in the AL National Guard on September 15, 1980 at Birmingham, AL. He completed eight weeks of Basic Training at the Army base at Ft McClellan, AL. He served as an Army MP there for two years. He then served with the 167th Com Support Command (COSCOM) in Birmingham, AL, in 1982. He served as an enlisted person for over three years. He was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant at the Alabama Military Academy at the Officer School at Ft. McClellan, AL, June 12, 1983. He then began his 34 years and three months serving as an officer. First, during June 1983 to December 1983, he served with the 167th Support Command as the Executive Officer in Birmingham. During December 1983 to January 1986, he served as the Training, Advising and Counseling Officer (TAC) Officer at the Alabama Military Academy. During 1984-1985, he attended the Rotary Wing Flight School at Ft. Rucker, AL, becoming a helicopter pilot. He returned to Birmingham to serve with the AL National Guard. His service began with

Company E 131st Aviation (AVIM). Then he served in the following positions: 1. The Executive Officer of Headquarters and Headquarters Command (HW HHC) 167th Combat Service Support Command ( 2. Tactical Officer of the AL Military Academy, 3. Plt Leader of Company E 131st Aviation (AVIM), 4. Commander 445th Aviation Company, 5. Commander 1133rd Aerial Medical Evacuation Company, 6. S3/ Operations Officer, 1-131rd Assault Aviation Battalion, 7. Battalion Commander, 1-131st Assault Aviation Battalion during September 2001-March 2004. 8. Chief, Combat Tactical Advisor, Ghazni, Afghanistan, 9. Brigade Commander, 131st Aviation Regiment, 10. State Army Aviation Officer, Joint Forces Headquarters—AL, and 11. Team Chief, Senior Combat Logistics Advisor to the Afghan National Army (ANA), Helmand, Afghanistan. His military career included service at Ft. McClellan, AL, USAR School in Birmingham, AL, Ft. Rucker, Montgomery, AL, Mobile, AL, Ft. Eustis, VA, Cullman, AL, USAR, Hattiesburg, MS, Carlisle Barracks, PA, Colorado Springs, CO and Ft. Polk, LA. While serving in the military, he received a Masters Degree in Strategic Studies from the US Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, PA, in 2004. Col Bonasera retired from military service March 30, 2018. His military career encompassed leadership, crisis action planning, budgeting, training, management, process improvement, scheduling, critical thinking, team building, problem solving, mentoring and negotiation.

After his military retirement, Col Bonasera worked for one year for DynCorp, a private military contractor specializing in aviation, logistics, training and intelligence solutions. He then worked as the JROTC instructor at Stanhope High School, AL, for five years retiring in June 2024.

Col Bonasera and his wife, Jimette, have been married 21 years, and they have eight children and seven grandchildren. He has held membership in the Army National Guard Officer Association, National Youth Sports Coaches Association and the Army Aviation Association of America. He is a member of the New Home Baptist Church at Titus, AL, where he teaches Sunday School for grades one through six.

Col Bonasera's conclusion about what his military service means to him are: ***"It gave me a life that I could not have had. It was a great equalizer. My service in the Alabama Army National Guard and to my nation as I now look back has provided my family and me great opportunity, I wouldn't change a thing. I believe there is no greater endeavor than service to one's nation"*** He states. ***"I would like to be remembered as a good person who loves the Lord, was a good husband and was a good father to his kids. I would do it all over again."***



## Staff Sergeant Drew Donis Lufkin: Age: 42



Staff Sergeant Drew Donis Lufkin served 15 years in the U.S. military including six years in the Army Reserve and nine years on active duty in the Army. His Military Operation Specialty (MOS) was Infantryman eight years and five months and Counter-intelligence Agent for four years and five months. His decorations, medals, badges, citations and campaign ribbons awarded included Afghanistan Campaign Medal with three Campaign Stars, Army Achievement Medal, USA/USAF Presidential Unit Citation, Army Good Conduct Medal; two awards, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal with Campaign star, Joint Services Commendation Medal, Non Commissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon, two awards, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon, NATO Medal, Combat Infantryman Badge, Expert Infantryman Badge, Ranger Tab, Pathfinder Badge, and Senior Parachutist Badge.

SSG Lufkin was born March 22, 1983, in Millinocket, Maine, to his parents, Clyde and Cathy Lufkin. Millinocket is the gateway to Mount Katahdin, voted World's Best Hike by National Geographic and home to the northern terminus of the Appalachian Trail. He was reared in nearby East Millinocket, and while in high school, he participated in basketball and cross country running, and he was a member of the National Vocational Technical Honor Society. In addition, he earned the rank of Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts of America. He graduated from Schenck High School in East Millinocket, Maine on June 1, 2001.

After his high school graduation, SSG Lufkin joined the Army Reserve on July 27, 2001, and served six years as a truck driver for one weekend per month and two weeks during the summer. His civilian employment during this time included working as a park ranger; however, he was diagnosed with leukemia and received chemotherapy treatments for 2.5 years.

SSG Lufkin's battle with cancer was successful, and he resumed military service with the U.S Army at Ft. Benning, GA, where he completed 14 weeks of Basic Training in August 2007. This was followed by participation in the Army's Airborne School in a three-week course that trains soldiers in the skills needed to be paratroopers. He then participated in RIP, the Ranger Indoctrination Program, which is the initial training and assessment program for soldiers seeking to join the U.S. Army's 75th Ranger Regiment. It is a rigorous, physically and mentally one month course designed to evaluate a soldier's suitability for the Regiment. He completed RIP October 31, 2007.

SSG Lufkin's active-duty service assignments at Fr. Benning included a total of six years with three years serving with the 3rd Ranger Battalion and three years at Headquarters, 75th Ranger Regiment working in intelligence. During service at Ft. Benning, he was deployed to Afghanistan three times with the 3rd Ranger Battalion during 2008, 2010 and 2012 where he served as an assistant machine gunner, gun team leader and fire team leader. He also deployed to Iraq in 2009. After serving at Ft. Benning, he served with the 4th Brigade 25th Infantry Division (Airborne) at Joint Base Elmendorf- Richardson, Alaska, for three years. In 2014, he received an online BS Degree in Intelligence Studies from the American Military University. Because of an atrial fibrillation condition, SSG Lufkin was medically retired from military service on January 7, 2016.

After his military retirement, SSG Lufkin used the G.I. Bill and graduated from Auburn University with a B.S. Degree in Mechanical Engineering August 2, 2019. After getting his degree, he worked for three years in Auburn, AL, with IS4S, a contracting company in which he worked on research and development for autonomous tractor-trailer convoys. Then he began graduate studies at Auburn University working on a Master's Degree in Finance.

In 2018, SSG Lufkin began volunteering with **Operation Ruck**, an organization to prevent veterans' suicide. Rucking can refer to walking with a weighted backpack which is also known as a rucksack. This organization provides the necessary support for veterans and their families through a variety of programs and services, and 100% of donations go toward outreach and support to veterans.

### Organizations receiving support from Operation Ruck are:

- (1.) Three Hots and Cot which provides a safe place for homeless veterans.
- (2.) Mission 22 which supports veterans and their families providing long-term wellness.
- (3.) Bill Nichols Veterans Home which provides services in a senior-living facility.
- (4.) Tuskegee VA Home which provides assistance for homeless veterans.
- (5.) Houston Project which provides assistance for struggling veterans and raising awareness for veterans suffering from depression, PTSD and CTE from concussions.

In the days preceding the Iron Bowl football game, students from The University of Alabama Chapter of Student Veterans of America and Auburn University Student Veterans Association lay the Iron Bowl rivalry aside and together ruck the Iron Bowl game ball from the visiting team's stadium to the home team's stadium. At each Iron Bowl, veterans, ROTC and veteran alumni from both Auburn and Alabama make a 151-mile ruck starting at the away team's stadium and ending at the home team's stadium. Complete information about Operation Ruck can be found at the web site:

<https://www.operationironruck.com>

In addition, on August 16, 2025, a 5K ruck, Operation Iron Ruck Day Zero, will be held at Wind Creek State Park at Lake Martin from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. **The 2025 Operation Iron Ruck will be November 26-29, 2025.**

SSG Lufkin has two children. He is a member of the American Legion, the VFW, the Auburn Student Veterans Association, the University of Alabama Chapter of Student Veterans Association and the Church of the Highlands.

SSG Lufkin's conclusions about what serving in the U.S. military has meant to him are: ***"I had just graduated from high school when September 11 occurred. Remembering every single American that died that day, if you want to hurt us, we are going to take the fight to you. I remember that day like it was yesterday. Serving the greater good, I feel like it was an honor to serve my country as it is something bigger than you."*** He would like to be remembered as someone that was actually there for people when it mattered.



## National POW/MIA Recognition Day

The POW/MIA Recognition Day will be held at **10:30 a.m. on Saturday, September 20, 2025 at the Alabama State Capitol South Lawn, 600 Dexter Avenue, Montgomery, AL 36130.**

National POW/MIA Recognition Day is an annual observance in the United States dedicated to honoring and remembering the sacrifices of American service members who were prisoners of war (POWs) and those who are still missing in action (MIA). This day serves as a reminder of the nation's commitment to accounting for every service member who has not returned home and to recognizing the courage and resilience of those who endured captivity. It is a time to reflect on the cost of war and to express gratitude for the bravery and dedication of those who have served and continue to serve the country.





Chief Master Sergeant Zacchaeus Buckner: Age 78



Chief Master Sergeant Zacchaeus Buckner served 24 years in the U. S. Air Force. His Air Force Service Code included Supply Manager for one year and 11 months, Supply Management Superintendent for six years and 10 months and Inventory Management Supervisor for 15 years and four months. CMSgt Buckner received the following decorations, medals, badges, citations and campaign ribbons: Meritorious Service Medal with one Device, Air Force Commendation Medal with one Device, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with three Devices, Air Force Good Conduct Medal with six Devices, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal with two Devices, Air Force Overseas Short Tour

Ribbon with two Devices, Air Force Overseas Long Tour Ribbon, Air Force Longevity Service Award Ribbon with Four Devices, Air Force Training Ribbon, Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Device and Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal.

CMSgt Buckner was born October 18, 1946 to his parents, Otis and Beatrice Buckner at Columbus, GA, where he was reared and graduated from Carver High School in 1964. While in high school, he participated in the school’s debate and basketball teams.

Immediately after graduation from high school, CMSgt Buckner volunteered on July 5, 1964 for military service and enlisted in the U.S. Air Force. He completed eight weeks of Basic Training at Lackland Air Force Base, TX, followed by 12 weeks of technical school at Amarillo Air Force Base, TX, in preparation to become an inventory management specialist which he did during his entire military career. His first assignment was at McCoy Air Force Base, FL, for one year during 1965 where he worked delivering office equipment at a warehouse.

During the time of the Vietnam War, he was deployed to Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, which served as a crucial staging and logistical hub for the U.S. military. It was a major point of transit for troops and supplies and also a launchpad for bombing missions into Southeast Asia. The base's strategic location made it a vital asset for the U.S. war effort. He worked with resupplying the KC-135 Stratotanker, a military aerial refueling tanker aircraft, with Fly Away Kits which are spare parts typically located on aircraft comprised of critical, frequently used rotatable and non-rotatable parts for use in maintenance of the KC-135 aircraft. These planes were stationed at Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, and flown to Vietnam during the Vietnam War, and the planes returned to Okinawa after those missions so that they could refuel and be resupplied with needed equipment for flights back to Vietnam. He then went to serve three months TDY at U-Tapao Royal Thai Navy Airfield, where he worked building the base, preparing for U.S. pilots who would be flying into Vietnam. He returned to serve at Kadena Air Base, Okinawa. After completing his tour on Okinawa, he received a full assignment to U-Tapao Royal Thai Air Base. While at U-Tapao, he was sent TDY to Saigon and Da Nang, Vietnam for 4 months, and returned to U-Tapao.

CMSgt Buckner returned to serve in the USA at Griffiss A.F.B., New York, for one year, followed by service at Barksdale AFB, LA, for 1.5 years. He was then redeployed to Korat Royal Thai Air Base in northeastern Thailand for

one year. Next, he returned to serve at Moody AFB, GA, for seven years from 1972-1979. He then served one year at George AFB, at Victorville, CA. CMSgt Buckner next served on a special assignment at the U.S. Embassy in Egypt for one year. This was at the time of the Camp David Accords, which were a pair of political agreements signed by Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin with the facilitation of U.S. President Jimmy Carter in September 1978. While he was in Egypt, the U.S. provided F-16 American single-engine supersonic multirole fighter aircraft to Egypt. He was involved with a training mission with the Egyptians in teaching how to maintain and recover the F-16’s which the U.S. supplied to Egypt.

CMSgt Buckner’s final assignment was at Maxwell AFB, AL, for six years during 1982-1988, and he began at Headquarters Logistics, and after being promoted to the rank of Chief Master Sergeant, he was in charge of the entire base’s supplies as Management Superintendent. He retired there from all military service August 31, 1988.

While CMSgt Buckner was serving at Moody AFB, GA, he attended Georgia Military College and Valdosta State University, and he received a B.S. Degree in History and Political Science from Troy University in 1984. He also earned a Master’s Degree in Human Management from Troy University in 1986. After his military retirement, he received his Teacher’s Certificate when he earned a Master’s Degree in Collaborative Education from Alabama State University in 1990. During one summer, he worked as an instructor at the AL Department of Youth Services with male students up to age 21 at Mt. Megs, AL. He worked as an instructor of R.O.T.C. and introduction to special education at Robert E. Lee High School in Montgomery for 24 years during 1988-2012.

CMSgt Buckner is a member of the American Legion and a life member of the Disabled American Veterans. He currently serves as the President of the Montgomery Education Retired Association (MERA) and on the Board of Aid to Inmate Mothers (AIM)

CMSgt Buckner and his wife have been married 55 years, and they have three sons and two grandchildren. He enjoys teaching and serving others as well as attending sports games. He is a member of the Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church, where he serves as Superintendent of the Sunday School, Trustee Ministry serving as Vice Chair, and teacher for the Wednesday night Bible Study.

CMSgt Buckner’s conclusions about what serving in the U.S. Air Force means to him are: *“It meant a lot to me because for the first time I learned more about the nation’s defense and purposes, and it gave me purpose. It was the first time that I felt the pride in the US that I had never felt before. It gave me motivation to accomplish things. It gave me a purpose and a desire to do better and better. I made Staff Sergeant in four years which was very rare in those days. It gave me motivation and confirmation that I could make a difference in the Air Force.”* He would like to be remembered not only for his military service but also for mentorship at Robert E. Lee High School, and his dedication to serving others at his church and the organizations for which he has worked. He would also like to be remembered for his service to the children of inmates and the less fortunate.



COACH TOMMY TUBERVILLE

U.S. SENATOR X FOR ALABAMA



Senator Tuberville (R-AL) Honors George Krietemeyer of Opelika as August “Veteran of the Month”

“When natural disasters strike, you can always count on the United States Coast Guard. This month, the Guard celebrates 235 years of excellence and life-saving emergency missions. And that’s because of heroes like Captain George Krietemeyer of Opelika.

Growing up in the post-World War II era, Krietemeyer said his favorite pastime was watching John Wayne save the day in war movies. Like John Wayne, George wanted to be that hero for fellow Americans in times of need. He dreamed of attending the Naval Academy, but through a series of events found himself attending the Coast Guard Academy in Connecticut. This experience would launch him into an over 30-year career in the Guard. He decided to attend flight school after a few years in duty where he trained to fly both airplanes and helicopters. Through his extensive training, Captain Krietemeyer established himself as a leader among the ranks.



As John Wayne always said, “*Courage is being scared to death... and saddling up anyway.*” Captain Krietemeyer truly embodies this type of courage. And it is my honor to recognize him as the “August Veteran of the Month.”

Senator Tuberville recognizes a different Alabama veteran each month for their service and contribution to their community. Constituents can nominate an Alabama veteran and submit their information to Senator Tuberville’s office for consideration by emailing [press\\_office@tuberville.senate.gov](mailto:press_office@tuberville.senate.gov).

Senator Tommy Tuberville represents Alabama in the United States Senate and is a member of the Senate Armed Services, Agriculture, Veterans’ Affairs, HELP and Aging Committees.



U.S. Senator Katie Britt (R-AL) Receives Crime Stopper of the Year Award

U.S. Senator Katie Britt (R-Ala.) received the Crime Stopper of the Year Award from Crime Stoppers of Metro Alabama. She was recognized for her work in passing the Laken Riley Act, supporting local law enforcement, and other key public safety initiatives.

*“The work done by the Crime Stoppers of Metro Alabama is truly invaluable, and I’m honored to be recognized by them for my work in the Senate. Fighting for the safety of Alabamians and advocating for our law enforcement agencies at every level is a true honor and privilege. Whether it was leading the bipartisan Laken Riley Act, the most significant immigration enforcement and border security legislation to be signed into law in nearly 30 years, or advancing critical funding through the appropriations process, I will always fight to keep Americans and Alabamians safe,”* said Senator Katie Britt.

*“In Washington and here at home, Senator Britt has been relentless in addressing violent crime and she understands that the rule of law is not just a principle-it is the very safeguard of our freedom. Her work has not been about what is easy-it has been about what is right. She has confronted some of the most difficult and emotional topics we face as a nation including cracking down on repeat violent offenders, strengthening penalties for those who target our children and ensuring that those who would harm our citizens are met with swift justice,”* Crime Stoppers Board Chairman Frank Barefield said in a statement.

*“Perhaps no better example of her commitment can be found in her leadership supporting the Laken Riley Act, legislation named for a young woman whose life was tragically taken by a 26-year-old undocumented immigrant. Senator Britt fought to see this bill passed so that those who illegally enter the United States to commit violent crimes and harm innocent people are removed from our communities and so that the loss of life like Laken is never repeated. Senator Britt is not only a defender of the most helpless among us, but she is a partner to law enforcement in making our communities safe and free,”* Chairman Barefield continued.

The Laken Riley Act was the first bill signed into law by President Trump as 47th President of the United States and received bipartisan support. It represents the most significant immigration enforcement bill to reach the president’s desk since 1996.

Recently, Senator Britt advanced \$14.4 million to support local law enforcement amongst other crucial projects across Alabama. As Chair of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security, she is proud to support President Trump’s recent efforts to make D.C. safe and beautiful again.

There is no limit to the amount of good you can do if you don't care who gets the credit. —Ronald Regan—



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- Perfect for Basement Home



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## Social Security Celebrates 90 Years of Service to the American People

### President Trump signs proclamation recognizing the enduring strength and importance of Social Security



President Donald J. Trump and SSA Commissioner Frank J. Bisignano in the Oval Office as President Trump issues a presidential proclamation honoring the 90th anniversary of the Social Security Act.

**SSI PRESS RELEASE: August 14, 2025**  
Today the Social Security Administration (SSA) proudly commemorates its 90th anniversary, marking its unwavering commitment to the financial security and dignity of millions of Americans. Since President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act into law on August 14, 1935, the program has grown into one of the most successful and trusted institutions in American history. At a ceremony in the Oval Office today, President Trump signed a presidential proclamation reaffirming his commitment to protect Social Security and celebrating the customer service improvements that have occurred at the agency during his presidency.

*“For 90 years, Social Security has stood as a promise kept, ensuring that older Americans, people with disabilities, and families facing loss have the support they need,”* said Commissioner Frank J. Bisignano. *“As we honor this legacy, we are also building a future where service is faster, smarter, and more accessible than ever before. Through President Trump’s vision, we are protecting and preserving Social Security by delivering extraordinary customer service through technological improvements and enhanced process engineering.”*

This year, 72 million beneficiaries will receive over \$1.6 trillion in payments—making Social Security a lifeline for retired workers, survivors, and people with disabilities and a cornerstone of retirement security across generations.

Since his swearing-in on May 7, 2025, Commissioner Bisignano has led a bold digital-first transformation of SSA’s operations, guided by a vision to make the agency a premier service organization. Within 100 days as Commissioner of the agency, he has led SSA to achieve significant improvements in service delivery for the American people:

- Giving Americans 24/7 access to their personal my Social Security account, allowing more than half a million transactions to take place in the first three weeks, when previously the website was down 29 hours a week
- Reducing average wait time on the National 800 Number from 30 minutes last year to single digits last month
- Shortening field office wait times by 30%, and booking more appointments than ever before
- Upgrading phone systems in all field offices, allowing for 30% of all calls to be handled instantaneously through technology
- Enabling 90% of calls to be resolved via self-service or convenient callbacks
- Reducing the initial disability claims backlog by 26%, from 1.2 million to 940,000 cases
- Decreasing disability hearing wait times by 60 days, reaching historic lows
- Sending over 3.1 million payments totaling \$17 billion to eligible beneficiaries five months ahead of schedule under the Social Security Fairness Act

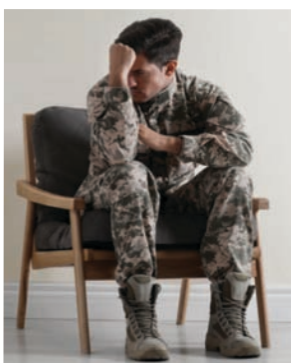
**Commissioner Bisignano’s modernization agenda emphasizes operational agility, data-driven performance, and a digital-first approach. His leadership has prioritized:**

- Integration of technology to streamline phone inquiries and reduce errors
- Strengthening of data security following past breaches, with firm commitments to safeguard beneficiary information and eliminate fraud, waste, and abuse
- Workforce optimization to increase frontline capacity while maintaining service excellence

*“Our strategy is clear: serve customer needs quickly and completely, no matter how they contact us,”* said Commissioner Bisignano. *“We are empowering our workforce and embracing innovation to ensure Social Security properly supports the American people and remains strong for the next 90 years.”*

As SSA celebrates this milestone, it remains focused on its mission of delivering benefits accurately, efficiently, and timely. The agency continues to work with Congress, outside advocates, and the American public to strengthen Social Security, and deliver on President Trump’s mandate to protect and preserve for generations to come.

For more information about SSA’s communications, initiatives, and accomplishments, please visit the agency’s Communications Corner at [ssa.gov/news](https://ssa.gov/news). To download the image of President Donald Trump and Commissioner Frank Bisignano in the Oval Office, visit: [www.ssa.gov/agency/assets/images/SSA-90th-Anniversary-WH-Proclamation.avif](https://www.ssa.gov/agency/assets/images/SSA-90th-Anniversary-WH-Proclamation.avif). For more Social Security news, follow the agency on X @SocialSecurity.



**Veterans Crisis Line**  
DIAL 988 then PRESS 1  
[www.veteranscrisisline.net](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net)

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or visit <https://www.buglesacrossamerica.org>.





**Dr. Lester Spencer**

President Pro Tem

Alabama Emerald Coast Conference

9001 Vaughn Road, Montgomery, Alabama, 36117

Email: [Lester@aecgmc.org](mailto:Lester@aecgmc.org)Tel: (334) 245-0260 - Web: [www.aecgmc.org](http://www.aecgmc.org)*Soul Searching...***GLOBAL  
METHODIST CHURCH**  
ALABAMA EMERALD COAST CONFERENCE**ALWAYS SPEAK TRUTH!***"You will know the truth and the truth will set you free."* -Jesus, **John 8:32***"I am the way, the truth and the life."* - Jesus, **John 14:6**The Apostle Paul states, *"Love does not delight in evil but rejoices in the truth."*  
-1 Corinthians 13:6*"No legacy is so rich as honesty"* - William Shakespeare*"Rather than love, than money, than fame, give me truth."*  
- Henry David ThoreauWhen we tell the truth, we live as our Creator intended for us to live and as God has commanded us to live. *"You must not testify falsely against your neighbor."*  
Or *"You shall not lie."* -Exodus 20:16

When we lie, we go against what God expects of us, and we disobey His Commandments. Often people lie because they are concerned about getting in trouble or perhaps they fear that by telling the truth they will hurt someone. Some people lie because they are sociopaths and have no conscience at all. But we lose our integrity when we lie. We hurt ourselves, and we hurt others. We lose our integrity not only in the eyes of others but also in the eyes of God. Lying diminishes our relationships with others and destroys trust. And that trust is extremely difficult to rebuild.

Think about how the world would be different if no one ever lied. At first it is a scary thought. After all, if we didn't lie people would get hurt right? For example, you might hurt your relationship with your best friend if you told him or her that you couldn't stand a certain character trait of theirs. Or you may have to pay a bit higher taxes if you told your accountant about a particular gift or inheritance you didn't want to declare on your income statement. Yet, not being able to lie might teach us to be more tactful with our friends or more honest about our business affairs.

We must learn the skills that will help us be honest in all of our relationships. If we want to be people of integrity and honesty, we have to overcome the temptation to lie. It can be frustrating at times and fear is the biggest emotion we must

overcome when we face the temptation or desire to lie. Yet we must always keep in our hearts and minds that there is a way to tell the truth that is good, right and wholesome!

How can we live as people of truth?

**Think first.**

Sometimes we lie so we can give a quick answer to someone. Before you speak or answer a question, take a deep breath and pray about how you can say the truth in a tactful way. Sometimes you don't need to say anything at all.

**Keep It Real**

Lies aren't always full untruths. Sometimes we exaggerate or stretch the truth. Exaggerating or stretching the truth is also lying. We often do it to make ourselves look better. But is it worth it? Be authentic. Be real. People are usually very impressed with people they can always trust to tell the truth no matter what.

**Set things right**

We have all given in to the temptation to tell a lie or exaggerate. If you have or if you do in the future, pray about and look for the opportunity to make it right and tell the truth. It will be uncomfortable, but telling the truth will set you free to be who God created you to be. You will experience a freedom that comes from being a person of integrity who speaks the truth.

Determine today that you will be a person who always speaks truth. I will close with two more of my favorite quotes about truth:

*"Speak the truth in love."* - Paul, **Ephesians 4:15***"Truth is like a lion. You don't have to defend it. Let it loose. It will defend itself."*

- Saint Augustine

**Always Speak Truth!**Dr. Lester Spencer  
Conference SuperintendentAlabama Emerald Coast Conference  
Global Methodist ChurchAlabama Emerald**Gary Miller**[gary@outdoortruths.org](mailto:gary@outdoortruths.org)

Preparation for deer season is in full swing. Just check out any of your favorite groups or people on social media and you'll see that we're all doing the same thing. Checking stands and cameras. Making food plots. Shooting bows and guns. Gathering clothes, boots, and other gear. It's all happening right now. In some places the season will open in a few days. In others, it's just around the corner. And nothing brings a greater sense of peace than being prepared before the season gets here. The rest that comes from readiness is unparalleled. Sure, there will be unseen frustrations, but these always add flavor to our hunting stories.

I heard a story about a farmer looking for a hired hand. One person that applied didn't look especially strong or skilled. And when asked what made him qualified for the position, he simply said,

*"I can sleep in a storm."* The farmer didn't understand the answer, but something about this man, drew the farmer give him the job. He turned out to be a good worker. As it often does, one night a violent storm swept across the farm. The farmer jumped out of bed in a panic and rushed to wake his hired hand but found him sound asleep. Frustrated, the farmer checked the farm himself. To his surprise, everything was secure. The shutters were latched, tools put away, animals

sheltered, and the hay was covered. The hired hand could sleep in the storm because he had prepared well before bad weather arrived.

One of the lessons of this story is that much of our concern is wasted energy. It comes because we didn't prepare beforehand. But there's an even greater truth here. It's not just about our preparation. It's about God's. The Bible tells of another storm, one that came suddenly while Jesus and His disciples were on a boat. The wind howled and the waves crashed, and the disciples panicked. And when they looked for Jesus, He was asleep. He could sleep in the storm because He controlled the storm. And that's the real encouragement for us. While we do our best to prepare for the things in life, there will always be unexpected storms. It's then that our deepest peace won't come from what we do or even from how well we have prepared. It will come from trusting the One who has taken care of the storm even before we knew it was coming. There's never been a storm that has kept Jesus awake. And yours won't either.

*Gary Miller has written Outdoor Truths articles for 21 years. He has also written five books which include compilations of his articles and a father/son devotional. He also speaks at wild-game dinners and men's events for churches and associations.* [gary@outdoortruths.org](mailto:gary@outdoortruths.org)**American Red Cross****Volunteering with Service to the Armed Forces****Volunteers carry out 90% of the humanitarian work of the Red Cross helping one displaced family or thousands providing care and comfort to an ill or injured service member or veteran, or teaching others how to respond to emergencies. It's through the efforts of ordinary people that the Red Cross can do extraordinary things. The Red Cross responds to an emergency every eight minutes.****Volunteers are needed for the following positions in the Central AL area:**

- 1. Local Level VAVS Representative:** This leadership position is responsible for assisting the local representatives in supporting coordination between the Red Cross and the VA Health Care Facilities.
- 2. Maxwell Health Clinic Volunteer:** This person provides assistance with tasks in a clinic setting and supports staff in a variety of tasks with patient care as well as enhance the morale of patients.
- 3. Service to the Armed Forces-Event Volunteer:** This person supports the Services to the Armed Forces Department and assists with programs such as Military Stand-downs, Yellow Ribbon events, parades and other events.

**To apply, please visit: [www.redcross.org/volunteer](http://www.redcross.org/volunteer)****For more information: Contact:****Sandy Zuiderhoek: phone: 334-201-1620 or E-mail: [sandy.zuiderhoek@redcross.org](mailto:sandy.zuiderhoek@redcross.org)****Become a Central AL Veterans Healthcare System volunteer:****Contact:****Tamera Hendricks, Director of Volunteers; phone: 334-5490-0832 (His); 334-272-4670 (Operator); Voluntary Services: ext. 34748 (on 1st floor)****Address: 215 Perry Hill Road, Montgomery, AL 36108****Address for volunteering at VA Out Patient Clinic: 8105 Veterans Way, Montgomery, AL 36117.****Brantley Bank**  
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334-365-4610****Thank you for your support over the years!**





JUDGE PEGGY GIVHAN

## Southern Gardening Potpourri for September



Alabama fan, Saturdays will be game day for the season. It is amazing how much of our scheduling in the South centers around football games. So for much of you, ROLL TIDE and WAR EAGLE.

In assessing my garden outcomes, the extreme heat and lack of rain did a number on our flowers, trees, and shrubs. In particular, the heat really stressed the dark leaf begonias so much. There was die-back, even though I take care of my plants with daily watering, liquid fertilizer every 2 weeks and trimming back the dead leaves. Even drought tolerant verbena grew very little. Many of the other flowers held their own, but were not what they have been in years gone by. Geraniums wound up being the happiest flowers over the past couple of months.

One task for September is to pull out perennials and annuals which have bitten the dust. Then replant these areas with fall flowers such as pansies, petunias, perhaps marigolds, blue salvia, dusty miller, and daylilies, such as Stella Doro. In the drier and sunny areas of the beds, you may want to add Lantana, and Mexican Heather. I will keep the Geraniums as they will do great in the fall with the cooler nights. Mine need to be trimmed back, cut off the dead heads, and fertilized. Geraniums make a spectacular comeback in the fall.

### PLANT OF THE MONTH--CELOSIA COCKSCOMB



This plant is also known as crested celosia, and has a unique flower shape. It has a very distinctive ruffle brain-like form and is dramatic in appearance. Some say it resembles a rooster's comb, hence the name. These flowers can be fan shaped or can be similar in appearance to brain coral. Cockscomb comes in a wide range of colors, red, orange, yellow, purple, and even variegated. They are easy to grow in a sunny location with well drained soil. Cockscomb tolerates heat and humidity and is low maintenance. These flowers look great in flower arrangements and they also dry well. They are native to Africa.

**Good Gardening**

## Today's Woman Trisston's Tidbits:

By: Trisston Wright Burrows

Ms. Wheelchair America/Alabama 2005

site.trisstonwrightburrows.com



### "God has a Plan for it All"

Oftentimes, we get confused with the idea of "it's all part of God's plan" and "God has a plan for it all". There is a big difference between these two statements. If everything that happens, every tragedy, every heartbreak, every trauma, was simply just all part of God's plan", then how would we cope with the fact that God is a loving and good and just God? Because if it was His plan, then why didn't He stop it or why didn't He intervene? Why did I have to go through it? And I think a lot of us asked those questions, maybe silently, and maybe even felt guilty for doing so.

Here is a different way to look at it that brings the peace to the confusion. God did not plan your pain, but He does have a plan for it.

Romans 8:28 tell us, *"And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose for them."*

I'm so thankful that God has given me a fresh perspective on it. God never intended for sin or sickness or suffering to be a part of our story. We live in a broken world, and with that broken world comes heartache. But even still, God does not waste anything...Not our tears, not our trauma, not our waiting, not our wounds. He has a plan to redeem it all.

To use what the enemy meant for evil and to turn it around for good. To take the scars that are written on your heart and to use them as bridges. To reach other people in their pain and in their hurt. And God doesn't author any pain or anything bad, but He does allow hardships in our life not to punish you, but to prepare you to deepen your faith, to grow your character and ultimately to grow you closer to Him.

God is not surprised what you're walking through, and He has already written away through it. And He promises that He will work all things together for your good and for His glory.

My friend, it's a promise. So, no matter what season you're in, you can trust this. God has a plan for it all.

**Many blessings!**



**Humane Society of Elmore County News**  
255 Central Plank Road (Hwy 9) Wetumpka, Alabama 36092  
PHONE: (334) 567-3377

Hours:  
Mon-Fri: 8am - 5pm  
Sat: 8am - 4pm



## 19th Annual Bark in the Park at Fort Toulouse in Wetumpka



**Sunday, 21 September  
NOON – 4 pm,**

will be our 19th Annual Bark in the Park at Fort Toulouse in Wetumpka! Let's all have some fun with our dogs by bringing your dog out to Fort Toulouse to enjoy a nice afternoon in the park.

There will be plenty to do and see at Bark in the Park (more details will be added as we get closer) - vendors, food, demonstrations, Microchip Clinic, Blessing of the Pets, Pet Parade, Pet & Owner Contests, Paw Painting, Bark in the Park T-Shirts, some great raffle baskets, Pet Photo Booth and more!

Microchips can be critical to reuniting lost pets and to help keep more pets safe, bring your dog to Fort Toulouse where it can be chipped. From 1–3 and for only \$25 (which includes the registration) you can get your pet microchipped thanks to the Tuskegee College of Veterinary Medicine.

Admission to Bark in the Park is \$5/person 13 years old and older. ALL dogs coming to Bark in the Park must be good in public, meaning good around children, adults and other dogs in a very busy situation, AND they must have a current rabies tag/proof of rabies vaccination to come to the Park.

RAIN DATE is Sun, 28 Sep '25

As we are getting into political campaigning season, please understand that we do not allow political campaigning at our Bark in the Park event. As a non-profit we must remain neutral, by law, to candidates, so let's please just keep everyone's focus on dogs and fun! Thank you!

### SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS!

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## Home Town Community News

### LOCAL COMMUNITIES FIGHTING TO INCORPORATE INTO TOWNSHIPS

#### Snowdown Community

*“Incorporating Snowdown gives us the chance to shape our own future. We love our land, our neighbors, and our way of life and we want to protect it for generations to come”* R. Harris Resident

##### WHY INCORPORATE?

- Protect farmland and rural character
- Gain local control over zoning, development, and land use
- Preserve community values
- Support agricultural businesses
- Avoid annexation by the city of Montgomery
- Empower residents to make decisions that directly affect Snowdown
- Protect property values

##### INCORPORATION MEANS:

- Local Control
- Protecting our land and agricultural heritage
- Keeping decisions close to home
- Having a say in zoning, development and services, taxation with representation.
- Preserving our community’s identity.

##### INCORPORATION FACTS:

- The community must have 300 people to incorporate with residences being contiguous.
- A petition signed by at least 15% of qualified electors within the proposed municipality must be submitted to the county probate judge as the official application.
- No territory can be included unless at least four qualified electors reside on each 40-acre tract and sign the petition in support of incorporation.
- The probate judge must order an election within 90 days of approving the petition.
- After incorporation, property owners can request to be annexed into the town.

**Stay Informed:** Get updated information and meeting dates, email us at [snowdownal@gmail.com](mailto:snowdownal@gmail.com) and request to be added to our email group.

**Talk to Neighbors:** Inform neighbors and encourage involvement. Act when and where help is needed.

**Funds are needed for the groundwork and to move forward.**

**Please send your donation to:**  
**Snowdown Community Center**  
6145 Norman Bridge Road, Montgomery, AL 36105  
(334)603-1449

#### Hope Hull

##### Hope Hull Eyes Incorporation: A Historic Crossroads Prepares for Civic Identity

Residents of Hope Hull, a historic community just south of Montgomery, are exploring the possibility of formal incorporation—a move that could reshape local governance, infrastructure planning, and economic development in southern Montgomery County.

The push for township status comes amid growing interest in preserving Hope Hull’s identity while managing the pressures of industrial expansion and suburban growth. A recent WSFA report highlighted community discussions around incorporation, with local leaders citing the need for more direct control over zoning, public services, and long-term planning.

##### Economic Momentum at the I-65 Corridor

Hope Hull’s strategic location off Interstate 65 has made it a magnet for industrial investment. Most notably, Manna Capital Partners is constructing a \$600 million beverage production and distribution complex on 180 acres near the Hope Hull exit. The facility, expected to begin operations in early 2025, will create 280 full-time jobs and serve as a major supply chain hub for both alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages.

This development, along with proximity to Hyundai Motor Manufacturing Alabama, has intensified calls for local governance that can respond to infrastructure demands and ensure community input in future projects.

##### A Community Rooted in History

Hope Hull traces its origins to the 19th century and was named after Methodist minister Rev. Hope Hull. The area has long been known for its rural character, agricultural heritage, and close-knit community. While it has never been formally incorporated, it has functioned as a distinct locale with its own post office, churches, and civic traditions.

Incorporation would allow residents to elect local officials, establish ordinances, and potentially access state and federal funding streams designated for municipalities.

##### What’s Next?

The process of incorporation in Alabama requires a petition, a feasibility study, and a vote by local residents. Advocates in Hope Hull are reportedly in the early stages of organizing community meetings and assessing legal requirements.

If successful, Hope Hull would join other small towns in Alabama that have recently incorporated to preserve local identity and manage growth—such as Pike Road, which incorporated in 1997 and has since become one of the state’s fastest-growing municipalities.



Art by Mary Wright

In a small rural community, South of Montgomery AL, lives a simple country girl at heart. Mary Wright retired in 2019 from many years of working as a bookkeeper for construction companies and a family business. In retirement Mary loves to spend her time working in her yard creating a beautiful, peaceful, living landscaped canvas, she enjoys attending church and church events, going to the river, fishing, and painting pictures. She will take photos of scenes from the river and the countryside that she enjoys so much, and paints them. Some ideas will just come from her heart. Some are memorials for family members who have passed on. Mary grew up with talented people in her family, she studied art in school and took many art classes in her youth. Mary and her mother Mary Lillian Rosier, would paint and have mother-daughter art shows at the TSUM library, Easter Seals Center, and they also hung their artwork in establishments such as Mary B’s Buffet and the Farmers Market Cafe. Mary recently started painting again after many years and is enjoying her long lost love of creating art. Mary is the person sitting behind a computer weekly taking in article contributions for the Alabama Gazette and assisting in publishing the printed paper. She puts her talents to use here too.

Mary’s thoughts are, *“God has blessed me richly and I want to share my heart the with people around me. I paint from my heart.”*



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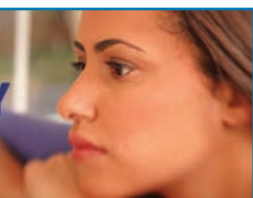
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Articles submitted and shared from The Montgomery Rotary Club.



# The COGnition

The Official Publication of the Montgomery Rotary Club

Glenn Halbrooks, Editor



Derrick Cunningham was born in Tacoma, Washington and moved to Tuscaloosa, Alabama with his family when he was 12 years old. He graduated from Tuscaloosa County High School and later moved to Montgomery, Alabama where he began his law enforcement career and later married his wife Mattie and they have two daughters, Eboni and Jillian. He and his family are members of Progressive Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. Cunningham joined the Alabama National Guard in 1984. He retired from the Alabama National Guard with over twenty-four years of service.

On Friday, January 16, 2015, Derrick Cunningham was sworn in as the current Sheriff of Montgomery County as well as the first African American Sheriff of Montgomery County.

Cunningham always knew law enforcement was his calling in life. He started his law enforcement career in 1989 as a patrol officer with the Montgomery Police Department. He finished his tenure in the Detective Division where he was assigned to the homicide unit. Cunningham was appointed by Sheriff D.T. Marshall in 1999 to the position of Chief Deputy of the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office. His responsibilities included overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Sheriff's Office as well as the Mac Sim Butler Detention Facility or as it is commonly called, the "County Jail". Furthermore, he oversaw the budget for the Sheriff's Office which operates on an annual income of 33 million dollars.

Cunningham has a Bachelor of Science Degree from Troy University and a Master of Science Degree from the University of Phoenix. He has attended numerous schools and seminars throughout the United States since the start of his law enforcement career. He graduated from the F.B.I. National Academy Class 231 in December 2007. Cunningham is the point of contact for Homeland Security for Montgomery County, overseeing funding for the county. He also graduated from the 108th National Sheriff's Institute in Aurora, Colorado in September 2015. He was given the Sheriff of the Year award for 2018. In January 2020, Cunningham was sworn in as President of the Alabama Sheriff's Association (ASA) where he served two terms as President leading their association. On December 7, 2020, Cunningham was named YMCA Man of the Year. He was also named Tuscaloosa County High School Alumnus of the Year for 2021. Leadership Alabama class 32 graduate 2022.



Our Rotary guest speaker on August 18 was Montgomery County Sheriff Derrick Cunningham. Sheriff Cunningham is a native of Tacoma, Washington, who moved to Tuscaloosa with his family when he was 12. When he was 21, he saw a TV commercial with then-Mayor Emory Folmar asking for police recruits and decided to sign up. After graduating from the police academy, Cunningham worked for the police department in the detective division before becoming Chief Deputy for the sheriff's office in 1999. He became sheriff in 2015. (Pictured L to R: President Elect Henry Davis, Sheriff Derrick Cunningham, President Kimberly Baker and Program Chair William Bloom.)

Cunningham provided an update on how technology is helping his office. He has 76 cameras looking for trouble throughout the area, 12 license plate readers and seven drones. In addition, he has crime analysts who scour the internet looking for clues to help solve crimes, like finding information on a suspect's personal connections and social media posts.

Cunningham says he's looking for tomorrow's law enforcement professionals, who may still be in high school today. He has 38 members in his Explorers Club, which is a part of the Scouting organization for high school students interested in pursuing a particular career. He says he can hire a cadet as young as 18 who can eventually hit the streets at age 21.

The sheriff also spoke of conditions at the Montgomery County Jail, which was built in 1985. Water issues with pipes and drains led to an \$80,000 water bill, which is now down to about \$400 a month after \$28 million in renovations, which included work to the kitchen and other areas.

New programs are helping inmates get back on their feet and stay out of trouble once they're released. There are classes in areas such as auto maintenance, where workers are hard to find.

Cunningham says mental illness and drug addiction continue to be serious issues. He says Narcan is being used all the time to treat those suffering an overdose. He says he never thought he'd see fentanyl in our area, but it's everywhere.

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## Rotary Prepares for its Dictionary Project Across Montgomery

Rotarians will be visiting all third grade classes across Montgomery in September as it celebrates Rotary Literacy month. This special Montgomery Rotary Club project has been conducted for over 30 years, usually in September coinciding with the start of school. Throughout this month, Rotary International highlights the importance of education and literacy as fundamental building blocks for children and adults alike across communities around the world. All Montgomery third graders have an opportunity to have an age appropriate dictionary which include graphs, lists and maps in the appendix. Rotarians deliver the books in the classroom. A space is provided for them to write their name and it is theirs to keep. Funding comes from generous Rotarians and a grant from The Rotary Foundation.

**Throughout this month, Rotary International highlights the importance of education and literacy as fundamental building blocks for individual and community progress. Rotarians worldwide engage in activities and projects aimed at strengthening basic education and literacy skills for people of all ages.**

### Upcoming Programs:

**Sept. 1 No Meeting – Labor Day**

**Sept. 8 Kevin Davidson – Acting US Attorney for the middle district of AL**

## 35th Annual Rotary International Night



Thursday, October 16, 2025

6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

National Dress or Cocktail Attire



*RSA Activity Center*

*201 Dexter Ave. – Montgomery, AL 36104*

*Please RSVP by October 1st*

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