



Ronald A. Holtsford

IS IT GOOD TO THINK ABOUT ANY LEGAL ISSUES FOR THE NEW YEAR?

Without specifics about yourself I'll make this answer generic in a personal and in a business sense.

I presume you looked at your financial estate planning (401K, mutual funds, stocks and bonds, life insurance, etc.) and as you do you also think about your legal estate planning. After all you are a year older; you may have gotten married, had a new child, had a child reach the age of majority (19 years), gotten divorced or suffered the death of a spouse or even a child. You may have a child graduate, enter the workforce and be off your payroll. Even if the child is off your payroll you may keep them on your health insurance until they reach age twenty-six (26) as a buffer or necessity if you still have a family plan but it may be that you decide not to continue to carry the young adult child if the plan has changed and the cost can drop significantly. Your financial estate planning goes hand in hand with your legal estate planning and you should discuss that with your lawyer, not that he or she will try to advise you on whether your investment advisor is steering you correctly but rather the impact of your financial worth on your legal estate.



person if both you and your spouse gift to the same person once per year. There is a lifetime generation skipping tax (GST) limit of \$11.58 million in 2020. There may be a tax advantage for the wealthy in that and if this seems to be something that might be helpful to your financial planning you should seek the advice of an accountant or other tax/ financial professional (may include a tax attorney). For 2019, there was a \$11.4 million total estate tax exemption per individual; 2020 will provide a \$11.58 million tax exemption. The total GST and total estate tax exemption are inclusive in total in that they cannot exceed \$11.58 million. The portable portion mentioned above may be available to a surviving spouse who may be able to combine through election their unused estate credit amounts up to a total of \$23.16 million. See your tax professional after the death of the first spouse if your assets are in the millions. Remember that life insurance is considered for estate tax purposes if you have control over the policy (i.e. ability to change the beneficiaries, cancel the policy, etc). Some individuals have large insurance policies and in the past not inconceivable for high middle class people to have an estate over prior limits but the possibility could even exist with some wealthier individuals. If you die in 2020 with an estate of greater than \$11.58 million (or \$23.16 million for a second to die spouse) then that amount over \$11.58 million will be taxed at 40%.

With that said you need to pull out your Last Will and Testament and review it. If you have had any life changes (marriage, divorce, death, large inheritance, new child, etc.) a new Will may be in order. If you don't have a Last Will and Testament you need to have a lawyer prepare one as soon as possible. Why do you need one? Because if you don't then the State of Alabama has one for you. Some of the spousal examples under the rules of intestacy (dying without a Will); (1) first \$100,000 to spouse and then 1/2 of the remaining estate to the living parent(s) when there are no children, (2) if children then the spouse gets \$50,000 and 1/2 of the rest, (3) if one or more of the children are not yours then the surviving spouse only gets half of everything, period. This is probably not the estate plan you have in mind. There are internet sites and software programs that can also assist with a Last Will and Testament but there is no guarantee that it will pass muster regarding state rules on probate nor a guarantee that it will do what you want upon your death. The best chance of meeting estate goals is through a lawyer and if you are of moderate means, you may be surprised that it is less expensive than you think. In the long run a Will may save money since an intestate estate when probated requires the bonding of the Personal Representative and an inventory of the decedent's estate. I run into too many old or non-attorney prepared defective Wills when it really counts and there is an attempt to probate the estate. Obviously such probate is not without issue. If you have an out of state prepared Will it should be acceptable for probate since under the Full Faith and Credit Clause (Section 1, Article 4) of the United States Constitution a valid Will prepared in one state is valid in Alabama. There can be issues so a review with an Alabama attorney is always a good thing to do.

Aside from the Last Will and Testament you may want to have a Power of Attorney prepared, both one for financial reasons and health. Most prepared these days are durable which require wording that the power of attorney is effective even in your disability or incapacity. Financial Powers of Attorney became a statutory form as of 1 January 2012. Most attorneys have concerns about the filling in the blank and initialing choices format and most now insert tried and true language used in their practices for their many years. A financial Power of Attorney is now by default a Durable power; however I insert the needed language anyway to make sure that there are no questions about its durability. A Power of Attorney (POA) can be very powerful and placed in the wrong hands can be damaging such as a daughter that is named AGENT and decides to sell your lake house and push you towards moving to an assisted living facility. On the other hand, naming a trusted AGENT and retaining the POA for future needs can be extremely beneficial. The POA can be used so that someone can write your bills for you during incapacity, file your taxes and with health/ Health Insurance Portability and Privacy Act (HIPAA) provisions monitor your care with the doctors and hospital as well as handle medical insurance billing. The POA may also be used to nominate whom you would want as a conservator or guardian should one need to be named for you through a Court proceeding. A health care power of attorney can be used to coincide with the Advance Directive mentioned below should you have need to name another or others to help with health care decisions.

The final personal document would be an Advance Directive for Health Care, which is composed of a Living Will and Health Care Proxy nomination. It will allow you to make certain decisions about end of life issues should you later become unable to speak for yourself and two doctors have determined that you will likely die in the near future. This is the document that Terri Schiavo DID NOT have and for that reason the court found the testimony of the "husband" who was then living with another woman to be credible as to Terri's final wishes. Hmmmmm. Naming a Health Care Proxy is the same as naming a health care power-of-attorney



such as under a POA. The proxy is given limited rights under which situations that they can make decisions. And by the way, the ex-spouse automatically loses that job as proxy upon divorce. That's dodging a bullet!

If retirement is nearing and you will also receive Social Security consider that the 2020 Medicare Part B will move from the 2019, \$135.50 to \$144.60 per month dependent on whether the senior is subject to the statutory "hold harmless" provision. Those with higher incomes to \$109,000.00 will pay higher Part B premiums. There is a \$202.40 (move from \$185.00 in 2019) Part B deductible for the year. Even greater incomes over \$109,000.00 will have higher Part B premiums as it moves up in brackets. If you need nursing home (skilled nursing) care under Part A, days 1-20 are fully covered provided you continue to meet Medicare's requirements for those days; the co-payment for days 21-100 (if you qualify) will be \$176.00 per day (\$170.50 per day in 2019). After day 100 you are 100% on your own unless you have some other means of long term care payment. If you have not already checked on long term health care insurance you should do so now. It not only will cover nursing home care but can also cover assisted living or in home care. If you consider this insurance also look carefully at the options since they may be equally as important as the policy itself. This includes inflation increases which are very important or even the option of continued coverage for a certain amount of time when one with "forgetfulness" forgets to pay the premium.

Current tax law consideration is to remove the mandate under the Affordable Care act (Obamacare). The time to make health care changes under the ACA has passed (open enrollment) unless you have a qualifying event or become eligible under Medicaid/ CHIP. Older Americans may be eligible both for Medicare and Medicaid and impoverished Americans may be Medicaid eligible when they cannot afford premiums under Obamacare and some Americans eligible for insurance from the market place with subsidized premiums.

If you are currently in business or considering a business what about entity? A sole proprietorship offers pass



through taxation but no limited liability. Your personal and business assets are at risk in a lawsuit. A Limited Liability Company (LLC) or a Registered Limited Liability Partnership (RLLP or LLP) offers the same pass through tax advantages as well as limited liability. A "C" corporation offers the same limited liability but there is taxation on the corporation and taxation on the shareholders. If you are in one of these entities and about \$80,000.00 plus salary talk to your accountant about the possibility of an "S" corporation election. Current tax considerations suggest that pass through entities not involved as professional service businesses (accountants, attorneys, etc) such as sole proprietorships, LLC's, LLP's and S corporations may take an additional significant percentage off their income. Because pass through entities are taxed at the owner's tax rate this will give an additional percentage decrease in taxable income.

In addition to the advantages of pass through taxation and limited liability there may also be some self-employment tax advantages since some of the income can be paid to a shareholder- employee as a profit distribution. The Internal Revenue Service however looks for Shareholder-Employees that pay themselves substandard salaries for their position in order that they can take more from the company as a distribution and save more on Self Employment taxes. The IRS will consider a reasonable income based on IRS summarized factors considered by a Court case from the Eighth Circuit which advised shareholders to give them careful consideration in establishing their compensation.

The factors are:

- (1) Employee qualifications;
- (2) The nature, extent, and scope of the employee's work;
- (3) The size and complexity of the business;
- (4) Prevailing general economic conditions;
- (5) The employee's compensation as a percentage of gross and net income;
- (6) The employee-shareholder's compensation compared with distributions to shareholders;
- (7) The employee-shareholder's compensation compared with that to non-shareholder employees or paid in prior years;
- (8) Prevailing rates of compensation for comparable positions in comparable concerns; and
- (9) Comparison of compensation paid to a particular shareholder-employee in previous years where the corporation has a limited number of officers.

An "S" Corporation election only exists through the IRS and has specific requirements. So you can be an existing LLC, C Corporation, etc. but elect via the IRS as an "S" Corporation. Ask your accountant about whether it is right for your business.

I hope that this has helped with your question. If you need a lawyer you can contact the Alabama State Bar Lawyer Referral service or ask a trusted friend about a lawyer that they might recommend.

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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ROBSEVATIONS...

by Robert Tate

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

Out of the Mouths of Babes

The other day, I was sitting in a mall food court reading a magazine I just bought while my bride was shopping. I like to sit, read and of course watch the world pass by. I have to admit, I am a people watcher. Some are obviously more pleasant to watch than others, but regardless, people are interesting to watch. While sitting there, I was watching this young girl writing furiously on pieces of paper. She would write something, scribble it out, write some more and then wrinkle up the paper and toss it in the garbage. This went on for about 30 minutes. She never got up, never tired but just wrote, tossed, wrote, tossed and wrote some more. At one point, with her tongue dangling from the corner of her mouth, she must have hit some inspiration for she wrote, without break, for a solid 15 minutes. Finishing her work, she read it over, scrunched her nose up, shook her head and tossed her masterpiece in the garbage. Just then, her mother and father showed up, took her by the hand and off they went to see Santa who was sitting just 40 yards away.

I know I should not have but curiosity got the best of me and I had to simply read what she had written. I had to. So, I nonchalantly strolled over to the garbage and lifted the paper from the top of the can. I decided to reprint her words her, unedited and unchanged. It will give you insight into the minds of some of our future leaders. When the time comes, this little girl will get my vote.

Dear Santa,

My name is Nicole Robinson and I am 6-years-old. I live in Bay Town, Texas and I am not looking forward to Christmas this year. It seems like everybody is upset and angry all the time including my mum and dad. Why are people so mean? What is impeachment exactly? That is all I hear on the T.V. these days. I am only a 6-year-old girl but I think I know that someone has to commit a crime to be punished. Right? I am not sure why people hate the President, but my mum and dad say he didn't do anything wrong and there is absolutely no proof of anything. My dad said it is the first time in history that a Republican is being punished for the crimes committed by Demoncrats (as my mum calls them.) I am not sure what Demoncrats are but I don't think they are too nice. It is funny that some people are so stupid that they believe, according to what mum and pop have taught me, that if the President in impeached, they think that means he is going to get kicked out of office and sent to jail right away. Are people that stupid or just mean spirited? Don't they know Christmas is just a few weeks away?

Mummy was watching the T.V. this morning and some ugly man said that no one is above the law. Mum took one of her foam bricks and threw it at the T.V. I don't know anything about some lady called Hillary Clinton, but according to mum, she broke laws like perjury (whatever that is), doing some bad things with secret information that has sent others to jail, letting her maid and lawyers read things they were not supposed to and let a very important man and some of his friends die over in Africa and then lied and tried to cover up what really happened. Mum said some tall po po man, knew she broke the law but said she really did not mean to do it. I am just a kid and don't know a lot but that just doesn't seem right. Maybe you could tell me. Mum got pulled over for speeding the other day and she told the po po she did not intend to speed but she got a ticket anyway.

Why do our so-called friends in Europe, in something called NATO, not like us anymore? My pop tells me a lot of them did not like President Trump "calling them out" and telling them to pay their money to be a part of the NATO team. My pop told me that out of 27 countries in this team, only five pay the amount of money they said they would pay according some treaty they signed. 2% of a country's GDP (????) doesn't seem like a lot, but as of 2017 only the US, Britain, Poland, Greece and Estonia pay what is required. I

guess dead-beat countries hate being reminded of what they are. My mum sounds just like that stupid Greta girl when she says, "How dare you let the world know we are cheapskates."

The way my pop speaks, I thought record low unemployment in our country, an increasing GDP (again????) and record job creation was a good thing. If so, then why do those two crazy women, one called Waters and the other something like Peeloser hate the President so and not give him credit for fixing things the other guy didn't? You would think they would be happy for him and for the country. I guess not. There's another thing, Santa, I love oatmeal but I know enough to brush my teeth after I eat. Why does it always look like those two crazy women always have oatmeal stuck in the corners of their mouths. Yuk! Gross! Then what about the insane looking, white haired man who is always screaming? "Feel the burn," they say. He never seems to make a lot of sense and even I can see that his math never works out, but some people seem to like him. My dad calls those people communists and socialists. Are those nice words? I don't think so 'cause when pop says them, mum just hits him with her elbow or throws one of her foam bricks at him.

Santa, is it okay to pretend to be someone or something you are not? I don't mean like Halloween but make up things about your past just to get ahead in life? Who is this Liawatha lady who is running for President? Or as mum says, Feauxcohontas? What is GITMO? Don't bad people live there? Why does she want to get rid of it? She seems "unhinged" as mum says. Why does she have to make such ugly faces when she talks? I can't say what pop says about this. I still want some toys for Christmas. Also, what does "sleep your way to the top" mean? I am confused.

We were at the gun range the other day. Pop likes taking us there and he even let me shoot a gun a couple of times. I seem to always hit the target. My pop shouted, "Nicole, now that is what I call gun control!" My pop started talking about something going on in Virginia. He wouldn't tell me. He, mum and pop's Air Force and Marine Corps buddies were very secretive and I only picked up a couple of key words. Governor, jerk, Nazi, anti-constitution, bug-out bags, militia, 2nd Amendment, oaths to defend something, National Guard, Civil War and evil people coming to our house to steal our rights. I cannot remember anything more. Should I be scared, Santa? Why do these Demoncrats hate the Constitution so much? Why can't they understand it? Didn't they ever finish high school? I am 6 and I understand most of it. It really is not that hard, Santa.

Santa, after writing this, I guess I really want only one thing. Could you get a big net and capture all of these Demoncrats who hate America and take them to the Island of Misfit Toys and let King Moonrazor watch over them? I guess that is all I want but I will take a Boxer puppy as well. Thanks, Santa for reading my letter and I will be sure to put some milk and cookies out for you on Christmas Eve.

Yours,
Nicole Robinson

PS - Don't bring my brother Tommy anything. He is mean to me all the time.

Out of the mouths of babes! Rock on, Nicole!



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Inside the Statehouse with Steve Flowers

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His weekly column on Alabama politics appears in over 60 Alabama newspapers.
He served 16 years in the state legislature.*

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

NEW YEAR BEGINS. IT'S A PRESIDENTIAL YEAR

As the new year begins, so does a Presidential election year.

For several decades, in fact for most of the twentieth century, Alabamians were more interested in state and local politics than presidential politics. In fact, from 1901 through the 1950's there were more people voting in a Democratic Primary for Governor than in a presidential General Election.

The interest in national politics is a fairly new occurrence for Alabamians, and it seems to have been in correlation to the party change in the state. Donald Trump carried Alabama by over 63 percent in 2016. You can pretty much bet the family farm that he will do the same to whomever the national Democrats offer up in the coming year.

The country is divided like never before in our history. You either live in a red Republican state or a blue Democratic state like California. You might say, “the hay is in the barn,” in all but about 10 battleground swing states. There are 40 states that it really does not matter who the Republican or Democratic nominee is, that party's candidate is going to win that state and get all of that states electoral votes.

As I always say, if Mickey Mouse was the Republican nominee for President, he would carry Alabama and by the same token, if Donald Duck was the Democratic nominee, he would carry California.

The election is won or lost in the swing states of Florida, Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. The candidates will not even campaign in these safe 40 states. We will not see the presidential candidates, but neither will California or New York. Although, the Democratic candidates will go to California and New York to raise money. In fact, that is where our anomaly, short-lived Democratic Senator Doug Jones is getting his campaign money. He raises his funds in the most liberal zip codes in America, especially the left coast of California.

Our national politics, especially Congress, has become nothing more than an extreme partisan show. The theater is acted out in childlike petty gamesmanship. The Democratic charade of the impeachment inquiry is a perfect example. They are having a childlike food fight.

Swing voters are really turned off by this partisan circus. It is an obvious political vendetta. The votes are exactly along party lines. That in itself tells

independent voters that it is a tribal squabble that is obsessing the tribally aligned politicians instead of important economic issues that affect them and their families.

The Democratic CNN/MSNBC/Stephen Colbert watchers gleefully boast of a coup that will never occur. An impeachment vote by only Democrats in the House of Representatives will never be approved or given any credence in the United States Senate, which has a Republican majority. It would need a 2/3 vote in the House of Lords and the U.S. Senate has a Republican majority. It appears that all measures, movements, and votes in Washington are cast along party lines.

All of the Republicans watch Fox news and consider the whole theater as an illegitimate political sham. My guess is that the fair minded, independent voter sees this show as a political act to appease their partisan zealots and they are making a mockery of a time-honored institution.

The Democrats will be the losers in this scenario. Voters reacted unfavorably to Republicans when they impeached Bill Clinton. Although they seemed to pay more attention and enjoyed that show more because the proposed misdeed was a lot more salacious.

As we begin the New Year, let's not forget that we have some governing to do in the Heart of Dixie and not just politicking. The 2020 Legislative Session begins on February 4. The paramount issue to be addressed is our prison overcrowding problem and prison reform. Gov. Kay Ivey will come forward and offer to the Legislature a comprehensive plan to address this dilemma which has been building up for over a decade.

The Governor deserves a tip of the hat for working with the Justice Department on this issue. In turn the Justice Department and our U.S. Attorneys deserve accolades for their due diligence in working harmoniously with the Governor's office and guiding them in the directions necessary to avoid federal interference.

This discourse and harmony is quite a contrast to the political rhubarb and catastrophe illustrated and orchestrated by the George Wallace vs Frank Johnson scenario of the 1970's.

January 1, 2020

Your Vote is Your Voice



by John Martin

The Nanny

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

“The American Dream”—to live and let live.”

From our very beginning, we the people of the United States have honored and fought for the right to live free and support ourselves without government interference under a sacrosanct principle called “The American Dream”—to live and let live.” This is the bedrock that provided the opportunity for all citizens to create the greatest nation on earth.

But over the last century and especially the second half of it, numerous agencies have been created that violate that ethic. The taxes, regulations and mandates we now suffer have held us back from the greater prosperity we could otherwise achieve.

During the George W. Bush recession in 2008, we decided that overbearing government had gone too far and started the Tea Party movement. The objective was to trim government at all levels down to a manageable size—to make all of it smaller, less intrusive, and less expensive.

Unfortunately, a majority of people, to avoid being labeled as “racist,” elected Barack Obama for President, and worse yet, Democratic supermajorities in both houses. The result was a catastrophic eight-year surge in just what we needed to roll back.

Finally, we now have Donald John Trump, a business-like President who has the backbone to take serious steps to rectify these impositions.

If we look at our Constitution and check out its principles, we will see that about 90% of the federal government's actions are unethical, unconstitutional, and yes, criminal.

What is that 90%? Most of it can be classified into three portions. The greatest one is our menagerie of mostly counterproductive “safety net” and social-welfare programs. Another is warmongering, empire building, foreign aid, and other meddling we should not be doing overseas. The third is the gross excess of regulatory agencies and their enforcement.

What IS constitutional? Essentially three things:

1. Legitimate national defense—but not the foreign interventions mentioned above.
2. Public roads, bridges and waterways.
3. Protecting citizens from wrongdoers, including government wrongdoers.

That's really about it.

About 80% of all of our state, county and city government is also unconstitutional and counterproductive. This includes licensure, excessive safety and environmental mandates, eminent domain abuse, hostile annexation, law enforcement overreach, victimless “crime” prosecutions, civil asset forfeiture, and tons of little nanny laws and their enforcement.

Like the federal, nearly all state and local governments have become too authoritarian. Montgomery is a good example. It used to be a great place to live. But it has gone downhill over the last several decades.

What did Montgomery have then that it does not have today? Why are so many people fleeing to Pike Road, Millbrook, Prattville and elsewhere to get away?

It's not what Montgomery lacks. It's what it has—excessive nannyism, regulations, abuses, and taxes:

And while the police have been really busy enforcing them, crimes, especially property crimes, have escalated, even though we have the highest incarceration rate in the world.

Back in the good times—in the 1960's and earlier—people could let their grass grow “too tall,” park their cars on their lawns, have a “junk” car for spare parts, have a thickly wooded vacant lot (a mini wilderness area), go shirtless in the public parks on hot days, salvage items from the landfill, shoot fireworks, build a bonfire to dispose of trash, dive for relics and antique bottles in the river, ride a horse on a public street, raise chickens and other animals, and stroll around on summer nights without being “suspect” or guilty of an ordinance of some kind.

The children had fun exploring old abandoned houses and buildings, crawling in the storm sewers (the only “caves” available), playing in the woods (now mostly destroyed because of “weed control” laws), running barefoot almost everywhere, occasionally running around naked without being viewed as sex offenders, building tree houses (the higher, the better), collecting “treasures” in the city dump and various private dumps, and riding bikes and motorcycles on the public roads and in the gravel pits (which are now gone) without helmets. High school students with drivers' licenses were allowed to earn money by driving school buses.

The total sales tax was only 3%—1% city, 0% county, and 2% state. Lodging taxes, as far as I know, didn't even exist. Traffic fines were a lot more reasonable—overtime parking, \$1; stop sign, \$2; red light, \$5; speeding, \$10; reckless driving, \$25; and the maximum fine for any offense, like DUI, \$100. No court costs were added.

Prior to tampering by the AEA and the imposition of federal mandates (like the forced busing of children away from their own neighborhoods) from the LBJ administration, Montgomery's public schools were rated as some of the best in the nation and were efficiently funded with a tiny percentage of what we now pay for our dismal education failures.

Intrusive nannyism is everywhere; it has flooded our entire nation like an Ebola pandemic and infected every level of government from the federal down to the municipalities. Freedom-loving Americans are absolutely fed up with its explosive and reckless growth.

But nearly every time we have an election and “throw the bums out,” we still end up with more government growth and abuse. When will we ever be able to elect effective and responsible leaders to put an end to it?



Sheriff Derrick Cunningham



Montgomery County Alabama Sheriff's Office

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Chief Deputy Kevin J. Murphy

Thank you to everyone that gave generously to our annual Christmas Angel Tree! Once again, we were able to provide Christmas for the homeless at Faith Rescue Mission and to special children at the Children's Specialty Center. Your thoughtfulness goes a long way!



Social Media

The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office has a new Facebook page! Make sure you follow us as All our social media outlets are listed below:

Social Media Search

Facebook **Montgomery County Sheriff's Office Alabama**

Instagram **Mcsaal**

Snapchat **mcso.alabama**

Twitter **MG_Twitter**



Sheriff's Office App

If you haven't already heard, the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office has a phone app called "Montgomery County AL Sheriff" that can be accessed through your phone's app store. Once you have added this app to your phone, you can easily set your phone up to receive important push notifications. Push notifications are quick, important messages that can notify you of road closure(s), blocked road(s), anything pertinent to your travel, escapee, etc. While our app can help you with many things including checking to see if someone is in the county jail, it is most helpful to receive push notifications. After you have downloaded the app, go through the follow steps to make sure your phone is set up to receive the push notifications:

- Go to your phone's setting icon
 - Scroll down and click "Applications"
 - Scroll down to "MCSO" or "Montgomery County Sheriff"
- OR**
- Click "Application Manager", if it doesn't take you directly to the location
 - Click "Notifications"
 - Turn 'on' "Allow Notifications" and "Previews in pop-ups"

You should be all set to receive the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office push notifications!

Detention Facility Recognitions

We also recognized the following personnel in our Detention Facility:

Corrections Officer of the Year **B. Jackson**

Corrections Officer for the First Quarter **J. Gourdine**

Corrections Officer for the Second Quarter **T. McLoyd**

Corrections Officer for the Third Quarter **B. Jackson**

Corrections Officer for the Fourth Quarter **D. Williams**



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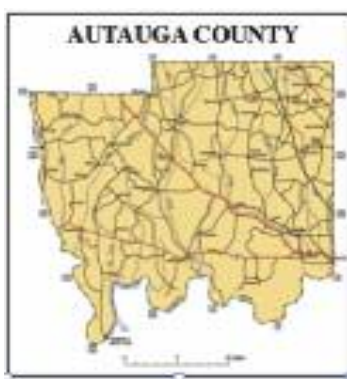
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Firearms Familiarization Course

Register NOW for our Firearms Familiarization Courses for 2020!

We know that learning how to protect yourself is very important in today's world. The class is held at our Sheriff D.T. Marshall Firearms Training Center and is FREE to Montgomery County residents! The morning session is classroom instruction on firearm safety and firearm laws. The afternoon session allows citizens to practice shooting on our Firing Range for the remainder of the class (if you would like). All classes are under the instruction of the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office Range Master.

Course Requirements:

- **Montgomery County Citizen**
- **Obtain a Montgomery County Pistol Permit (prior to the course date)**
- **Complete an Application for the Course**



2020 Course Dates:

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April 4

June 6

July 11

August 8

September 5

October 10

Pistol Permit Questions?

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Lowndes County Sheriff's Office

Chief Deputy Chris West appointed as Sheriff of Lowndes County

Newly appointed Sheriff of Lowndes County, Chris West, admits he can never fill the shoes of former Sheriff "Big John" but that he will be a vessel and the best sheriff he can be. He already has plans to increase patrol and combat crime.

West served as Chief Deputy under Sheriff "Big John" and Lowndes County for several years in many capacities. West found his calling in continuing to serve others through law enforcement for the last 24 years.



Lowndes County Sheriff Chris West



The views of this editorial may not express the views of The Alabama Gazette.

John Sophocleus

THINK

GazetteSophocleus@gmail.com.

Doing the County’s Bidding; Malice in Hubbardland spirit still alive and well in Lee County...



Two Lee county officials were bound by law and contract documents to procure **bid** proposals before spending taxpayer money. Records show one manager was **not** protected for her actions; the other **was** protected and lauded for his admitted wrongdoing. This familiar “*tale of two bureaucrats*” in a county believing in Mike Hubbard is as follows...

One county manager was placed on administrative leave with pay, brought before a County Commission executive session, tendered a resignation and received severance pay for allegedly failing to follow bid processes on a vehicle purchase. No documents were provided for public consideration, no discussion of failed oversight by her superior(s) and Commissioners. The ‘Malice in Hubbardland’ spirit is still alive and well in Lee County.

The other County official recently (mis)managed a Recreational Project. Some recall this County **TWICE** rejected Parks & Recreation tax votes on **general** election ballots to be placed on a **special** election/low turnout result to manipulate passing, further evoking the ‘bidness [sic] as usual’ spirit in Hubbardland. This project required a bid proposal and Change Order [C/O] **prior** to performing **any** work outside the scope of contract. Subcontractor(s) removed \$100K of rock **without** notification or submitting a bid for the C/O. Despite contract requirements, the county manager requested Commissioners approve payment, and ‘bidness [sic] as usual’ - they **did**.

Commissioners didn’t question this bureaucrat nor put him on administrative leave with pay until an executive session to discuss his admitted failure to enforce bid proposal requirement(s) on the project he managed. Upon asking Commissioner Lawrence if he’d read the contract which expressly forbid payment without notification and bid requirement of a C/O, Lawrence asserted he didn’t need to, he trusted the county manager, an **unelected** bureaucrat. The commissioner is **elected** by voters (who actually show/participate) for oversight of taxpayer money and resources. His comment was admission of abdicating this duty/responsibility. Little surprise to those who keep watch over an increasingly corrupt Commission, this particular bureaucrat/county manager wasn’t placed on leave or obliged to resign. Since the commission is not forthcoming with the facts of either case, one cannot determine why these two bureaucrats were treated so differently.

This ‘bidness [sic] as usual’ pattern of malfeasance in Lee County is easily recognized by those who regularly witness Commission meetings, even though the county operates with little to no transparency. Another illustration of the ‘me too’ corruption was shown at the **same** [11/12] Commission meeting for another favoured bureaucrat. The county renewed their highway engineer’s employment contract as the top official overseeing safety of the travelling public. During his tenure, ALDoT stated in a letter this manager’s repeated delay in providing plans for a joint effort to improve a dangerous RR crossing jeopardized the travelling public. Indeed, several more accidents occurred at this dangerous crossing due to his dilatory behavior. The commission did not admonish him for this and other instances of poor performance upon renewing his employment contract at the same meeting announcing the separation with a bureaucrat who appeared much less destructive in comparison. When one considers this engineer was not bonded for most of his tenure in violation of the Code of Alabama, one further sees the pattern of failure to follow process, lack of accountability and little oversight by Commissioners/Judge responsible for his bonding and adhering to County Access Management Policies.

Concerning transparency, if one wants to obtain facts, an open document request must be filed. For example, the only hard fact disclosed about the EMA Director’s plight is failure to follow bid law when she purchased a vehicle. We don’t know if it was an independent citizen, federal or State investigators who pressed/uncovered this or discovered by the county. We also don’t know what federal/State grant money was forfeited by this mismanagement and how it will be reconciled along with separation pay. During budget discussions, the county administrator did volunteer he could manipulate \$50k around without much difficulty. Commissioners successfully keep their public [dare I type subjects?] in the dark...

The Commission has repeatedly failed to follow policies, process and uniform accountability - the pattern is clear. Three high-level bureaucrats improperly performed duties; two remain in their position and the one whose malfeasance seems least is no longer in office and appears to be paid for silence. Little surprise this will not be pursued/reported by local papers dependent upon ads and revenue support from corrupt politburo members; it seems the ‘plot sickens’ when another of several long time **Lee County Voters League** member county Commission ‘watchers’ [Senior Apostle Prophet C.F. Davis] submitted a battery of questions on April 8th.

As I recall, Apostle Davis began his inquiry on how/when the authority to

set up a **501c3** through **EMAC** [East Alabama Medical Center] to receive disaster relief funds (a.k.a., **M.E.N.D.**) was determined. He requested data on amounts raised (to date) and disbursements of expenditures making clear the Spirit of his public request for documents were for purposes of clarification and transparency. Davis did not have enough data to be conclusive. If commissioners were not forthcoming/self-explanatory, he respectfully requested making them agenda item(s).

Davis also asked for data on the percentage of overall Lee County disaster relief fund (designated to the County **EMA**) for safe rooms and the status of tornado survivors wrongfully arrested and/or detained for a lack of ID due to the tragedy. Had all been addressed legally via just due process? Is there some discussion of compensating anyone wrongfully detained/impeded during this terrible episode and effort to reduce this happenstance in the future? No reply wasn’t surprising, the Commission has made it clear they don’t answer questions from their ‘subjects’ - for the record this lowly citizen did ask the Commission for comment [12/9 meeting] to reconcile this blatantly different treatment of bureaucrats before writing this column.

Apostle Davis finished his request/questioning on why **black** nonprofit organization survivors endured different scrutiny in comparison to **white** non-profit organizations with respect to receiving adequate funds and supplies or being set as viable station/locations to facilitate their communities. He specifically cited his observations/findings on **Pastor Linda Threat’s Ministry** which appears to be part of a continuing 'pattern and practice' of systematic actions disproportionately burdening black churches and their wellbeing as part of the traveling public especially in rural Lee County - e.g., RR crossing closure harming primary access to **Salem Chapel C.M.E. Church**; returning bond money to developer instead of doing road/safety improvements (mandated by County policy) for **Green Chapel**, etc.

One may reasonably expect action from Montgomery and/or DC given State/federal monies in the mix... that may be a bit foolhardy in Hubbardland or any other county who operates straight from the **ACCA** [Association of County Commissions of Alabama] playbook to protect corrupt commissioners and broker crony contracts to those receiving the funds. Fellow Commission watcher Peter Byrd submitted enough documentation, facts and narrative for Rep. Bandy to agree to investigate malfeasance at ALDoT (disproportionately suffered by mostly black rural citizens/churches in Lee County) a couple months before Mr. Bandy’s terrible vehicle accident/death. Now, Apostle Davis noted recent efforts to impede his ability to get on a Commission meeting’s agenda to obtain further answers and discipline corruption in Lee County. Davis said, "I was told I must go through Judge English’s approval before I’d be placed on the agenda to speak on subject matter possibly exposing him; this seems odd having observed past meetings where any commissioner would add an agenda item independent of the probate judge’s determination or discriminating criteria."

Hard to know what triggers outcomes on the margin, but efforts to reactivate the Lee County Branch of the **NAACP** began December 2019. I pray the **NAACP** will effectively address deleterious and at times **deadly** issues of this sort. All the current (Democrat and Republican) county commissioners have shown beyond a shadow of a doubt holding onto power, crony contracts and increasing their pay/wealth matters more than the safety and general wellbeing of the citizens they take an oath to represent.

This is ‘bidness [sic] as usual’ in Hubbardland County, where a Mayor who doesn’t understand economics continues to shill for his first ‘Gig City’ debacle, politburo members lack the spine and integrity to remove Felon Hubbard nomenclature from a road in their county as their own greed blinds the ability to see their sin in others... It is stomach churning to witness these sycophants slobbering over this felon ‘public servant’ they’ve adored these past years. I’m not surprised clergy, commissioners, councilpersons, mayors, representatives, senators, etc. are willing to make a buck cashing in on the reduced quality of life of others instead of promoting healthy profitable growth; I am surprised so many think it will be OK if the Alabama Supreme Court let’s Hubbard off. It will be similarly disappointing when the US Senate gets Trump off for his wrongdoings, how it will be deemed OK for others to do so... Clearly I’m **not** the norm asserting Biden and Trump have both earned being removed from ever holding any public office again. I see no difference between felon Hubbard’s \$12k/month crony payment from Southeast Gas in Alabama and Hunter Biden’s \$50k/month via Ukrainian corruption. This will not change until those who simply put on their preferred colour jersey and sell their souls to the blue or red demons realize they are doing the bidding of the **same** fallen angel... and even more difficult, actually change their paths toward righteousness away from corruption.



Will the Best Team Win?

Daniel Sutter is the Charles G. Koch Professor of Economics with the Manuel H. Johnson Center for Political Economy at Troy University and host of Econversations on TrojanVision. The opinions expressed in this column are the author’s and do not necessarily reflect the views of Troy University.

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

By Daniel Sutter

The field is set for the college football playoff. Good sportsmanship often involves wishing, “May the best team win!” But the best team does not always win, which illustrates an important element of economics.

Either LSU, Ohio State, Clemson, or Oklahoma will be crowned champion on January 13. I will not prognosticate about the winner. Football fans know that many small things affect a game’s outcome. The football can take funny bounces. Passes can get deflected or dropped. A player can slip. Officials can miss a call.

How much do small, seemingly random things matter? Players can lose concentration and focus, leading to self-doubt and tentative play. Coaches can panic and make bad decisions. Small things can snowball.

Yet the games must be played to determine the best players and teams. Saying that things will be decided on the field means that experts’ judgments do not rule. LSU quarterback Joe Burrow was a 200-1 longshot to win the Heisman Trophy before the season. A stellar season on the field matters, not the prognostications.

The randomness I mean here is not necessarily a roulette wheel determining outcomes. Rather, I mean that if, say, Clemson and Ohio State could hypothetically play ten times, each team might win five games. We could think of the outcome of their game as like flipping a coin.

Small factors also affect economic outcomes. The decisions and actions of people across the globe also influence economic actions. No one can know everything relevant for the success of a business. The many unknowable factors add to the appearance of randomness.

Contemplating a random world can be troubling. We might accept that the football could have bounced differently. But was luck as opposed to hard work and smart decisions really responsible for Amazon’s success? Has Warren Buffet just been amazingly lucky? We might want so say no, but being in the right place

at the right time often matters.

The structure of sports contests suggests that bad breaks might impact business less. A dropped fourth down pass in the final minute might decide a football game. A business has time to respond to unfortunate events like a fire at their factory. Furthermore, momentum seems more significant in sports. Bad luck in the first quarter could break a team’s spirit; a salesperson seems more capable of bouncing back from a couple fruitless calls.

Economists must learn to think of the world in terms of probabilities, especially because of the effects of relevant but dispersed information. With enough information we perhaps would have predicted Amazon’s success in 1997; a wise investor was probably thinking in probabilities.

Randomness complicates analysis and learning. For instance, the winner of a football game is not necessarily the better team. Underdogs sometimes win, and good teams can play poorly. If Ohio State vs. Clemson is like a coin flip, the teams would remain evenly matched regardless of who won a close game.

But dismissing game outcomes as coin flips runs the risk of allowing expert opinion determine the results. If Oklahoma defeats LSU, experts might still consider LSU the better team. Should LSU then play for the title despite losing?

Suppose that a new tech startup is losing money after three years, while a new concept restaurant is amazingly successful. Should the plug be pulled on the tech company and the restaurant expanded into a national chain? Economists like to say that profit and loss answers such questions, but profit also depends on luck.

The challenge is assigning importance to today’s events relative to the past. Mathematics offers a precise formula, Bayes’ Rule, for the world of math problems. We learn that we must revise our beliefs based on today’s events, although exactly how much is often unclear. Alabama finally missed the college football playoff this year; should we then dismiss them as contenders next year? I suspect not.

Fans say that football is life, but it can also illustrate economics. The best team doesn’t always win. This insight helps us to see the world probabilistically, which is indispensable for sound economic thinking.



Ed Jones, Football Writer

That will not change. He battled cancer for years, continuing to coach until he could not stand up. PAT SULLIVAN, dead at the age of 69.



Sullivan, Heisman Trophy winner.

losses to the dominating Crimson Tide. That surely helped. Coach Bryant said on his TV show, “I’ll be glad when that Sullivan boy graduates.”

Pat Sullivan is not the only reason Auburn was such a power in ’69, ’70, ’71. Auburn had some good football players. Terry Beasley was the number one receiver drafted by the NFL in 1972. Dick Smaltz was one of the best possession receivers in the country. Alvin Breshler was a great deep threat at wide receiver opposite of Beasley. He was even faster than Beasley. He just didn’t have Beasley’s agility. Terry is the most famous pass receiver in Auburn history and in the history of Robert E. Lee High School football.

Two other players from Montgomery were outstanding football players. Jimmy Speigner was a tough-as-nails linebacker and his brother, Danny Speigner, was a leader in the offensive line. Both were on the ’66 and ’67 Lanier High School state championship teams. The most amazing player from Montgomery on that team was Spence McCracken. At 5’10” and 200 pounds at best, he was the center and leader of the offensive line on those teams. He also was a star center and linebacker for the great Robert E. Lee teams in ’66 and ’67, who lost only to Lanier’s state championship teams.

Yes, Pat had plenty of help in dominating the headlines during those three years, culminating in his winning the 1971 Heisman Trophy. However, his leadership kept the Tigers from losing their focus on the tasks that lay ahead. The years 1969, ’70, ’71, ’72 were when Alabama and Auburn football was at its zenith in the State of Alabama.

During those glory years, it was evident on and off the field that Pat Sullivan was the leader. He was not a “rah rah” type leader. He was a quiet, gentle leader. He held the team together when the going was tough. Every player looked up to him. Even the coaches were in awe of his skill in running the Auburn offense. If you had to rank the Auburn quarterbacks of all time, you would have to rank Pat Sullivan as number one. That is even considering the great Cam Newton who led the 2010 Tigers to the national championship. Newton was a better athlete. But, Pat Sullivan is the most charismatic name in the history of Auburn football. That’s hard to top.



Bart Starr at Wisconsin.

Just to continue describing Sullivan’s impact on Auburn, I am going to risk drawing attention to another great leader from the State of Alabama. Pat Sullivan was Auburn’s Bart Starr. Starr was the same type of leader. His coaches in college were obviously not as good at recognizing talent as Coach Jordan was. Coach Red Drew probably recognized it in 1952, but didn’t know what to do with it. However, Drew was fired after Bart’s junior year during which Bart was battling injuries the entire time. Bart’s senior year, Coach “Ears” Whitworth did not even recognize Bart’s talent. Bart also sat on the bench in the NFL for a few years at Green Bay, Wisconsin. It took a real football coach in the person of Vince Lombardi, who took control of the Packers in 1958, to recognize what two college coaches and one NFL coach could not see. The references to Bart Starr are important to understanding my observations of Pat Sullivan’s less than successful professional career.

Norm Van Brocklin was the coach at the Atlanta Falcons when the Heisman Trophy winner was drafted by Atlanta in 1972. To understand what happened to Sullivan in Atlanta, one must understand Norm Van Brocklin. Van Brocklin was a great NFL quarterback with the Philadelphia Eagles. What made him a good quarterback probably also made him a terrible football coach. He was a great passer with perfect delivery with the football. He was also cocky and more impressed with himself than most. You can see that his personality would clash with the quietly confident and humble Pat Sullivan. This combination was a disaster for Atlanta and for Sullivan. Van Brocklin did not like Sullivan’s delivery and release of the football, which had earned him the Heisman Trophy. He made the same mistake a lot of professional coaches make. He wanted to change everything about Sullivan’s mechanics. Instead of looking for leadership at the quarterback position, he wanted a precisely mechanical delivery just like his precisely mechanical delivery. “Over coaching” has led to the graveyard for many coaches. This was also Van Brocklin’s problem. “Do it like I do it, not like you do it.” At this point it is important to point out that Norm Van Brocklin did not win the Heisman Trophy.

Pat Sullivan had been a precise passer since 6th grade when he first started playing quarterback. In the 6th grade, it is hard to throw a football very far without making a three-step (back, up, out) procedure out of passing a football. Obviously, he became pretty good at it. Coach Tom Banks at John Carroll High School in Birmingham didn’t try to change him. Coach “Shug” Jordan didn’t try to change him. Van Brocklin spent three years trying to change him. A coach in most cases has to evaluate a player on his ability to lead a team into battle and not worry about the minutia. Sometimes it is just smart to pick the leader, tell him that he is your quarterback, “sic ’em.” That’s what Coach Vince Lombardi did with Bart Starr in 1959. That’s what “Coach” Norm Van Brocklin did not do with Pat Sullivan in 1972. Starr and Sullivan were similar. Bart had a perfect two-step delivery (up and out), but his leadership kept the Green

The Most Charismatic name in Auburn Football History

The views of this editorial may not express the views of The Alabama Gazette.

Bay Packers at the top of the NFL for a decade. Bart spent his NFL career being who he was. Pat spent his short NFL career trying to be what Van Brocklin wanted him to be. Van Brocklin was fired. Sullivan was traded to the San Francisco 49ers to sit on another bench. But, he had company this time. Terry Beasley was with San Francisco at the time of the trade. They were “together again” for a brief moment in time. Then life got in the way.

They went separate ways but both wound up in or around the Birmingham area. In 1984, Pat was asked by a frustrated Pat Dye to come in and run an offense other than the only offense he knew, the wishbone, which he had learned at Alabama. Coach Dye wanted to feature Bo Jackson more than he could out of the wishbone. That was smart on the part of Coach Dye. They agreed on running the triple option out of the “I” formation. That bought Bo Jackson the 1985 Heisman Trophy. That year Auburn called many plays featuring Bo, and all they had to do was say, “sic ’em.”

The best game that Pat Sullivan ever played was not seen by many people. It was my good fortune to have been there. I had been to Huntsville on a Thursday night to scout Huntsville High School when I was coaching at Lanier. I heard about the Auburn freshman team playing the Alabama freshman team on Friday afternoon in Tuscaloosa. So I re-routed myself through Tuscaloosa on the way home instead of going through Birmingham. My high school coach at Robert E. Lee, Tom Jones, was in his first year as Auburn’s freshman coach. I was just curious to see how my old coach would handle this situation. Of course, I had seen Terry Beasley play since he was a running back under Coach Durden Lee at Capitol Heights Junior High School. Tom Banks had become athletic director instead of head coach at John Carroll in 1966, which was Pat Sullivan’s junior year in high school. Being in the same Catholic school system in Montgomery, I spent time with Coach Banks every year. Tom was a player on the infamous Auburn team that beat Alabama in 1949. Tom played center and linebacker on that team. They shocked everybody including me by beating bowl-bound Alabama 14-13.

He and others like quarterback Travis Tidwell were heroes of mine when I was a boy. It was good getting to meet some of these guys later in life, especially Tom Banks. He had told me about this quarterback at John Carroll that was going to be something special. Since I had not seen Pat Sullivan play in high school, I wanted to watch him in this freshman game. I am so glad that I made that decision. I have never seen a player take over a game like young Pat Sullivan did on that day.

During the first half, the Alabama freshmen were making the Auburn freshmen look like high school players. Coach Tom Jones did everything he knew to do but to no avail. The halftime score was 28-0 in favor of Alabama. I was really embarrassed for my old coach. When the second half began, I noticed Coach Jones being somewhat detached from the game. I will never know what went on in the Auburn locker room at the half. But, Pat Sullivan and Terry Beasley put on a clinic that day. Sullivan led Auburn back from 28-0 to win the game 35-28. How many times do you see a team behind 28-0 being down at the half come back and win the game? I have never seen that again. On the way home, I knew Auburn football was in good hands.

When Sullivan and Beasley were seniors in high school. I went to the state track meet in Auburn. Beasley stole the show, winning five medals, leading Robert E. Lee to the state championship. I was sitting in the stands with a few coaches, including Coach Gene Lorendo, the Auburn offensive coordinator. I said, “Coach, do you think you can coach that Beasley kid?”

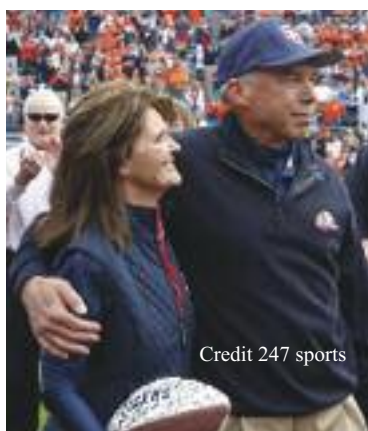
Without hesitation, he said, “I’m gonna split Beasley to one side and Breshler to the other, and tell Sullivan to throw it as far as he can.” You know, that is almost exactly what Auburn did for the next three seasons. It was like Disneyland at Auburn.

Pat Sullivan did a lot of good for people, especially teammates. His accomplishments were many. In addition to playing professional football, he was head coach at TCU, color commentator with the great Jim Fyffe for years on the Auburn Football Network, business man. A few years prior to being named head coach at Samford, he learned that he had cancer of the throat. While this obviously changed Pat’s future in a dramatic way, he continued to coach until 2014. In December of this past year, he was gone.

I was fortunate to be with Pat Sullivan on a number of occasions. The first was when Jim Fyffe asked me to come to the Auburn Spring Game that was to be Pat’s first try at doing the radio color with Jim. I had worked high school games with Jim for years. We also worked three Division III national championships. My job was to show Pat how we did the broadcasts. It was obvious very quickly that Pat didn’t need much help. He had that “it factor” that we hear so much about. You could drop Pat out of a plane with a parachute on over the Mojave Desert and he would find a way to succeed.

Talking football with Pat was like talking to the little brother I never had. We disagreed on the hurry-up spread offense. He was probably right. We disagreed on some high school prospects here in Montgomery. He was probably right.

Pat Sullivan was always a gentleman. He seemed to fit in anywhere. Why not? He is the most charismatic name in Auburn football history!



Sullivan and wife, Jean.

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Community Lifestyles







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Soul Searching

Remembering...

I read about an enlisted soldier who was walking along a Bavarian road. World War I was over. Germany was defeated and devastated. The land around him was scorched by the destruction of war. This little fellow decided to end it all. With the Fatherland finished, what was the point of living?

He came to a river, and he looked over a bridge railing to the icy waters down below. He decided to jump. He looked around again, and saw people aimlessly wandering about trying to find what was left of their homes. They were hungry. They were cold, and they were dressed in rags. He looked again at the water, and he observed only one person in the area. There was an old man fishing.

He jumped, and upon hitting the water he was knocked into unconsciousness. When he came to and regained consciousness, he found himself in a warm home drinking hot soup. The old man, the fisherman, said to him, “Drink this! I saw you fall, and I was barely able to save you...but I did. I understand you are heading for Munich. I can help you get a place there, for I have a friend.

The fisherman took the soldier’s identification card, penned a note, and then he dated it December 21, 1918. The note simply said...

Dear Benjamin,
As a favor to me, would you give food and lodging to this young man until he can find work?
His name is Corporal Adolph Hitler.
Your Friend,
Israel Cohen

Apparently, Hitler forgot the kindness of that old man...who was Jewish.


In this world in which we live, it is easy to forget the kindness and love of others!

That is why God sent His Son into the world – to help us remember the kindness and love of God towards us!

And what is it that we are to remember?

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” - Jesus, John 3:16

“The Son of God became the Son of Man to enable the sons of men to become the sons of God.”-C.S. Lewis
Mere Christianity



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Retired Salvation Army officer Commissioner Keith Banks “Contentment”

Retired Salvation Army officer Commissioner Keith Banks reads his collection of poetry, *Contentment*, in a powerful and engaging way for a new audio download from SP&S Tunes. Having most recently served as a chaplain at Glasgow Airport, the author has crafted verse that is accessible and meaningful. Many of the poems feature complementary music arranged or composed by eminent Salvation Army musician Gary Rose. This can be found online at: <https://www.salvationarmy.org/ihq/news/inf131219>



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By Dr. Martha Poole Simmons

Honoring Our Heros

Romay Catherine Davis: 100

Romay Catherine Davis served two years and four months in the Women’s Army Corps (WACS) during World War II. She was born October 29, 1919, to her parents, Fairfax and Catherine Johnson, in Prince George County, VA, where she finished the 7th grade followed by education in Camden, NJ, attendance at Harren High School in New York City and graduation from Dumbar High School in Washington, D.C. After graduation, Davis worked for a year in the U. S. Treasury Dept. operating presses where U. S. currency was printed.



Her brothers served in the military, and Davis carried on the tradition set by her siblings by volunteering to serve in the WACS. Her induction was at Camp Dodge in Des Moines, IA, in August, 1943, and from there Davis went to Camp Breckinridge, an Army troop-training facility in KY. Davis worked in the postal

service, but she also served as a driver for officers. She sailed to Europe on the Ile de France, a French ocean liner, which was a remarkable sea-going experience for her landing at Le Harve, France, then continuing onto Paris for two years where she served in the motor pool. In Paris, she made friends with a family where one child taught her to draw although she had always been creative. Her last assignment was in Birmingham, England, for almost one year completing her military service in December, 1945.

Davis lived in Ecuador, South America, for 19 months and moved to New York City where she lived 1948-1983. She studied fashion design at the Traphagen School of Design in NYC, and for 30 years she worked in fashion design for Glen of Michigan, a popular children’s wear clothing company, retiring in 1983. Davis had a unique eye for color and design, and she enjoyed those years of her life. While in Manhattan, she also earned a B.S. Degree and a Master’s Degree in Educational Child Care from New York University in 1981.

Davis was married to Jerry Davis, a retired Army Master Sergeant, for over 40 years, and they enjoyed traveling. After retirement, they moved to Alabama which was his home. Davis worked in real estate in Montgomery, AL, for a while. Since 1999, Davis has worked at two Montgomery Winn Dixie grocery stores where she organizes and cleans shelves. She has been active in churches where she has sung in choirs.

Davis concludes about her military service saying, “It was a duty as far as I was concerned. All five of my brothers went into service, and I thought I could be of support to them. I was part of something that to which I could contribute. I volunteered with the Red Cross in a hospital when I was a teenager, and I wanted to help somebody. The way that I think about it is that America is my home. It is all that I have. When I compare other countries that I have lived in, I prefer America. We have so much more than many people have.”

She attributes her reaching 100 years of age to her having a good family, being honest and taking care of herself. She recalls growing up in a rural area with her grandparents living nearby where she and her five brothers could run around and eat from fruit from orchards, berries and other produce grown on the farm.

James Vernon Godfrey: 99

James Vernon Godfrey served for three years as a payroll clerk in the U. S. Army in England, France, and Germany during WWII. He received the following medals: Army of Occupation Medal, The European-Africa-Middle East Service Medal, the WWII Victory Medal and the Good Conduct Medal.



Godfrey was born September 2, 1920 in Society Hill, AL, in Macon County to his parents, Claude and Minnie Godfrey. Godfrey attended schools in Tuskegee, AL, and graduated from Tuskegee High School in 1938. He completed bookkeeping courses at Massey Draughon Business College in Montgomery, AL. He was employed by Southern Farmer publishing company

1941-1943. During this time of employment, Godfrey was the office manager, prepared payroll for employees, hired and discharged employees, coordinated work of various departments, made purchase of printing supplies and equipment as needed, prepared collection statements and kept records of credit accounts and collections, handled correspondence, filed and made out reports, sold advertisement by direct correspondence and through agencies and handled advertising accounts.

Godfrey’s military service began when he was inducted into the U. S. Army April 3, 1943, at the rank of Private. He completed three months of Basic Training at Fort Barker, TX, including five weeks of training as a clerk typist before being deployed to England. This training included instruction in the basic principles of general Army administration, records and procedures. Special emphasis was put on preparing, distributing and filing military correspondence, special orders and clerical reports. A minimum typing speed of 25 words per minute was required of graduates. During his military service, he worked for five months as a clerk-typist at the rank of Tec 5, 16 months as a General Clerk at the rank of Sergeant and six months at the rank of Tech Sergeant in general administration. When WWII ended in Europe and in Japan, Godfrey was honorably discharged at Ft. McPherson, Atlanta, GA, April 24, 1946.

After discharge, Godfrey was employed by the Southeastern Publishing Company. He was also employed as a bookkeeper at the Record Shop and Cohens Co. in Montgomery, AL. He was married to Martha Mae Sellers, and they had two children, two grandchildren and four great-grandchildren including one set of twins.

When reflecting upon what his military service during WWII has meant to him, he says, “I enjoyed serving my country. I hated to leave my girlfriend.” He attributes reaching the advanced age of ninety-nine years to his taking long walks with his poodle and riding his bicycle until he reached 88 years of age.



We Thank You for Your Service!



Sgt. Joseph Collins: 99

Sgt. Joseph Collins was born January 11, 1920, in the Welona community of Coosa County, AL, and except for the four years that he served with the United States Army Air Force during WWII, he has lived in Rockford, AL, in Coosa County. His parents were William Milton Collins and Jessie Virginia Allison.



Collins attended grammar school in the Richville community and graduated from the Rockford High School living on a farm until he was drafted along with 35 others to serve in the U. S. Army Air Force. On February 14, 1942, he was inducted at Ft. McPherson, a U. S. Army Air Force Base in Atlanta, GA. Then he was sent to Keesler Field in Biloxi, MS, Army Air Force Field in Charlotte, N.C., Army Air Force Base in Meridian, MS, Camp Shelby Army Air Corps Base in Hattiesburg, MS, and then to Camp Kilmer, N.J., an Army staging area. At New York City, Collins embarked on a ship carrying 5500 military personnel with a destination for Glasgow, Scotland, arriving January 15, 1943. He worked

at an airfield, at Polebrook, England, from which the U.S. Army Air Force carried out its heavy bombing group with the Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress. Collins served with the 351st Bombardment Group and spent WWII servicing 45 American planes such as the B-17 with 2800 gallons of gasoline preparing them for combat flights on the German occupied countries of Europe. When WWII ended, Collins sailed back to the U.S.A. from Le Havre, France, and was discharged December 7, 1945, at Ft. McPherson, GA, and four Coosa County, AL, discharged G.I.’s pooled their money and paid a man \$50.00 to bring them home.

After discharge, Collins resumed working on a farm, cutting timber and raising cattle. He worked as a distributor for the Carter Co., a go-cart company, whose products were manufactured in Brundidge, AL, delivering them in Georgia. Collins has served for 45 years as a supervisor for Coosa County Soil and Water Conservation which distributes federal money for conservation projects and is committed to conserving Alabama’s natural resources by connecting those who use and work the land to the education, technical know-how and resources that they need. Collins was also involved working with the schools creating greenhouses and providing conservation information. He and his wife, Elizabeth Hanna, have been married 59 years. Although they do not have children of their own, they have close relationships with friends whose children view them as special parents too. Collins has been an active, faithful member of the Providence Baptist Church. He has enjoyed fox and squirrel hunting.

Collins reflects upon his military service saying, “On May 8, 1945, on the day that the war in Europe ended, he flew over the heavily damaged areas. Being in the military meant that you got to travel a lot. I got to meet people from almost every state in the union, learn more about how they lived compared to us and learn how to get along with them. I got to wade in the Mediterranean Sea near Marseille, France, after the war was over when we went there to close a base. I got to see cities in Scotland such as Dundee as well as lakes such as Loch Lomond. Back then everything was a secret. Today people are told how many troops are sent to war.” Today Collins continues his interest in the U.S. Air Force as each quarter he reads the 8th Air Force News.

Honoring Our Heros

Atwood Bullock Rush: 97

Atwood Bullock Ruch is a 97 year-old valiant WWII veteran who served November 11, 1943, until May 28th, 1946, in the U. S. Army 79th Infantry Division in combat in France, Belgium and Germany. His assignment was calculating the coordinates for the ordinance to be fired. He received the following awards and medals: Silver Star awarded for Gallantry in Action, American Defense Medal with four campaign stars, Armed Forces Expedi-



tionary Medal, World War II Victory Medal, Europe Africa Middle East Medal and four Over Seas Bars which were given every six months for overseas duty for a total of two years.

Rush was born in Tuskegee, AL, to his parents James Rivers Rush and Annie Judkins, November 10, 1922. He attended schools in Tuskegee for 12 years and graduated from Tuskegee High School before enrolling at Auburn University (Alabama Polytechnic Institute) where his ROTC class was enrolled in the Army Reserves, and instead of being drafted, the entire ROTC class was called up to Fort McPherson in Atlanta for induction in 1943. Rush rode on a train to Fort Sill, OK, standing up almost the entire time because of the over crowding of the train that was filled with young recruits. He reported to the 79th Division, 312th Field Artillery Battalion (FA, BN) for 17 weeks in OCS completing his training at the rank of 2nd Lieutenant. Rush reported to duty in Salina, KS, where he was told, “Learn what you can, observe, do nothing, stay out of the way and don’t screw up!” Rush was sent to the Battery which provided an extra four weeks of OCS which paid off as he spent time on firing problems.

When it was time for his deployment for combat in Europe, his commanding officer told him, “Make out your will and power of attorney and get ready to go overseas. I need cannon fodder that can shoot!” Rush sailed with a long convoy protected by sub chasers and destroyers from Boston to England. Arriving at Gourrock, Scotland, he was sent for a few months to Leek (Stoke on Trent), England. His unit bivouacked several days before D-Day in a staging area in southern England. His unit landed D-Day plus eight days at Utah Beach on a Landing Ship Tank (LST). Rush served with C Battery, and on his first day in combat near Cherbourg, France, he served as the Forward Observer with the

artillery telling the men where to shoot. Many of the infantry riflemen and replacements were hit and evacuated; but Rush survived combat without injuries. Crossing among hedgerows, communications were difficult as often the wires to the radios were severed making it impossible to string wires and to keep them working. Whenever it came almost impossible to communicate, Rush was told to use relay stations, vehicles, and cub planes with whatever was needed for setting the coordinates so that the armaments from the 155 mm Gun M1 could hit their targets. These weapons were so heavy that it took two men to pick them up and load them. By July, his division had experienced tremendous casualties. Conditions were miserable in the wet and cold of the fall as they traveled through forests. He recalls having one five minute shower during all the many weeks of combat, and most of his meals consisted of eating C-rations, a canned wet ration and K-rations for relieving hunger and sustaining energy. One gun position was his passing through the Saverne Gap adjacent to the Rhine River in November. During the trek through France, his unit was entertained by the Bing Crosby USO in a warehouse in Charmes, France. It was very cold with snow everywhere, and the roads were like a sheet of ice. He used a church steeple to view a battle scene in Haguenau, France, although his steeple was the only one not destroyed by the Germans. Rush became Battery Executive Officer after which the 79th Division was transferred to the 9th Army. His unit crossed the Rhine River and entered Germany near the Siegfried Line about the middle of December.

When WWII ended in Europe May 7, 1945, Rush’s unit was switched to Military Government guarding a large Russian POW camp in Cheb, Czechoslovakia. The unit was then sent to Tent City in Germany to train and to redeploy to the Pacific Theater to fight the Japanese; however after two Atomic Bombs were dropped on Japan, the Japanese surrendered August 15, 1945. Working with the Red Cross and the U. S. Army Military Government, he escorted displaced persons on a 50 car train to various towns in Czechoslovakia. His military duties were reaching an end. Taking a long train ride, he traveled to La Hague, France, where he caught a freighter back to New York City. Arriving at Camp Kilmer, NJ, he traveled via train to Ft. McPherson in Atlanta, GA, where he was discharged.

After discharge, he returned to Auburn, AL, where his parents then lived and resumed his collegiate studies at API graduating in 1946 with a B.S. Degree in Business. He worked for a while in a clothing store owned by his father until it was sold. Rush worked in sales and marketing for the AL Gas Company in Montgomery, AL, for many years followed by a few years in real estate until he retired at age 65. Rush was an active member of the First United Methodist Church of Montgomery, and he served as a volunteer with Meals on Wheels delivering meals to elderly. He and his wife, Margaret Meriwhether, were married more than 60 years until she passed, and they had two children, five grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

When reflecting upon his combat service, Rush says, “I thought that I was doing a pretty good job. If they gave us decent maps, I could give them the correct coordinates for firing the ordinance. When you go in as a second lieutenant, you go in and get bad jobs, and I guess that I got every bad job. One of the soldiers that I worked with was injured, but I could never find him in the hospital. I was not particularly afraid because I didn’t have time to be afraid. As a rule, we were trying to take our objective. I remember my commander telling us that we wanted to win this war so we could all go home. I did my job to make sure the coordinates were correct.”



Daniel Simms Alexander: 80

Chief Warrant Officer Daniel S. Alexander is a valiant U. S. Army veteran of over 26 years who served two tours to Vietnam, to Fairbanks, Alaska, which was considered an overseas assignment and three deployments to other overseas assignments including Vicenza, Italy, Ludwigsburg, Germany and Okinawa, and one TDY to Eniwetok Atoll. He is a highly decorated veteran who received the Legion of Merit which is given for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the



performance of outstanding service and achievement, the Bronze Star with cluster, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Commendation Medal with two clusters, the Good Conduct Medal with two knots, the National Defense Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal with six stars, the Humanitarian Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon with the numeral three, the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, the Meritorious Unit Commendation, the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm, the Expert Marksmanship Badge with tab Rifle and the Mechanic Badge with tab Mechanic.

Alexander was born November 22, 1939, to his parents, John Henry Alexander and Dorothy Virginia Alexander, in Charleston, WV, and he was reared near Charleston in St. Albans. He married Deanna Sue Thomas while he volunteered and enlisted in the U. S. Army in May, 1957, starting at the rank of Private. He worked as a mechanic on vehicles and construction projects needed by the Army’s Corps of Engineers after receiving such training at Ft. Belvoir, VA. After completing Basic Training at Ft. Benning, GA, he went to Vicenza, Italy, for 2.5 years, to Sierra Vista, AZ, for 16 months, to Ft. Belvoir, VA, to serve as an instructor in the mechanic’s school for 10 months, to Ft. Wainwright, Fairbanks, Alaska, for almost four years, to Ft. Carson, Colorado Springs, CO for 1.5 years where he received his appointment of Warrant Office One, then to schools for four months of Officer Training before deployment to Vietnam for one year for Tour I, to the Presidio at San Francisco, CA, for six months, to the Proving Grounds at Aberdeen, MD, for 16 months and to Vietnam for 11 months for Tour Two. His entire career was with the Corp of Engineers.

Returning from Vietnam, Alexander earned an Associate Degree in Mechanical Engineering at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, OK. After completion of that education, Alexander was sent to Ludwigsburg, Germany, for 3.5 years, to Ft. Rucker, Enterprise, AL for the Senior Warrant Course remaining there 2.3 years including a TDY to Eniwetok Atoll for the cleanup of past atomic weapons testing there, and Okinawa where he was in charge of all equipment for the fuel depot of all branches of service coming onto the island, for two years, to Ft. Sill, OK, for 2.5 years where he retired from service July 31, 1983, at the rank of Chief Warrant Officer (W-4).

Alexander reflecting on his first tour in Vietnam, he said, “I was a professional soldier. No questions were asked. That was my job.” Returning to the States from his first tour, he volunteered for Body Escort accompanying the bodies of deceased Army personnel to their hometowns for funerals. He was in charge of eight men in his mechanics unit his first tour and 21 his second tour in Vietnam, and he never lost a man. He was sent to the central highlands of Vietnam to work with the transfer of military equipment to the Vietnamese. While there, he became friends with the Montagnards, an indigenous people in the mountainous assisting them by providing them with water and gasoline. After his second R. & R. during his second tour, the American Red Cross assisted in his getting home for his mother’s funeral.

Returning to the U.S.A. from Vietnam tours, he encountered much disrespect from people in airports. Today, Alexander’s health has been affected adversely resulting from his exposure to Agent Orange during two Vietnam tours and to atomic weapons residue during his TDY to Eniwetok Atoll where the first hydrogen bomb was tested in 1952 and where 43 nuclear tests were conducted, yet he remains steadfastly loyal to the Army and the United States of America in spite of his current conditions.

After military retirement, Alexander worked with the Woods Psychiatric Institute in Abilene, TX, providing management of its facilities for seven years, and he worked assisting veterans to find employment through the Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs in Hope, for nine years. He returned to Abilene, TX, where he completed a B.A. Degree in History at Abilene Christian University. His oldest daughter was his History Advisor and taught all his core history classes, and he worked part time in the University’s library. He presented lectures about Vietnam at this institution as well as at a community college in Minnesota where his daughter presently is a professor.

Alexander and Deanna have been married almost 63 years, and they have five children, eight grandchildren, three step-grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren and five step great-grandchildren. Since his final retirement in 2005, they have enjoyed traveling the U.S. and overseas and visiting their children. His hobby was coin collecting, and he has just sold a large collection. Alexander is a keen student of history and is a voracious reader. They have written the book, Children Do You Remember When, which is a detailed record of their lives and is dedicated to their grandchildren to let them know how their parents and grandparents lived and how they grew up together. The Alexander family has a rich patriotic history with four generations of men serving in the U. S. Army including his father, his son and his grandson who is an Air Borne Ranger plus one son retired from the Air Force. Influenced by his wife, he has grown in his Christian faith serving in the Church of Christ as a lay minister conducting worship services wherever he was stationed.

Patriotic Ceremony for Veteran’s Funerals



- Veterans are entitled to a patriotic ceremony at their funerals.
- Families should take a copy of the veteran’s DD214 discharge papers to the funeral home and ask for an honor guard to conduct a flag ceremony.
- Although the funeral home can arrange for the honor guard to include a bugler to play “Taps”, that bugler may bring a bugle and play a tape recording.
- To arrange for a “live bugler”, contact Raymond Keel, a veteran who attend veterans’ funerals and plays “Taps” live.
- Call him at 334-233-8736. He is the Assistant Director of the organization, Bugles Across America for Alabama.
- Go to this web site: <https://www.buglesacrossamerica.org> and fill out the form for requesting a live bugler providing the date, location and time of the internment.
- There is no charge for the military honor guard or for the live bugler.



Raymond Keel, Bugler

Raymond Keel is a veteran who plays “Taps” at funerals of veterans. His voluntary service has been given already at over 300 graveside funerals of veterans. Since 2012, he has been an active member of the organization, Bugles Across America whose mission is to provide a “Live” not recorded bugler for the sounding of Taps at the closure ceremony for every veteran and other appropriate occasions. In May 2019, he was selected and accepted to the position of Alabama State Assistant Director for Bugles Across America. His duties will include playing Taps for Veterans’ funerals and other appropriate occasions, assisting the State Director by monitoring all bugle requests in the State of Alabama and recruiting new buglers. Keel states, “All veterans deserve the highest honor that can be given to them at the close of their lives and to their families. Veterans are entitled to have a real live bugler playing Taps from the heart and not from a recording. There is something about Taps being played by a real person; it does something to a person’s heart and soul that cannot be explained that a recording cannot do. I feel very honored, privileged and blessed to serve our veterans in this way for their service they gave of themselves for their God, country and fellow Americans.”

Keel was born July 9, 1946, in Memphis, TN to his parents, Elbert Leon Keel Sr. and Verbel M. McCrory. He graduated from Selmer High School in Selmer, TN. After graduation, he enlisted in the U.S. Army as a musician to play trumpet. After completing Basic Training at Ft. Campbell, KY., he attended the United States Naval School of Music in Little Creek, VA. He was hoping to be commissioned as a band director, which was his lifelong dream. Unfortunately, he was given a medical drop because his hearing was damaged in Basic Training on the rifle range. Keel then attended Supply School at Ft. Lee, VA, and after completing the training, he served in Germany one year and in Vietnam one year in Supply ordering parts for Hawk missiles. After three years of service in the Army, he was honorably discharged with the rank of E-6. He obtained employment with the Civil Service at the Army Depot in Memphis, TN. He used the G.I. Bill going to school at night to obtain a degree in Applied Science in

Engineering and Building Construction at the State Technical Institute at Memphis, TN. Graduating with high honors, Keel was on the Dean’s List several times. He joined the U.S. Naval Reserve in the SEABEES at the Naval Air Station at Millington, TN.

He transferred his Civil Service employment to Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, AL, where he worked in the Civil Engineering Department in the area of plumbing, heating, air conditioning and as a construction inspector retiring with over 28 years of service. He also transferred from the U. S. Naval Reserves to the 908th Air Force Reserves at Maxwell Air Force Base and retired with over 20 years of combined military service in the Army, Navy and Air Force.

Keel has been married to his wife, Martha Ann, for 51 years, and they have three children, five grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Because of his musical talent of playing the trumpet and French horn, which he learned during high school, he has played in Montgomery’s Capitol Sounds Concert Band, the Prattville Pops Concert Band and several other bands in musical programs.

Information about arranging for a deceased veteran to have “Taps” played by a bugler can be found at: <https://www.buglesacrossamerica.org> There is no charge for this service to veterans.



Wreaths Across America State House Ceremony

(Left picture) The Bessemer Civil Air Patrol Color Guard, Dr. Martha Poole Simmons, and Raymond Keel. He played Taps at the end of the ceremony.
(Below) Wreath placed in the rotunda.



Helen Lattal: WWII WAC Celebrated 100th Birthday

Helen Lattal, a WWII WAC (Women’s Army Corps), celebrated her 100th birthday on December 28th. Montgomery Mayor Steven Reed issued a special resolution declaring December 28, 2019, Helen Lattal Day in Montgomery.

Helen served as the administrative secretary and courier for American military leaders who were conducting WWII from a military base in England. After the War, she served three terms as the Commander of American Legion Post 20 and was named the American Red Cross Volunteer of the Year in Selma, AL.



Helen Lattal happily accepts the resolution presented by Dr. Martha Poole Simmons.



Chef David Spooner *Retired Chef*

*Volunteer Fireman,
Lowndesboro V.F.D.
St. Paul's Episcopal
Church, Lowndesboro
Board of Registrars,
Lowndes County*

Southern Cuisine



In past articles of the Alabama Gazette I gave a preview of what to expect in future articles. I commented about recipes in old cookbooks. The use of real ingredients not hydrogenated this and artificial sweetened that, but ingredients that were simple, fresh and raised or grown as close to home as possible. The recipes from these cookbooks used fresh sweet milk and heavy cream, real butter, bacon drippings, lots of eggs and lard. Also, the recipes called for ingredients that you can make at home cheaper and healthier than buying them in a store. I have said that peanut butter, mayonnaise, applesauce, hummus and pesto can be made at home with a good food processor. Granola needs a sheet pan, a bowl and a list of your favorite fruits and nuts.

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Even though you can make every meal from scratch, there are some items that I listed in earlier articles that also define the South. Go to a store in Montgomery and find Wickles, Barber's Buttermilk, White Lily Flour, Kelley sausage, Red Diamond Tea, Golden Flake chips and DUKE'S, my favorite mayonnaise. Don't forget to Think Alabama, Buy Local!

I am periodically asked about the topic for my next article. With what you have just read, it can be about anything. My standard remark is that I am not sure until I seriously sit down and write the article. I always have some ideas for a topic, from watching TV cooking shows, reading food blogs and the myriad of e-mails I get from food related websites. This time of year many food bloggers seem to have the same writer's block as I have and the old standby is to write about leftovers. But I am not writing just about the leftovers from a single meal such as Thanksgiving. Starting with Labor day, we have leftover BBQ and since Veteran's Day is the designated day for us to make the dressing for Thanksgiving, we have leftover chopped vegetables. From Thanksgiving and

Christmas there is the leftover turkey and fixins'. New Year's Day leaves black-eyed peas and with the leftovers from parties and potlucks during the year, my freezer "hath runneth over!"

I am one step ahead though, because I already portioned the leftovers. I do not have a turkey carcass or a pork butt the size of a bowling ball in the freezer. I packaged the pulled pork into ¾ pounds units. I made a stock from the turkey and added mirepoix, which is usually leftover salad ingredients. The leftover side vegetables are bagged up and in the freezer. I do this at least a day or two after the meals that produced all of the leftovers. So after New Year's Day, I have the makings of all sort of meals from my favorite breakfast tacos to stuffed Pork Loin.

So you are expecting recipes using my leftovers. Since they are my leftovers, you may not have the same ingredients that I have on hand. And since I am sitting in my living room and it is getting colder outside and thus colder inside, I am craving a hot soup. And my favorite hot soup is Chicken Tortilla. Very flavorful, has good presentation and can be made as spicy as you want. There are as many favorite tortilla soup recipes as there are favorite recipes for tuna salad. Use what you have and make it your way. This is what I have for this recipe and this is how I make it. Other variations for this soup is to add black beans and crumbled farmers cheese.

CHICKEN TORTILLA SOUP

Yield: serves 4 to 6

INGREDIENTS:

3 tablespoons vegetable oil
4 corn tortillas, cut in long strips, fried crisp, used as garnish, see note.
8 garlic cloves, peeled and minced
2 cups minced onion
4 cups tomato puree
1 tablespoon minced chipotle in adobo
1 or 2 jalapenos depending on taste, seeded and chopped fine
1 tablespoon ground cumin
2 tablespoons chopped cilantro
1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 bay leaf
1 ½ quarts chicken stock
salt to taste

GARNISH:

cooked chicken boneless and skinless, cut into strips
1 ½ cups shredded cheddar cheese
Fresh cilantro
Lime wedges for garnish
Chopped avocado if available
Note: tortilla strips can be substituted with your favorite corn chips



METHOD:

1. In large pot, heat oil and saute the garlic and onion until soft and aromatic.
2. Add tomato puree, jalapenos, cumin, cilantro, coriander, bay leaf and chicken stock.
3. Bring to boil and then simmer for 35 minutes.
4. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
5. Ladle soup into bowls and garnish with chicken, avocado, shredded cheese and crisp tortilla strips and cilantro. Serve.

BASIC GUMBO

Since the next recipe is a Creole specialty there is a rule of what you do first. First you make the roux! This step is strictly a personal one. Mix the same amount of oil and flour, at least ¾ cup each, in a heavy saucepan on medium heat, stir frequently to keep from burning the flour. When you stop depends on how dark you want your roux. You want to cook the flour taste out so you should cook the roux until there is some color. Anywhere from tan to mahogany will do.

Yield: serves 6

INGREDIENTS:

¾ cup oil
¾ cup flour
2 onions, chopped
3 tablespoons butter
4 cups frozen cut okra thawed
2 to 3 cans Rotel tomatoes, depending on taste
2 green bell peppers, chopped
1 ½ cups chopped celery
4 cloves garlic, minced
2 tablespoons butter
¼ teaspoon dried thyme
chopped green onions

File powder

2 quarts chicken stock
or fish stock (if you can find it or make it)
Hot cooked rice.



METHOD:

1. In a wide pot, sauté the onion in butter until soft, about five minutes.
2. Stir in the okra and sauté an additional 3 to five minutes.
3. Stir in the tomatoes, bell peppers and celery and simmer 20 to 30 minutes.
4. Add remaining ingredients except file powder and rice and simmer covered for about an hour stirring frequently. Simmer until liquid has thickened.
5. Add whatever meats you have, shrimp, chicken, sausage, oysters, or fish fillets. Simmer an additional 15 minutes.
6. Ladle into serving bowls, top with scoop of rice. Garnish with green onions. Sprinkle with file powder.

New Year's thought: I just do not want to look back and think "I could have eaten that."

JANUARY, 2020

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month of
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Steak Fingers
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2 sides @ \$12.99

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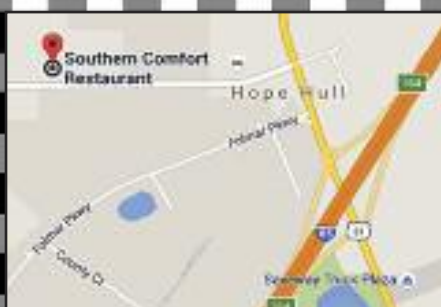
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Patricia Killough
Community Editor

Home Town Community News

Happy New Year!
We look forward to this next year and receiving your community news, birthdays and anniversaries!

Please send Patricia your family birthdays, anniversaries and weddings to alabamagazette@gmail.com

The Alabama Gazette will make every effort to include your submissions as space permits.

A Season for Giving! \$1,000

Alabama Gazette Publishing, LLC was very pleased to be able to again present several deserving people with \$100 cash this Christmas season!



While we couldn't give everyone who was nominated a gift, we appreciate everyone's thoughts and times for others who deserved some extra Christmas spirit this year.



We hope everyone has a blessed and prosperous New Year!

One of the recipients this year was Linda Hood. Sadly, her home burned down during the holidays with one life lost and two burn victims. Ms. Hood is now living with three other family members in a camper the Walsboro community north of Wetumpka. A gift of \$100 in cash was given to Linda by the Alabama Gazette, and Dr. Martha Poole Simmons was glad to present it to her in person.

Cindy Fanning was a surprised recipient, and very happy to be blessed this season. Her sister nominated Cindy because "she is the sweetest most unselfish person I know." Whenever anyone needs her help, she steps forward without asking.



Gazette staff members were honored to meet Cindy, her sister and other family members when they visited the office to receive the Christmas cash. (Cindy is pictured left, and above with her sister)

January Birthdays



- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 Steve Campbell | Hayden Kelly |
| 2 Butch Metcalf | John McClelland |
| 3 Velita McFarland (92nd) | Ester Covington |
| 4 Ben Davis | 16 Richard Bennett (96th) |
| 5 Morgan Boone | Ann Takacs |
| 6 Jerry Glen Wheat (82nd) | 17 Randy Childs |
| 7 Jan Johnson | Toni Grimes |
| 8 Barbara Harrington | Charlene McClanahan |
| 9 Linda Perdue (65th) | Bill Northington |
| 10 Obie Russell (105th) | 18 Carly Madison Ellis |
| 11 Esther Varon (91st) | Joshua C. Kyser (8th) |
| 12 Judy Norman | Joy Fleming |
| 13 Jackson Rice | Leslie Garvin |
| 14 Elizabeth Robison | Laura Hester |
| 15 Nicole Windham | Johnny Hassett |
| 16 Will Woodall | Roy McInnis (97th) |
| 17 Tim Pierce | 19 Kaybee Hobbs |
| 18 Danny Bush | Gina Hunt |
| 19 Joshua Nix (21st) | Connie Bush |
| 20 Betty Chesnutt (94th) | Sammy Turner |
| 21 Sam Cassels | Caleb Campbell |
| 22 Burks Crane | Dr. Charles Cloutier |
| 23 Marilyn Evans | Taylor Campbell |
| 24 Mary Ellen Millis | Alyssa Spivey |
| 25 Scott Mills | Randy Kelly |
| 26 Trey Norris | 21 Tonya Cooley |
| 27 Gwen Pearson (91st) | Cory Griffin |
| 28 Sarah Morgan Smith (16th) | Jane Russell |
| 29 Blake Webb | Julio Vazquez |
| 30 Brett Tolerson | Elizabeth Phibbs |
| 31 Edna Hargrove | 22 Kayla Cook |
| Bobby Mills | Jonathan Aplin |
| Brittany Mitchell | Tim Wilsford |
| Megan St. Clair Stewart | 23 Pam Higgins |
| Guy Newell Vaughn (94th) | Jason Selvage |
| 11 Jim Aro | Ridge Newell |
| 12 Joseph Collins (100th) | Bernice Bryant |
| Liz Klauss | 24 Donna Gail Andersen |
| Sue Woodall (80th) | Tina Campbell |
| 13 Corey Campbell | Anne Pinkston |
| 14 Carson Lane Abbott | 25 Katie Scarlett Boyd (10th) |
| Liz Braswell | Susan Crawford |
| Brenda Moseley | Mary Beth Wadsden |
| Clarice Caldwell | Ellen Robbins |
| James Barton | 26 Mary Price |
| 13 Theresa Henderson | Mack Terrell |
| Shirley Kirksey Jones | 27 Sophie Boyd |
| T. J. Mills | 28 Baleigh Windham |
| Bob Maddox | Darrell Self |
| Joe Thomas (92nd) | 29 Kim Kelley |
| 14 Tiffany Andrews | 30 Wanda Horsley |
| John Black | Betty Jones |
| Robert C. Cerha (73rd) | Doris Miller |
| John T. Killough (71st) | Betty Ann Russell |
| Doug Young | 31 Will Garrett |
| 15 Jennifer Williams | Hannah Johnson |

Gazette's Sympathy to the families of...

Barker, Paula Roberts (56)died November 30, 2019
Forby, John Larkin (81)died November 30, 2019
Sullivan, Pat (69)died December 1, 2019
Owen, Stuart Tucker (54)died December 1, 2019
McLemore, Jr, Price Chrenleigh (75)died December 5, 2019
Spears, Ann E. Pettis (90)died December 5, 2019
Paravicini, Ada Wesson (92)died December 6, 2019
Zaparyniuk, John Michael "Zap" (90)died December 6, 2019
McDill, Charles Jerome "Charlie" (70)died December 7, 2019
Reinhart, Clela Caroline Parkerdied December 8, 2019
Fleming, Jr., Marcus Neil (18)died December 10, 2019
Nicrosi, Harold Bowman (90)died December 10, 2019
Rials, Robert (65)died December 10, 2019
Barkley, Ernest Anthony "Tony" (84)died December 13, 2019
Bass, Aubrey Layne (40 days)died December 14, 2019
Tylicki, Anita Hudson (64)died December 14, 2019
Smith, Jessie (94)died December 26, 2019
Cauthen, H.E. "Sonny" (71)died December 28, 2019

Happy Anniversary

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| January 1 John & Greatha Findley (72nd) | January 18 Raymond & Ann Tucker |
| January 6 Jim & Beth Maxwell | January 20 John & Donna Russell |
| January 7 David & Christina Walke | Jonathon & Mallory Kohn |
| January 8 Fred & Nancy Setzer | January 21 Don & Gwen Guthrie (63rd) |
| January 11 Reneau & Virginia Gates | January 22 Bob & Betty Crowe |
| Ralph & Jessie Southern (72nd) | January 23 Jeff & Nancy Beale |
| January 12 Frank & Colleen Rutland | George & Sherry McCulley |
| January 14 Mike & Debbie Green (34th) | |

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In Memory Of

Mary Ruth Patterson – December 2, 2019
Ollie Ree Rigsby – December 2, 2019
Betty Ann Motes – December 3, 2019
Marsha Lynn Gumpf – December 4, 2019
Richard Wheeler Totten – December 4, 2019
Ada Melvina Paravicini – December 6, 2019
James Norman Gabberd – December 8, 2019
William Francis Drake – December 11, 2019
Anita Hudson Tylicki – December 14, 2019
Joan Oates- December 14, 2019
Claxton Wayne Gray – December 14, 2019
Helen Elizabeth Peterson – December 17, 2019
Billy Ray Myers Sr. – December 18, 2019
Curtis Freeman Parrish – December 21, 2019
Brandy Jana Burkett – December 26, 2019
Tommy Eugene Jones – December 26, 2019
Mary Geneva Lewis – December 29, 2019
Phillip Spergeon Swindall – December 30, 2019
Jeffrey Trent Ash – December 30, 2019
Vivian Jean Thompson – December 31, 2019

TODAY'S WOMAN

*The Value of a Woman...*Be very careful if you make a woman cry – because God counts her tears.



Years and Laughter:

The Answer Remains the Same

By Amanda Walker

Over the Christmas season I only lost the car twice. Once I was looking on the opposite side of the mall from where I had parked. I kept setting off my alarm with my keyring, but was too far away to hear it blaring. I finally found it by process of elimination. The next week I lost my friend’s car. The main reason I lost her car was because I had lost her for a while too.

We went to separate checkouts thinking that would be quicker, only it wasn’t. Once I had checked out I headed on out to the parking lot thinking she was ahead of me.

I made it through the receipt check, and then explained to the guy ringing the Salvation Army bell that I had already given on the way in – to somebody else that had been in the same spot an hour earlier ringing the bell.

When I realized I was out of the store before her I tried to call her, but she didn’t answer. I figured she was still in the middle of checking out. I considered going back inside to find her, but then I decided I would rather try and find her car in the sea of vehicles in front of me and wait on her before I tried to explain it all to the guy ringing that bell or the lady checking receipts.

I started strolling through the parking lot with my buggy looking into every white SUV I passed trying to figure out which one was hers. It was almost dark, and to see inside I was having to get really close to the window and peer in. Then I started worried about what people might be thinking. Specifically I worried about somebody might call the law. But I took comfort in realizing I was not the only person wandering around the parking lot looking for the car they had arrived in, and I did okay. I found it on the third try.

Of course it was locked. I knew it would be locked. So since I was just standing there trying to look normal, I decided to shoot her a text letting her know that I had found the car and would be standing beside it waiting for her, but not to rush. I was fine. Which I guess was a good thing, because when I sent the text I saw her phone light up inside the car. She had left it so she wouldn’t be disturbed. Later we would laugh about it on the way home. We agreed one of my New Year’s resolutions needs to be to have more awareness of where I am parked.

Last year I finally slowed down enough to start thinking about New Year’s resolutions shortly before the kids decorated Easter eggs. I ended up not making any resolutions. I passed entirely. Some years will be that way. Some years you just have to live through.

There has probably been no more tragedy and sadness in 2019 than any other year...it just seems so many people are grieving the loss of a loved one or dealing with health issues or unexpected tragedies, problems or accidents.

I have been reading a book of essays from 1949, and in one short column titled, “The Answer,” Monroeville’s beloved writer Shorty Culpepper once wrote, “So many people are wondering, asking and groping to find an answer to our world problems; so many are asking, ‘What is this world coming to? There is so much turmoil, hate, strife, unrest, just what is going to happen?’”

He went on to write, “If you would like the answer to these world problems, and all problems, for that matter, the answer will be given in detail next Sunday morning at eleven o’clock from the pulpit of thousands of churches throughout this land. It will surely be given, and you need not look elsewhere for the answer; you won’t find it.”

That was seventy years ago...and the answer remains the same.



Southern Gardening

Potpourri for January

by Peggy Givhan

First of all let me wish all of my readers a Happy Happy New Year. This country has been through a lot, but I have always been of the mind, that if lemons come your way, do not despair, make lemonade. In spite of the prophets of gloom and doom, 2013 will soar with hope, new ideas, new inventions and a new commitment to making our world a better place to live. And that include beautiful gardens.

January is the month of hope of things to come. A group wanted to visit my garden in the dead of winter several years ago. Of course, there were pansies, dianthus, the beautiful gray-green of lambs ears, and the silvery fluff of dusty miller. There were also huge blank areas where I have planted bulbs and seed. I told them to close their eyes and visualize the yellow and white daffodils, the bright pink tulips, the tall red and white poppies. I called these areas my underground garden.

Once we have had a hard freeze, there is still time to spray trees, shrubs, grass, fences, vines, and everything outside with a combination of Volk Oil and Lime Sulfur. But on the other hand if you love to deal with mosquitos, white flies, powdery mildew, mold, fleas, roaches, and a myriad of other pests which hatch from eggs, do not spray. Remember it is too late to spray when dormancy is broken.

Now is the time to take stock of where your garden has been and where you want it to go this year. A great gardening pal of both Ed's and mine, Bill Gordy, would postulate, "if a flower or shrub did not say thank you, out it goes". There is nothing like having a polite flower garden. But the point is, if you had trouble with a certain plant, and if that flower/plant was tended properly and it still did not perform, then let's just erase it off our garden plan and substitute.

I have found a great tarp for pots which house fairly cold hardy perennials such as plumbago, elephant ears, geraniums, and other plants which will take some freezing temperatures. It is a large outside grill cover which has curved sides and insulates the plants. Also, the large tarps can be put into action for this purpose also. Remember to weight the ends with brick or stones, so the wind does not blow the protection off.

Trisston’s Tidbits...



Brian & Trisston Burrows

“Who Do You Want to Be?”

By: Trisston Wright Burrows
www.trisstonwrightburrows.com

Happy New Year, Everyone! As we enter into this new year, I have a question for us to ponder...Who do you want to be in world? Think about it.

Notice, I did not ask what you want to do or what you want to achieve this year. While these are important things to think about, I am asking you to think more along the lines of what kind of person do you want to be. Do you know the answer to this question?

“Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.” Romans 5:3-5

Within about an 8-year period of time, my husband and I experienced what I can only describe as major shifts in our lives. We left fulfilling jobs that we felt truly passionate about to go to work for our family’s small business, dealing with significant health issues, and the passing of more than 30 family members and dear friends...some expected due to aging and/or illness and some very unexpected and quite shocking.

I cannot even begin to express to you how this wave of lose has affected us. Some so tender and close to my (our) heart that I just don’t have the words to be able to share. However, what I can share is that in attending (and many times, assisting with the planning of and speaking at) so many funerals and memorial services, I noticed that often times when people spoke about loved ones, their words would be so loving and impassioned.

“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” Maya Angelou

Isn’t that what we all want? I know I sure do! It all comes down to how your love and my love affects others...and how other’s love affects us.

As we enter this new year and, actually, a new decade, let’s do so with 20/20 vision. Let’s be more mindful and intentional...living from a place of service, grace, peace, hope, joy, light, and love. Be the person the you want to be!

Happy New Year & Many Blessings!

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PLANT OF THE MONTH

Nandina or Heavenly bamboo--Berberidaceae which is an evergreen or some, semi-deciduous shrub. This plant should have a prominent spot on the TV series, "The Survivors". If you want a shrub which requires no care, no water, no pruning , no fertilizer, then this is for you. Even with temperatures going down to 5 degrees, it will probably lose leaves, and still live. It belongs to the barberry family, and has caned branching stems with delicate narrow leaves. Not a rampant grower, and gets to about 6 feet or better in height. Foliage has pinkish copper which turn lime green in the spring and then has purple and bronze tints in the fall. Great for flower arrangements especially if you want to add bright orange berries to the mix. When pruning this shrub, trim in a slight wedge like manner to that the legs can get sunlight to encourage foliage. This procedure will eliminate that lanky leggy look that folks find objectionable in Nandina.



I will close with my favorite quote that I found somewhere by somebody, "a garden is a beautiful thing, and a thing of beauty honors all of life".

GOOD GARDENING!



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 (334) 272-7630--Fax

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 4344 Carmichael Road, Suite 100
 Montgomery, Alabama 36116



EXPANDING SOCIAL SECURITY FIELD OFFICE HOURS

Beginning on January 8, 2020, field offices will remain open until 4:00 p.m. on Wednesdays, with typical field office hours from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. You can locate the closest field office to you using our field office locator.

In another move to improve service to the public, Commissioner Saul announced in his Open Letter to the Public at www.socialsecurity.gov/agency/coss-message.html that the agency is hiring 1,100 front line employees to provide service on the agency's National 800 Number and in its processing centers. The agency is currently bringing onboard 100 new processing center employees and approximately 500 new teleservice representatives for the 800 Number. An additional 500 hires for the 800 Number will occur later in 2020.

"Improving service is my top priority. Increasing full public service hours at our nationwide network of more than 1,200 field offices is the right thing to do and will provide additional access," Commissioner Saul said. The additional hiring of National 800 Number and processing center employees is an important step in the right direction to greatly improve the service we provide."

While we continue to improve both the access to and the experience with our services, it is important to note that most Social Security services do not require the public to take time to visit an office. People may create a **my Social Security** account, a personalized online service, at

www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount.

Through their personal **my Social Security** account, people can check personal information and conduct business with Social Security. If they already receive Social Security benefits, they can start or change direct deposit online, and if they need proof of their benefits, they can print or download a current Benefit Verification Letter from their account.



People not yet receiving benefits can use their online account to get a personalized Social Security Statement, which provides earnings history information as well as estimates of future benefits. Currently, residents in 40 states and the District of Columbia may request a replacement Social Security card online if they meet certain requirements. The portal also includes a retirement calculator and links to information about other online services, such as applications for retirement, disability, and Medicare benefits.

Many Social Security services are also conveniently available by dialing our toll-free number, 1-800-772-1213. People who are deaf or hard of hearing may call our TTY number, 1-800-325-0778.



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