

Inside the Statehouse with Steve Flowers

Steve Flowers is Alabama's leading political columnist. His weekly column on Alabama politics appears in over 60 Alabama newspapers. He served 16 years in the state legislature.

www.steveflowers.us



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

2022 Will be Big Year for Alabama Politics

All signs point to a Titanic political year in 2022. In fact, as I look back over the last six decades of my observations of Alabama politics, next year may be the most momentous.

Most states elect their governors and legislators in presidential years. However, in the Heart of Dixie, we have our big election year in non-presidential years. Not only will we elect our governor to a four-year term, we will elect all of our constitutional officers like Attorney General, Agriculture Commissioner, Secretary of State, State Treasurer, State Auditor and Lt. Governor, as well as two seats on the State Public Service Commission and several seats on the State Supreme Court. More importantly, all 140 members of the Alabama State Legislature will be up for reelection. We have 105 members of the Alabama House of Representatives and 35 State Senators. In addition, all 67 sheriffs in the state are on the ballot in 2022. In many counties this is the most important race and the reason folks will show up to vote. All politics is local.

Most campaign money spent in the 2022 elections by special interests will be spent in state legislative races. The Legislative Branch is inherently more powerful in Alabama than the Executive or Judicial Branches.

All of our constitutional office holders are Republican. Attorney General, Steve Marshall, hails from Marshall County. He is in his first four-year-term. Therefore, he can and probably will run for a second term. He would be hard to beat in his bid for reelection in 2022.

John McMillan can run for a second term as State Treasurer. However, he will be over 80 years old. He has had an illustrious career in state politics. First, as a state representative from Baldwin County, then as head of the Forestry Association, the State Conservation Director, then two terms as State Agriculture Commissioner, before being elected as State Treasurer.

Speaking of Agriculture Commissioner, Rick Pate is doing a very good job in his first term and should have very little trouble being elected to a second

term in 2022. This post is the most prominent and important office in the constitutional ranks besides governor. It oversees a large department with numerous duties. Agriculture is still Alabama's number one economic industry.

Secretary of State, John Merrill, is precluded from running for a third term. Merrill is the best retail politician in the state and has by far the best grassroots organization of any political figure. Merrill will probably join the fray of candidates vying for the U.S. Senate seat left vacant by Richard Shelby. If he has to drop back, he could move to either State Treasurer or Lt. Governor.

The job of State Auditor will be on the ballot. Jim Zeigler, the current State Auditor, is thought of as somewhat of a maverick by Montgomery insiders. However, he is sly as a fox. Even though he knows the State Auditor has no real role in policy issues, he grabs headlines with his grandstanding. He is limited from running for Auditor again. It will be interesting to see if he chooses to run for something else at age 75.

Lt. Governor Will Ainsworth is only 38 years old. The job of lieutenant governor has few duties other than to preside over the state senate. Most state senators think Ainsworth has been a quick study in learning the Senate Rules and they like him. There is no doubt that Ainsworth desires to run for Governor of Alabama.

The biggest question of the upcoming 2022 momentous political year is whether Governor Kay Ivey will run for reelection. One school of thought has her going to the house at 78. The other is will she run and can she win? My prognostication is she will run and if she does, polls indicate she will win overwhelmingly.

Again, it will be fun to watch.



Justice Will Sellers

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What's in a Name?

There has been much debate lately about how we name public buildings and whether we should remove some names because of long ago actions that no longer conform to contemporary societal practices.

Public buildings are always tricky to name as evidenced by the fact that just a couple of years ago, the University of Alabama Law School was named after Hugh Culverhouse, Jr. in acknowledgment of a very generous donation. However, Culverhouse's donation was later returned and his name was chiseled from the law school's facade.

At Alabama State University many years ago, in-fighting and disputes among the trustees resulted in the Joe L. Reed Acadome being renamed.

Scandals and criminal convictions have caused other public facilities suffer the same fate. A variety of buildings once named after Healthsouth founder Richard Scrushy no longer sport his name.

Similarly, there is no longer an Enron Field; ditto the MCI Worldcom Center.

So, before we take further action to name or rename any public buildings, I would like to suggest a new criterion that should be used in the future.

It is always complicated to name something after a person who is still alive because the curriculum vitae is not complete. As long as someone is alive, there is more than adequate opportunity for them to act inappropriately, commit wrongdoing, or be revealed to possess feet made of clay rather than marble.

In order to ensure that a facility named in someone's honor avoids becoming an embarrassment to the institution - a retreat as opposed to advancement - perhaps a good rule would be to wait until they have been dead for at least five years. That way their entire record is complete, most statutes of limitations have expired, and their legacy should be secure.

Of course, one problem with this proposal is that living people tend to contribute more when they are alive and are attempting to establish a lasting legacy that, along with a satiated ego, only their name on a building will suffice. Heirs tend to prefer to experience a legacy more in selfish monetary terms; naming opportunities thus abound for the living.

So, while donations might decrease, naming a building or whatever after someone who is deceased seems like a safe bet . . . or at least it used to.

I say "seems" because now we are in a local and nationwide frenzy to fully explore the lives of people for whom structures have long ago been named. And in doing this, any improper conduct is scrutinized based on our current understanding of what should have been acceptable, polite behavior during the life of the honoree.

Perhaps we are finally embracing Shakespeare's observation that "the evil men do lives after them, but the good is oft interred in their bones." No one can argue that commemorating someone who supported a criminal enterprise is acceptable. Not many cities have an Al Capone Avenue or a Benito Mussolini Drive. Open, obvious, and socially unacceptable behavior no matter how sizable the donation or political influence at the time can never reach the level of deserving commemoration.

But we must be very careful because the finer the tooth on the comb and the higher the magnification of the glass provides details and information that

might be better left undiscovered.

In fact, few people look saintly when every nook and cranny of their life is fully examined.

Several times a year a new book comes out revealing that a well-known figure was a member of a socially unacceptable movement. Families under the yoke of an authoritarian government are shocked to discover an informer in their midst, a closeted Nazi or mafia hitman.

Years ago, France was so stunned that a documentary revealed more collaborators than resistance fighters that it was banned from television because it "destroys myths that the people of France still need." And who can forget when decades after World War II ended, United Nations General Secretary Kurt Waldheim was exposed as a Nazi intelligence officer? Others have discovered past family connections to organized crime. DNA testing often confirms embarrassing assignments.

But in discovering a not so auspicious past, few communities completely jettison a native son and families still embrace wayward kin. Most simply use the exposure to show the failed humanity that affects all of us.

I once heard a businessman on a panel about ethics comment that "there is a little larceny in all of us." In saying so, he was not refusing to condemn bad behavior, but was pointing out the permanence of original sin. Thornton Wilder penned the famous quote: "There is so much good in the worst of us, and so much bad in the best of us, that it behooves all of us not to talk about the rest of us," which is probably a good thing to remember when we critique others.

I don't know anyone who likes seeing their face in a mirror with magnification!

The lives of humans are complicated, complex and contradictory. Many seemingly mainstream people can have odd ideas about the world. In hindsight, old fads look sinister; the basis of past popular culture rarely survives contemporary scrutiny.

Political correctness changes with the wind and whims. A thorough background check unearths activities that are sublime, ridiculous, and embarrassing. So, if we are going to name public buildings after people, we should be very careful not only in who we choose to honor, but how we choose to judge them.

We must also make certain that judging ourselves by the same standards does not reveal more than a measure of hypocrisy, sanctimony, and pretense.

Rather than naming buildings after people, whether they are dead or alive, I have a much better idea. Perhaps we could name our edifices, parks, and public squares after non-violent animals, flowers, and friendly fruits and vegetables.

The Alabama State Capitol already sits on Goat Hill, and the University of Alabama has Rose Administration building; both of which provide precedent for my proposal.

Why not continue this trend for other buildings?

Who could be offended by Hippo Dining Hall, Squash Hall of Justice, or Daffodil Dormitory? If we start moving away from recognizing humans and honor non-flawed animals and plants, instead, we will have one less issue to divide us and give sign manufacturers a real boon to their business.

Hope everyone had a Happy April Fools' Day!

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ROBSEVATIONS...

by Robert Tate

BACK IN THE AIR!



I have to admit. Since my last Robsevation, my attention has not been so much on what is going on around the country but clearly focused elsewhere. Perhaps that is a good thing. I did watch President Biden’s pratfall going up the stairs to Air Force One and actually felt sorry for the man – yet again. For anyone watching with an objective, unbiased mind, the man is most definitely not in the game. Over his shoulders watches VP Harris ready to pounce on his job as soon as she gets the green light. It IS going to happen. That WAS and IS the plan all along.

Biden’s fall was embarrassing enough to watch. What was more disturbing was the way the press ran with the story. That is the ones who actually covered it. From the “tricky stairs” to a gust of wind that made him fall (three times nonetheless), the press continues their march into refusing to confront any real issues with our president’s mental and physical shape. Long before the election ever took place, it was clear that Biden was not up to the task of “leading the free world.” It really is that simple. I’m still betting on him not lasting through the year.

For those watching or paying close attention, thanks to the current regime’s inept handling of the immigration situation, our borders are at critical mass right now. It is so bad that even some Democratic politicians are wondering what the heck is going on. You know it is bad when they start to admit it. In the following article ([https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/washington-secrets/photos-agents-pulled-from-border-to-feed-diaper-illegal-immigrants.\)](https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/washington-secrets/photos-agents-pulled-from-border-to-feed-diaper-illegal-immigrants.) there are several disturbing facts including a link to several photos of what is going on behind the scenes out of public view. For example:

- “What we’ve learned in the past, especially in 2019, is the smugglers will use families and unaccompanied minors as ‘distraction tactics,” said Mark Morgan, the acting commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection under former President Donald Trump. “They know as they push them across illegally, USBP agents will respond to provide immediate and effective humanitarian care. The response, processing, and care required is extremely time-consuming and resource-intensive, resulting in agents being pulled off the front lines, leaving large sections of the border less secure and unmonitored and making it easy to smuggle drugs, criminal migrants, and single adults across wide, unprotected area.”
- “Once processed, taxpayers are paying an average of \$392.69 per person per night to put them (Illegal immigrants) up in hotels, according to an analysis of the Biden administration’s \$86 million program by the Center for Immigration Studies. (Yet our soldiers still quartered in Washington D.C. are sleeping on the ground in parking garages.)
- “Internal CBP documents obtained by ABC News show there are now 3,889 migrants in the Donna facility that is meant to hold just 250. That means it is currently at 1,556% capacity.”
- “The secretary is lying to the American people when he says our borders are secure. With crisis-level numbers of illegal migration being experienced on the borders, more and more resources are being pulled from the front lines resulting in a significant increase of the ‘got aways.’ Because of this administration’s dismantling of the effective tools and policies in place, we’re now experiencing the highest levels of got aways in memory – reaching 1,000 per day,”

This article states that border patrol agents are being pulled away from the “Front” in order to feed and diaper illegal immigrants. Uhhh, I don’t think so. Not my job. What is perhaps most disturbing is how the press demonized Trump for detaining kids exactly like Obama did before him and what Biden is doing now on an even grander, grossly incompetent scale. But from the press, the only thing we hear are crickets. President Biden actually issued a gag order preventing Border Patrol agents from talking to the press about what is going on at the border. The regime cannot afford to let the American people know what is

happening. <https://news.yahoo.com/biden-admin-restricts-border-patrol-125459995.html>. So much for transparency.

The border in the United States today is one H.A.M. I for one cannot believe people are actually okay with what is happening. I watched the news the other day as many illegal immigrants were protesting and demanding rights they most certainly do not come close to having. I thought it was funny that while many of these immigrants have walked hundreds if not thousands of miles, they were able to stop at a local truck stop and load up on Biden/ Harris T-Shirts. Gotta love that one.

How about this one? The Center for Immigration Studies on Monday estimated that at least 2.1 million illegal immigrants could be eligible for \$4.38 billion wired directly into their checking accounts, just like the hundreds of millions of legal residents and citizens who started receiving checks last week. What part of illegal do they not understand? I’ll be honest. If I do not get a stimulus check because of what I earn in my job, I really don’t care. I just don’t. I am happy to see people who really need the money getting it. But I tell you what. No matter what my income may be, you had best believe I deserve a stimulus before anybody who has crossed into our country illegally. Period. Dot. End of story. Sorry. Without giving them any money, which they don’t deserve, how

about giving more money to American taxpayers who need it? If it seems as though I don’t care about their needs, if those needs come at the exclusion of American needs, then I don’t. Sorry. I simply don’t. Take care of your own people first and then if, IF there is anything left over, absolutely you help others. But not a second before.

https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/washington-secrets/millions-of-illegal-immigrants-set-to-get-4-38-billion-in-biden-covidcash?utm_source=internal&utm_medium=widget&utm_campaign=midarticle_rec.

How about Vice-President Harris’ responses when asked about the situation at the border? (<https://thepoliticalinsider.com/when-confronted-about-detained-kids-at-border-kamala-harris-dodges-i-havent-been-briefed-today/>). First when asked about the huge increase in migrant children flooding the border, she simply says that she had not been briefed on it “today.” Interesting answer because it may in fact be true. Misleading but true. She may have not been briefed on it yet that day, but to imply that she had not ever been briefed is totally unbelievable. She expects us to believe that she has no idea of what is going on at the border because of no briefing “that day.” Then the other day when asked if she was going to visit the border, she laughs and says, “Not today.” She then said she had been there before but was sure that she would probably go again. Another interesting political type answer not requiring any form of truth. By saying she would likely go again opens the door for her to never go again. How about a straight answer? After all, she will be our next President. Get ready for it.

There is going to be so much to write on in the near future, I don’t know where to start at times. Being a 2nd Amendment guy, there is a lot of stuff heading down the pike that will need to be addressed. Another edition of “Schools in Session” may be in order, but that will have to wait. What I was going to write about was that the last three weeks have been pretty grueling for yours truly. I have had eight simulators, two simulator checks, an oral exam, six flights in the jet with an instructor and then was turned loose to fly with a normal First Officer for the last three days of my 5-day trip. This was all part of the normal requalification course for a pilot who has been out of the aircraft from 12-36 months. Although it was a lot of studying and preparation, I am happy to say that it all went without a hitch. But enough of that. I am back in the jet and going out on another trip in two days.

As for the news, the next 6 to 8 months are going to be interesting. When I have more time, I will be writing on a lot of them. Until then, cheers from the surly bonds.



Photo: www.cwsl.edu/



Veterans Day Ceremony Held at Greenwood Cemetery

A National Vietnam War Veterans Day Ceremony was held at the VVA Memorial Garden at Greenwood Cemetery March 29, 2021. The invocation was given by Charles Jenkins followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem. The names of 98 of the local Vietnam War dead were read aloud. An honor guard fired three rounds, and Taps were played by the bugler, Babs Couch. The Peter Forney Chapter of DAR was represented by Kathy Arant and Martha Poole Simmons.



Two Veterans Presented with Citations from Governor Ivey

Martha Poole Simmons presented citations from Governor Kay Ivey to two WWII veterans in celebration of their birthdays. Captain Marvin G. Smith, Jr. will celebrate his 98th birthday on April 13. His article was published in the December 2019 issue of the Alabama Gazette. Next, was John L. Zent, information about his book, From Sprint Valley to the Sky, was published in the June 2020 issue of the Alabama Gazette. His 95th birthday is April 23.





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START MONTH

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ESTATE PLANNING - DEATH OF A SPOUSE



My husband died and while most everything was in both of our names there is one financial account with about \$15,000.00 in it. How can I get to it since I am the primary beneficiary under his Will?

Ronald A. Holtsford

Most often on the first death of a spouse if everything has been tied together during life it is unnecessary to probate following the first death. When doing your estate plan it is important to think about EVERYTHING that you own or have control over, and I do mean EVERYTHING. Who wants to learn that there is an \$8,000 life insurance policy that has the estate as the beneficiary or an \$8,000 bank account where the deceased spouse was the sole owner? In both cases it will be necessary to probate the estate and the court, newspaper notice and legal fees will unfortunately take up a significant percent of the \$8,000.00. It's not that the costs are meant to take up a significant amount of the \$8,000.00, it's that the work required can be the same amount of work required for a \$24,000.00 estate and maybe a \$100,000.00 estate.

When looking at your estate plan did you also look at your insurance policies? Make sure all insurance policies have beneficiaries which does not include your estate as a beneficiary. Look at your investments; you may wish that they go to your heirs by way of probate or you may have set up a TOD (transfer on death) to transfer investment assets outside of probate or you may have been given the opportunity to transfer to beneficiaries. Bank accounts can be transferred by setting up a POD (payable on death) without giving that person or persons rights over the account or setting up an account with more than one owner. If the decedent owned real property, was the surviving spouse also on the deed "with rights of survivorship" or was there a life estate in place so that those named with remainder interests would take after death or were there beneficiaries in the Will for real property? Even if there are no beneficiaries for the real property was the Personal Representative (Executor/ Executrix) given absolute right under the Will to sell real property and distribute the assets to the beneficiaries?

Now on to your question. It's unfortunate that the amount is greater than \$5,000.00. There is banking law that allows a bank account under \$5,000.00 to be transferred to heirs if there are not other assets to probate. A specific process must be followed as outlined in the Code of Alabama, 1975.

But of course these assets are greater than \$5,000.00 but note that they are less than \$25,000.00. Why is the \$25,000 important? The Alabama Small Estates Act provides for a quicker settlement of estate assets when the total is less than \$25,000. That amount however is adjusted annually by the State Finance Director based on the Consumer Price Index. That amount is current \$30, 608.00.

The requirements of §43-2-692 are:

(a) The surviving spouse, if there is one, otherwise the distributees of an estate of personal property only, may initiate a proceeding for summary distribution of the estate by filing a verified petition in the office of the judge of probate of the county in which the decedent was domiciled at death alleging the conditions provided in subsection (b). The petition shall include a description of the estate of the decedent. No bond shall be required to be filed with the petition.

(b) The surviving spouse or distributee shall have a defeasible right to the personal property of the decedent without awaiting the appointment of a personal representative or the probate of a will if all of the following conditions exist:

(1) The value of the entire estate does not exceed twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25, 000). This figure shall be adjusted annually for changes in the Consumer Price Index by the State Finance Director who shall notify each judge of probate of the newly adjusted figure.

(2) The decedent died a resident of this state.

(3) No petition for the appointment of a personal representative is pending or has been granted.

(4) At least 30 days have elapsed since the notice of the filing of the petition was published as hereinafter provided.

(5) All funeral expenses of the decedent have been paid, or alternatively, that arrangements for the payment out of the estate of the decedent of all unpaid funeral expenses have been made by the surviving spouse or other distributee.

(6) If the decedent died intestate, the awards due under Alabama descent and distribution statutes to the surviving spouse and to the child or children have been determined by the judge of probate.

(7) If the decedent died testate, a document purporting to be his or her will, which on its face, is properly executed, witnessed, and attested in compliance with Alabama law, has been duly filed in the office of the judge of probate.

(8) Notice of the filing of a petition for a summary distribution under this division shall be published once in a newspaper of general circulation in the county in which the decedent was domiciled, or if there is no newspaper of general circulation in the county, then notice thereof shall be posted at the county courthouse for one week.

(9) All claims against the decedent's estate have been paid or arrangements for the payment out of the estate of the decedent have been made by the surviving spouse or other distributee according to the following priority:

a. First, to each person entitled to payment for any funeral expenses owed by the decedent or his or her estate.

b. To the judge of probate for fees and charges incurred in the proceedings for summary distribution.

c. To any person entitled to payment for expenses incurred in the decedent's last illness.

d. To the State of Alabama, the county, and any municipality therein for taxes assessed on the estate of the decedent previous to his or her death.

e. To each secured creditor.

f. To each unsecured lienholder.

g. To each remaining general unsecured creditor of the decedent.

h. To each surviving spouse, child, or other distributee who is entitled to take under Alabama's descent and distribution laws, or, alternatively, to each devisee entitled to take under any testamentary disposition of the decedent.

(Acts 1975, 3rd Ex. Sess., No. 145, § 3; Act 2009-399, p. 724, § 1.)

So basically, after appropriate filings are made and notice is made in a newspaper generally circulated in the county of residence or if not one then posted at the court house, there is a wait of at least thirty days. After that point a hearing is held. If the probate judge is satisfied that the requirements are met then the judge can order that the assets be distributed to the appropriate individual(s). This is a time saver in that typical probate of an estate greater than the mentioned, \$30,608.00 will have a minimum wait time of six months before the estate can be closed and all distributions made. Generally the cost is less with a Small Estates Distribution as well. I hope this helps.

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COVID (comic) relief



COVID-19 is still impacting our health and economy. Please continue to practice safety and social distancing so that, together, we survive this!



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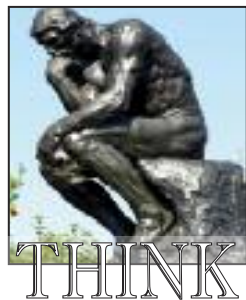
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John Sophocleus

How Our Politburo Puts the AU in FrAUd

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Column readers these past dozen years will recall AU administration frequently begs attention. Distortion of this once grand institution into another corrupt arm of the Lowder-Hubbard graft machine is well documented. Hope recent imprisonment of Felon Hubbard (further dashed by a suspiciously reduced sentence) would induce a renaissance at Auburn University seems foolhardy upon closer observation of recent events. Noteworthy from past writings of the early ‘Bentley daze’ efforts to reinstall Lowder on the AU Board of Trustees offered the adage, once corrupted, “universities advance one funeral at a time...” seems even more illustrative in retrospect. COVID-19 put many under significant stress; university and university-based communities under even greater duress, such difficult events can sometimes allow one to see more clearly. Witnessing AU’s COVID-19 response is revealing.



AU shut the campus and moved to online instruction following Spring break last year similar to most other universities and in alignment with many gubernatorial orders, including Gov. Ivey’s. As fear levels w.r.t. the virus subsided and infection rates stabilized in late spring, many universities, including Auburn and Alabama, began their process of planning for campus reopening and *face-to-face* instruction. Indeed, Auburn-alum and Auburn Board of Trustees member, Kay Ivey (in conjunction with our State Health Officer) issued the following order for educational institutions in our State regarding social distancing:

Effective June 1, 2020, all schools, public and private-including elementary, secondary, postsecondary, technical, and specialty schools, and colleges and universities-shall comply with the following rules:

a. **Social distancing.** Schools shall take reasonable steps, where practicable, to maintain six feet of separation between persons of different households.

Those with an eye for semantics will focus on strong language used such as “shall comply” and defining social distancing with precise measurement of six feet. Violating the State Health Officer’s order is a **criminal** offense under section **22-2-14**, albeit a misdemeanor. Any State university was clearly obliged to evaluate and adjust instructional facilities to accommodate *face-to-face* instruction and maintain compliance with Gov. Ivey’s order. Shortly after this order went into effect, AU’s Provost promised (June 2020 University Senate meeting) classrooms would be organized to achieve safe social-distancing – further asserting classroom layout mattered. Facilities management began performing CAD [Computer Assisted Design] based studies of AU classrooms to determine maximum student capacity in accordance with six-foot social distancing.

Basic understandings of elementary geometry leads one to conclude classrooms with **fixed**, high density seating require major reduction in capacity to provide students six-foot social distancing as mandated. Classroom studies performed by AU’s Facilities Management precisely calculated this result. Many classrooms – esp. rooms with **fixed** seating – required capacities reduced to 20% of normal capacity to accommodate six-foot social distancing. The football stadium imposed similar restriction to only 20% capacity given the realities of its high-density **fixed** seating. Furthermore, this restriction was implemented even though the football stadium is *outdoors* whereas classrooms are *indoors*.

Based on **initial** Facilities Management study findings (and common sense) one expects AU administrators would’ve modified the Fall 2020 schedule for ‘*face-to-face*’ classes. Undoubtedly such modifications require modest administrative effort, competence, and investment/redirection of resources. Instead of completing the study for **all** classrooms and re-organizing schedules to provide *face-to-face* classes with mandated six-foot safe social distancing, the Provost allowed academic administrators in charge of academic scheduling to put *face-to-face* Fall classes in rooms up to 50% of normal capacity, irrespective of whether such capacity **exceeded** AU Facilities Management findings. Even more incriminating, shortly before opening the Fall 2020 semester, critical Facilities Management studies being conducted in compliance with Governor Ivey’s order were suddenly **stopped** with hundreds of classrooms still unstudied w.r.t. safety. Initial findings remained hidden from faculty, students, parents, legislators and general public.

Numerous *face-to-face* fall semester classes met in rooms far **beyond** the maximum capacity level accommodating six-foot social distancing. Naturally virus levels surged throughout the student population during the first month of fall semester. Consider the example of outspoken Economics Professor Michael Stern who volunteered to teach his fall semester classes *face-to-face* advocating to provide students with the best learning experience possible given the complex nature of his classes. Stern’s undergraduate mathematical economics class was placed in Lowder (aptly named) Hall Room 015 with an enrollment of **33** students. This room’s normal capacity is **68**. Some think Prof. Stern’s class was placed there by corrupt or grossly inept (pick one) AU administration under the Provost’s reckless, unlawful 50% rule. Facilities Management had not studied this room before the politburo suddenly stopped remaining critical studies just before fall semester began. When Facilities Management suddenly resumed performing room studies mid-November, this room was correctly determined to have maximum safe capacity of only **15** students! Class enrollment was more than **double** the maximum level accommodating six-foot social distancing ordered by Governor (and AU Trustee) Kay Ivey. Even more disturbing – classrooms that would have safely accommodated Prof. Stern and his students were **empty** during the exact same time block.

AU pushed for vastly more *face-to-face* instruction during Spring 2021 semester when the virus subsided in October 2020. Auburn students registered in early November via a spring schedule loaded with explicitly advertised *face-to-face* classes. The spring academic schedule was **again** determined under the Provost’s unlawful 50% rule as Facilities Management studies remained ‘on ice.’ When the Provost failed to attend (perhaps fearing questions about his conduct) one of the largest faculty assemblies in university history in early November, Prof. Stern **proposed** a motion of no confidence. Little surprise the Senate Chair violated rules to block Stern from formally making the motion. As one who witnessed much fraud at AU Senate meetings (*esp.* for the most sycophantic politburo members) another successful effort to protect this corrupt Provost along with other ‘public servants’ was no surprise.

In response to these outrageous acts by a lawless Senate Chair, 50 brave faculty members organized and petitioned for another meeting to allow Prof. Stern to formally make the motion. The University Senate meeting [11/17/20] announced recent receipt of the signed petition. **Magically**, the very next day, it appears Facilities Management studies of safe classroom capacities required six-foot social distancing suddenly began again – they’d been *on ice* for nearly three months. No surprise to this former lowly instructor that Facilities Management documents indicate they restarted classroom studies with Miller Hall, the professional home of . . . you guessed it, Prof. Stern!

Stern discovered existence of hidden Facilities Management classroom studies in early December and corresponded with Pres. Gogue and others to acquire their public release. Classroom studies were finally posted on-line without notice December 18th, the final business day before AU closed for the long holidays. The studies affirmed Spring 2021 scheduling had been determined with widespread disregard for six-foot safe social distancing ordered by Gov.

Ivey. Student registration was already completed, and the pandemic was surging to unparalleled heights heading into the start of the semester in early January.

The corrupt and incompetent academic administrators (all too willing to follow the reckless and low-effort ethos of the Provost) panicked and strongly encouraged – *i.e.*, bullied and threatened – faculty to reduce the quantity of *face-to-face* instruction students had been promised by telling students they could no longer come to a portion of the classes. I was provided one (extreme I hope) example where a *face-to-face* class had an enrollment of over **five times** the mandated maximum safe capacity for six-foot social distancing! Students were told they’d only be able to attend on average one of every six classes. Some instructors refused to cut *face-to-face* instruction promised to students and conducted courses with massive class size compared to capacity limits in compliance with Gov. Ivey’s order. Prof. Stern’s *face-to-face* spring classes were rescued into safe rooms at the last minute, only due to Pres. Gogue’s efforts.

AU could’ve easily provided much more *face-to-face* safe instruction by engaging in transparency, hard work (the Auburn Creed is now useful ‘cover’ for the corruptiest village on the plains) and the investment of additional resources in the academic arm – all of which would be received as Holy Water on vampires like *FDIC* Lowder- and Felon Hubbard-type parasites. Instead, deceit, laziness, and disregard for academics once again carried the day at AU. This is in stark contrast to the outstanding job Auburn Athletics accomplished when handling COVID-19 as we witnessed yet another “investment” of \$25 million in paying people like Gus Malzahn and Steven “Crash” Leath to no longer perform AU duties. A small fraction of that money would’ve sufficed to split up the Spring schedule, hire additional faculty, and avoid academic fraud associated with telling students they can’t attend classes as promised and that they, their parents, taxpayers paid for with hard earned money or federally subsidized loans.

Some know I left Auburn (years before I could draw laughable *RSA* checks – lowly instructors forced into the system are treated very poorly) because I could no longer stomach the fraud. I made my way in the ‘*real world*’ working for Ford Motor Company so I could take my ‘vow of poverty’ to teach. I think students appreciated my knowledge and understanding of the subject matter was not simply academic but also experiential. I’m grateful and understand I’ve been truly blessed unlike many at AU who are there for tenured, guaranteed paychecks, inflated administrative politburo pay, *etc.* Perhaps my biggest concern I’d like addressed is the poor disclosure of risk. Over 30 years teaching I realize there was some higher probability of getting the flu or worse (the measles scare when teaching at Clemson comes to mind) and certainly have been no stranger to spoiled students recklessly driving cars (they couldn’t afford and protected by shameless parents) damaging my health and property. What makes this specific episode of ‘*High Plains Grifter*’ so upsetting is **not** disclosing the risk and willful failure to follow such a well-defined, public mandate. I pray faculty and students may be granted a class-action to discipline these AU fraudsters as it seems **every** internal mechanism is failing.

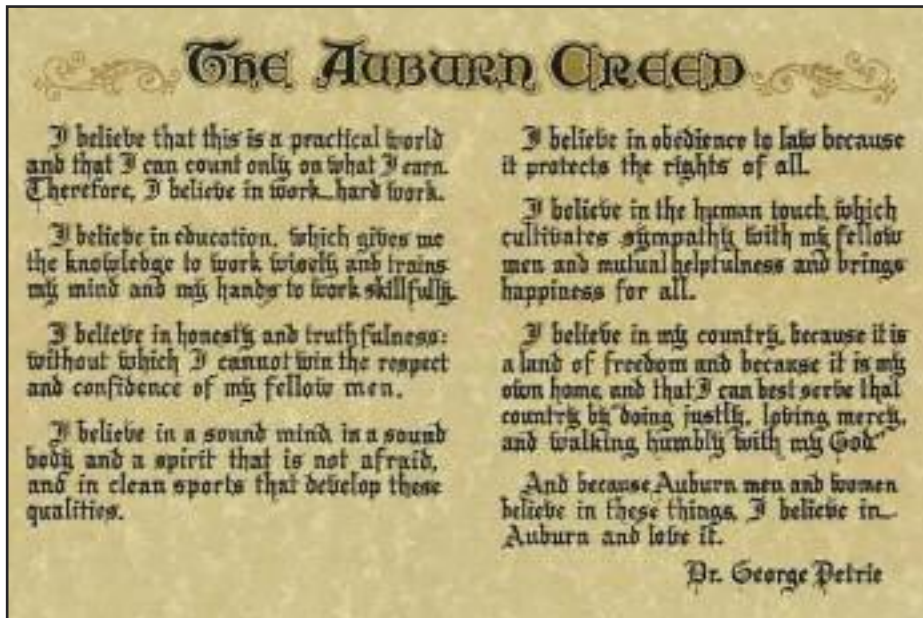
In closing, I want to thank all who sincerely wanted me to continue teaching and provided many heartfelt accolades and empirics to convince me I was an outstanding instructor. Was told I’m one the few multi-recipients into “Who’s Who of College Educators” at AU, was honoured to teach many years for the Air War College International Officers Summer Program, was humbled and most rewarded to teach prisoners in Auburn’s **APAEP** [Alabama Prisons Arts & Education Project] and have what some consider an impressive publication record for a lowly instructor – *i.e.*, **not** a professor. In retrospect, the award/recognition I hold most dear is being the first (and at the moment, **only**) recipient of the Prof. Ault Excellence in Teaching Award. While I make **no** claim to be as skilled or accomplished teacher as Prof. Ault, what I recall most in my many years blessed to have Ault as a colleague was his observation, “*The worst sin anyone can commit at AU is compel an administrator to do their job.*” I was further choked up by this recognition to have Pres. Gogue attend the Ault award ceremony. Sadly, AU administration is so incompetent or mean-spirited it still has **not** paid this award from 2019 and I refuse to become a grubber like the highly paid politburo members responsible for this payment and press the matter. The theme of my acceptance speech was that it spoke more of those who made an environment for someone like me willing to continue teaching for pure passion **not** income.

When the corrupt Richardson administration down to my un-elected dept. head made sure I was not re-hired, I was immediately picked up by AUM thanks to an outstanding, duly elected

Chair, Prof. Gregowicz – unafraid to hire someone he thought certain to serve students and taxpayers well even if corrupt politburo members wouldn’t like it. When Pres. Gogue came to AUM (as part of his responsibility he took seriously) I took notice and when asked to return by my department’s duly elected Chair (the corrupt dept. heads installed had been removed by the efforts of good faculty like Prof. Ault mentioned above) it was a worthy place to teach once again. Sadly, the corrupt are in unbridled power again and want to silence or push out those who keep them in-check like Prof. Stern, along with Professors Altindag and Seals who’ve done the academic research (with Grad. Student Samuel Cole) on this matter recently covered by *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and submitted to a professional journal for publication.

The First Amendment and Academic Freedom are in similar jeopardy as our Auburn Creed. [<https://www.alabamagazette.com/story/2018/03/01/opinion/the-auburn-creed/1301.html>] As much as Pres. Gogue despises so-called ‘*micro-managing*’ when removing these cancerous personnel operating outside their authority, it is time to earn the pay and get rid of these corrupt politburo members and get those who’ve tried to save Auburn from rape lawsuits, **NCAA** violations, federal litigation, *etc.* back to work as advocates for students, taxpayers and their units. It grows easier, even for those blinded by *Orange & Blue* glasses, to see it is impossible to spell the word ‘**fraud**’ without an *AU* these past years.

Below is *The Auburn Creed* by Dr. George Petrie created in beautiful calligraphy by AU graduate Gene C. Beck (dec.)



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

Dealing with Scammers ... continued from front page

GAMBLING ~ GOOD PUBLIC POLICY OR PANDEMIC?

John W. Giles

In March of 1999, my phone rang and it was General Charlie Condon, the Attorney General for the State of South Carolina. I was the newly installed President of the Christian Coalition of Alabama as of January 1999. He gave me a strong sober warning about the future plague consuming our state, if we legalized gambling. His warning in that conversation will never be forgotten and I wanted to share it with you.

I was in the Fob James Administration in 1998, when Lt. Governor Don Siegelman unseated the Governor over one single issue, passing an Alabama Education Lottery. Siegelman was a disciplined, hardworking liberal Democrat, and his one and only campaign issue was passing the lottery. Reporters often questioned him on a cadre of other issues like prisons, economic development or Medicaid. Siegelman had one "cure all" for Alabama's short list of infirmities, passing the lottery would heal everything and fix all that was ailing the state. He was disciplined staying on message and his work ethic in retail politics was unmatched, this guy was shaking hands in his sleep. We uncovered in our research the lottery concept was severely laced with many flaws, but emerging on top was poor public policy and it would create an infested fertile breeding ground for massive public corruption.

General Condon mentioned he had been monitoring the Alabama gambling legislation and strappingly admonished me to work day and night to defeat the lottery and the video poker bill. He said, "John if this passes in the state, the gambling bosses will pollute and corrupt all three branches of government, and it will take you 10-15 years to clean it up." He went on to tell me of his current work disinfecting South Carolina's gambling residue in the courts and the epidemic of white collar public corruption cases of elected officials bribed by gambling bosses. He offered to come to Alabama, so we hosted an Alabama fly around press tour telling the South Carolina story. Because of his position and personal experience, the press did cover his visit and showcased corruption and addressed the poor public policy component.

I recall the 1999 Alabama Lottery arithmetic promised to bring in \$150 mm for scholarships and the math just didn't add up. After you pay the lottery contractors, set up a new bureaucracy loaded with patronage jobs unregulated by the state personnel board, reducing the Education Trust Fund revenues by flushing disposable personal income and elevated DHR expenses, the "Real Net" was only \$10 - \$15 million at best. Based on the Georgia Lottery model, Alabama would spend about \$95 million on compulsive gambling cases, families falling apart, breaking up homes and spiking domestic violence over state sponsored addictions. These costs were not calculated in the puffed up revenue projections by lottery advocates.

Gambling proponents always preach, we already have gambling, we need to tax and regulate it. Alabama auto tags are in casino parking lots in Mississippi and a lottery won't hurt anybody. Here are the facts; the ONLY current legalized gambling in Alabama is the pari-mutuel gambling at dog tracks. The courts have ruled (although the legal premise is seriously flawed) that dog track gambling is a "Game of Skill." The court suggests you can watch a dog eat, if he uses the bathroom before running, etc. making it a Game of Skill, not a Game of Chance. The Creek Indian casinos are on sovereign land, outside of state jurisdiction, but they too are operating illegally. Why do you think they needed a compact with the state in the recent failed Lottery - Casino Bill? On yes, a survey taken showed that only 10% - 15% of the cars in out of state casinos were Alabama tags. Remember Governor Riley appointing a Special Counsel to raid the illegal dog track casinos in 2010; he was 100% constitutionally correct, because they are operating illegal on an illegally passed local amendment in violation of the state constitution.

Why do you think they had specific casino locations named in the recently failed Del March Lottery-Casino bill, was it to contain gambling or to choke out future competition, I will let you make that determination.

Why is legalizing the lottery such an explosive subject? Glad you asked! To repeal the lottery prohibition from the Alabama Constitution, requires a 2/3 vote from both the house and senate chambers, and then sent to the people to ratify the constitutional amendment, with a simple majority vote. If that happens, several things are triggered. First, a lottery (Games of Chance) is now legal in the state. Once the constitutional amendment is approved by the people, full scale casino gambling (Games of Chance) can and will take place in every corner of the state. The reason specific allowable locations were mentioned in the Marsh bill was to stave off competitors and have a monopoly on gambling. The final link in the lottery nuclear chain reaction is you just legitimized the illegal Creek Indian facilities. There are only two ways the Creeks can operate legally on their sovereign land; one is a signed compact with the state and the US Department of Interior (USDOI), and or repeal the lottery prohibition through a constitutional amendment. According to the US Indian Gaming Commission, which is a division of the USDOI, whatever is legal in a state, is legal on the reservation. You cannot run an illegal operation on a reservation in a state, where it is illegal or unconstitutional in the state wherever the reservation resides. The US Indian Gambling Commission is chaired by 3 corrupt former Indian chiefs, who turn their heads; I know this from personal experience. What are they smoking in those peace pipes?

Facts driven by research studies, suggest that gambling preys on the poor, the elderly and our youth. Everyone dreams of being the big winner, when in fact only 1 in 30 million win the lottery and 1 in 70 million win the multi-state Powerball. Gambling addictions tear families apart and drives up social cost on every front. White collar crimes soar because high stakes gambling debt breeds embezzlement and credit card theft. Sound like good public policy?

Attorney General Condon told me the hidden dark secret is "LARGE SUMS" of cash finds its way to gambling commission members, legislators, other highly visible and vocal public advocates for gambling. He said that is why it takes so long to cleanse your state from the pandemic prompted by gambling expansion.

A simple vote for a lottery is not guileless and the associated cost is astronomical. Following on the heels of that innocent vote guarantees legalized casino gambling statewide, permanently inks in Indian casinos on the reservations, increases white collar crime, further breaks up the family unit through additions, feeds public corruption with cash pays offs and bribes.

From the experiences and wise counsel from my friend, former Attorney General Charlie Condon, gambling expansion in any form is Poor Public Policy and fuels an unbridled Public Corruption Pandemic with no immediate inoculation or vaccine in sight.

Alabama currently looks a lot like Bedford Falls in the Jimmy Stewart movie, "It's A Wonderful Life." Do we want Bedford Falls or Pottersville? Good Public Policy versus a Pandemic of immeasurable proportions.

I am a personally a long-time NO Vote on Gambling Expansion, hope you join me.

Poor Public Policy!!

DEALING WITH SCAMMERS

Capitalism and Inequality also examines the measurement of inequality. Economists Thomas Piketty and Emmanuel Saez have measured income inequality using tax returns. The research, popularized in Piketty's book *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, argues that the U.S. experienced modest inequality after World War II but worsening inequality since the 1980s. Furthermore, high Federal income tax rates (90 percent until the 1960s and 70 percent until the 1980s) contained inequality.

Taxable income proves unreliable with the Reagan tax cuts. The reform sought to lower the high tax rates which made avoiding taxes more remunerative than earning income. Lower tax rates would produce less income sheltering and faster growth.

Tax return measured inequality jumps significantly in 1987, after the Tax Reform Act of 1986 lowered the top tax rate to 28 percent. No fundamental economic change could have created such an immediate spike in inequality. This is the predicted reporting of previously sheltered income.

The top income tax rate, furthermore, does not necessarily reveal the burden on high earners, or its progressivity. Economists have constructed comprehensive measures of tax progressivity based on households' shares of taxes paid and income earned. These measures show that the Federal income tax is more progressive now than during the 1950s and 1960s. So much for the income tax holding inequality in check.

In economics and other social sciences, our approach can affect how we interpret what we observe. *Capitalism and Inequality* seriously challenges the narrative of worsening that inequality requiring punitive taxes on our economy's great wealth creators.

Open House set for IDEA Bank, SBDC at Troy University

April 9/8 a.m. - 10 a.m./IDEA Bank on the Square in Troy: The Troy University IDEA Bank and the Small Business Development Center at Troy University is hosting an open house for community and business members in the area. The IDEA Bank is located at 63 S. Court Sq. in downtown Troy and serves everyone from TROY students to small business owners to non-profit and government organizations. It is administered by the University's Division of Advancement and Economic Development.



Contact: Clif Lusk or Matt Clower
334-268-9982



Tornadoes Devastate Alabama in March

While we are aware in the Deep South of the possibilities of tornadoes during our erratic spring weather, we prepare for the worst and hope for the best.

Unfortunately, this March plagued Alabama with numerous tornadoes. Any loss of life is tragic, but the number of deaths in light of the catastrophic damage during these outbreaks was minimal. Television meteorologist and weather personnel remained on high alert and worked around the clock to provide the latest developments in tornadic activity. These men and women are to be admired for their dedication and commitment to keeping Alabama safe! We also extend a huge thank you to the linemen and other services personnel who worked nonstop to protect the public and restore utilities. First responders are also to be commended as are so many in communities that are unnamed.

These images are from the tornado that first swept through Dallas County and caused extensive damage in Burnsville on March 17, 2021, before continuing its destructive path in multiple other counties throughout that evening. Sadly, just over one week later, March 25, 2021, more tornadoes ravaged the State. This time, the destruction was greater and there was a loss of lives.

During these severe weather alerts, please be sure to follow Severe Weather Safety guidelines provided by <https://www.spc.noaa.gov>.



(above) A young lady drove to this house to escape the tornado and was in the car when the tress crushed her car. Luckily, she was unharmed.

Photos by Joey & Lynn Campbell

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Perry O. Hooper, Jr.

Republican State Executive Committee
Former State Representative

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The Double Standard has Completely Destroyed America’s Trust in the Media

When completely unfounded and unverified accusations of sexual misconduct against Supreme Court Nominee Brett Kavanaugh came out of the blue, Senator Elizabeth Warren and other leading Democrats screamed, “They must be believed.” The left demanded an FBI investigation into decades old allegations. They held up the confirmation hearings from proceeding. They made speeches on the record from the Senate floor. They contended Kavanaugh was unfit for the court merely because of the accusations. Editorials were written nationwide on Justice Kavanaugh’s unfitness for the court. White House reporters were relentless in demanding the President withdraw his nomination. No evidence was ever uncovered that gave credence to a single instance of inappropriate behavior on the Justice’s part. His family suffered tremendously during this ordeal. The Democrats and their allies in the press to this day have not apologized or written a retraction.

Fast forward to the 2020 Presidential Election. When Tara Reid made similar accusations against Democratic Presidential nominee Joe Biden, not a word. No reason to believe her, she was making it up. She was exaggerating. The press and the Democratic Party came to his aid. Good ole Joe from Scranton could not have done anything inappropriate. Even with decades of video evidence showing Biden touching women and his obsession with smelling women’s hair; Joe could have never crossed the line. They were sure of it. No editorial outrage against good ole Joe. He must be believed. The story just faded away.

They are at it again. The Democratic poster boy for excellence in leadership, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo is facing numerous allegations of wrongdoing. First for his coverup of nursing home deaths from Covid. His administration lied to the Department of Justice plain and simple. The Trump administration had no right to the actual statistics because it was an election year, and the media agrees. Cuomo was given an Emmy for his daily press briefings even as he was sending Covid-19 positive patients back to nursing homes to spread the disease. And now, Cuomo’s serial exploitation of women is being exposed. At this writing, seven very credible women have told their stories, and it is not pretty. Cuomo has been using his position of power to sexually assault women for years. Where is the mainstream media outrage? There is none. Where are the speeches from Democrats on the Senate floor? Is Joe Biden sending the DOJ to investigate? Nope. This is treatment is reserved for Republicans, not left-wing heroes.

Now there is a crisis on the border completely caused by Joe Biden’s reckless actions. His first actions as President were to tell the world we are rolling out the

red carpet for all illegals. Biden signed executive orders to deliver on his long-standing promises to illegals. He stopped construction on the border wall. Now, to no one’s surprise the illegals are pouring in, many Covid-19 positive. They are not being detained or tested. Many are unaccompanied minors looking for Uncle Joe. Where is the media outrage? There is none. The Biden Administration is blaming President Trump for not having enough welcome centers for this onslaught. The Kay Bailey Hutcheson Convention Center in Dallas has been turned into a “decompression center” for 15–17 year-old unaccompanied males at tremendous expense to the taxpayers. What is a few extra million dollars to the deficit? The media is completely agreeing with this insane logic.

It is so sad. We used to trust the mainstream media to give us facts. To hold both parties accountable for their actions. They do not even pretend anymore to be objective. Now, it is only their left-wing opinion and embracing the Biden administration’s actions. This double standard would be laughable if it were not so serious.

RESOLUTION Honoring President Trump PASSES

On February 27th, 2021, the Executive Committee of the Alabama Congressional Republican Party adopted Resolution No. 2021-08 honoring President Donald J. Trump. The Resolution was passed unanimously and declared Trump to be “one of the greatest and most effective Presidents in the 245-year history of this Republic.”

During a fundraiser at Mar-a-Lago for GOP Senate candidate Lynda Blanchard, March 13, 2021, Perry Hooper, Jr. proudly presented a copy of the framed Resolution to President Trump.



Perry Hooper, Jr., Ambassador and U.S. Senate Candidate Lynda Blanchard and John Blanchard with President Donald J. Trump being presented with the framed Resolution No. 2021-08 during the Mar-a-Lago fundraiser March 13, 2021.



John Martin

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

TAX FILING HEADACHES

Once again, it is time for all Americans to endure the annual ritual of filing and paying their income taxes. Every year, it seems to become more time consuming and more problematic.

Last year, the IRS published some new schedules to go with the form 1040 and its numerous schedules. However, they did not replace or substitute for any existing paperwork. They were in addition to it. The bad news was that this small booklet didn’t include any of the

other schedules that we had filed in the past and still needed to file. Nor were they provided on the rack that had contained them in the past. No printed instructions for them were included either.

The local library said they could be downloaded from [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov) and printed out at 25 cents per page. There were multiple pages to print, including extra copies for personal records. Instructions also had to be downloaded, and printed copies would include many additional pages.

This year, the library remained closed since March, 2020, but finally re-opened on March 15 of this year, barely a month before the initial April 15 deadline (just advanced to May 17 as I am writing this). I had earlier stopped by a post office to get some forms and found none at all. When I asked a lady who worked there, she told me that the IRS no longer produces printed forms, schedules, or instructions; they all have to be downloaded and printed at the taxpayer’s expense.

She was not quite right on that. The IRS did still print the forms 1040 and 1040-SR (for seniors), along with instructions and schedules 1, 2, and 3. But printed copies of any other needed schedules and their instructions were not provided.

Why does the IRS continue to make it difficult for people to file and pay their taxes? Don’t the tax collectors know that if they want compliance and minimal mistakes, that keeping the process simple and providing all of the materials needed will help make it happen?

This appears to be a scheme that the IRS is concocting to force everybody to file online, and professional tax preparers completely agree. One told me that he doesn’t even do paper returns any more—it’s all online, and the fancy, expensive software that he uses (that he must re-purchase every year to cover changes) does much of the preparation automatically.

Some people like filing online and find it convenient. Refunds can be delivered sooner this way. If you expect a refund most of the time, online filing is probably right for you. Of course the IRS finds it more convenient and can process more returns with less work and manpower. But not all taxpayers like it. Some choose to avoid exposing their bank accounts to hackers and ransomware. Some have found it daunting and fraught with problems for various other reasons. Sometimes the IRS software refuses to process a return for want of an unknown input. Some people are die-hard old schoolers who don’t like being pushed around.

There are portions of our state where internet service is not even available. Even where it is, many areas are serviced with only a single, expensive provider. Combine that with closed libraries, the only option for many people with no internet. And finally, how do we deal with those who live off the grid, are computer illiterate or too poor to own computers, purchase internet service, or pay professional tax preparers?

For many years, filing and paying taxes has continued to become more difficult. The earliest forms, beginning in 1913, consisted of a single page that could be filled out by a novice in a few minutes. Furthermore, only the wealthy had to file or pay any taxes, and the rates were very low—ranging from one percent to a maximum of five percent for multi-millionaires. And don’t forget that a dollar back then was worth fifty or more of today’s dollars.

Over time, tax rates kept rising, and tax returns became more complex, although nothing like the paperwork jungles of today. The Franklin D. Roosevelt regime jacked taxes up sharply, especially in the days after Pearl Harbor. By that time, the threshold of taxable income had dropped down to the poverty level and all but the poorest paupers were required to file and pay taxes. In addition to increased rates, tax withholding began—a scheme that was in part invented by Nobel laureate Milton Friedman to help provide funds for the war effort. After the war, the withholding still remains until today. Friedman later admitted that coming up with the idea was one of his greatest regrets.

Tax rates continued to rise. At one point during the 1950’s, the maximum rate rose to 90 percent for the wealthiest taxpayers, although generous deductions were provided to mitigate the impact.

During the latter half of the 20th century, one of the most painful increases, especially for lower income people, was the FICA tax—up from a modest one percent in 1950 all the way up to 15.3 percent for the self-employed by 1985. Tax returns continued to grow bigger and more complicated.

The IRS people at least provided printed copies of all of the papers that we needed to file our returns. Up until 2010 (for 2009 taxes), they always provided a complete booklet in the mail that contained everything—even including an address label and envelope in which to send the return. That was the last year of automatic deliveries of complete forms and instructions. Note “FORMS & INSTRUCTIONS” in the photo. Never has that been provided in any subsequent year.

From 2011 until 2019, needed paperwork could be picked up at local libraries and post offices although in later years, a few necessary pages had to be printed from online. In 2020, the IRS quit providing anything except the small booklet with the 1040 forms and the new schedules. It may not be long before there is no printed material at all.

Up until and including last year (2020), we could call an IRS number (800-829-3676) to order forms by mail. That year, it worked fine. A lady promptly answered and took my request. I received the needed materials a few days later. I attempted to order forms and instructions this year with the same number. It seemed to work at first, but when

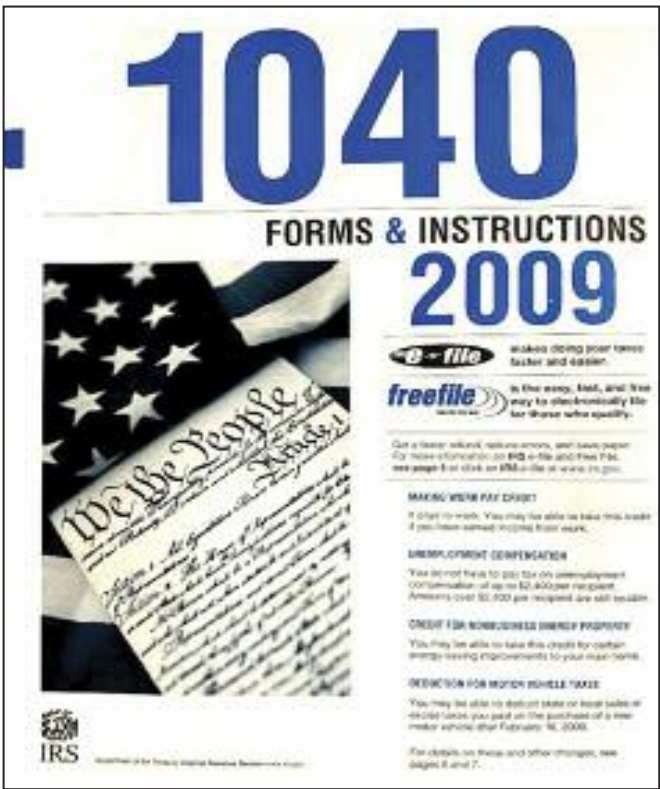
it came time for someone to answer, I was put on hold, which I expected in the beginning. But I stayed on hold—10 minutes, 30 minutes, an hour—until finally my phone battery died. Repeating the procedure another day ended up with the same result—nobody available to take an order—just loud music. So say goodbye to mail order forms.

The news media does not seem to show much interest in addressing tax filing problems. Newspapers, magazines, radio, TV, the internet, and others are wrapped up in COVID-19 issues and have said little about tax issues, except a brief mention in January that new tax forms for 2020 would not be ready until February 12. We were (then) given only a two month window to get our returns prepared and filed. That means more mistakes and more wasted time and anguish to deal with unfamiliar new changes on short notices. And of course, refunds are going to be delayed this year.

If the IRS is really serious about getting people to co-operate in paying their taxes, it should stop putting roadblocks in the way. Quit trying to force people to file online; give everybody the option to file either way. Scrap the new protocols and go back to the simpler forms and procedures of a few decades ago.

Keep tax filing simple. Avoid needless questions and inputs. Avoid frequent and needless changes. Avoid confusing language. Avoid anything that causes trouble and consumes excessive amounts of the taxpayers’ time.

For people who file paper forms, help them with the complete booklets used back then—complete—with two copies of all forms and schedules and instructions for all of them contained therein. And add a nice touch, an addressed, postpaid, return envelope.



The Civil War



260,000+ Confederate deaths

They were all Americans before they were divided into Confederates and Union soldiers.

“Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” Philosopher George Santayana.

“It was a war people thought would be over in three months but lasted four horrible years (1861-1865), and the cost was more American lives than in all other American wars combined. By the end of the Civil War, over 360,000 Union and approximately 260,000 Confederate soldiers would be dead. It remains the greatest, and the most tragic, even in American history, where an incalculable sacrifice of “brothers’ blood” was spilled to restore to one a nation bitterly torn in two.” (The American Patriot’s Bible)

Confederate Memorial Day is observed in several Southern U.S. states since the end of the Civil War to remember the Confederate soldiers who died in military service until the final surrender April 26, 1865.

360,000+ Union deaths



<http://www.pacivilwarflags.org>

“The Informed Southerner”

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

ABRAHAM LINCOLN’S REASON FOR WAR

Abe Lincoln was determined to keep the Union together and deny Southern Independence. Although antithetical to the creation of these united States, the “unbreakable union myth” was supported by some in

Lincoln’s era as it is now; however, there is more to the story.

Lincoln stated the pivotal reason for war in his First Inaugural Address of Monday, March 4, 1861: “The power confided to me will be used to hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the Government and to collect the duties and imposts; but beyond what may be necessary for these objects, there will be no invasion, no using of force against or among the people anywhere.”

After seven States seceded, Lincoln agreed to meet with Southern peace seekers:

First Meeting: On April 4, 1861, John Brown Baldwin of Virginia met with Lincoln in Washington, D.C. After introductory conversation, Baldwin quickly realized the area of concern when Lincoln asked, “Well ... what about the revenue? What would I do about the collection of duties?” Baldwin asked about the amount of yearly revenue loss. Lincoln responded “fifty or sixty millions.” Baldwin said a loss of two hundred and fifty million dollars (based on a four-year presidential term) would be trivial compared to the cost of war and Virginia had a plan to resolve the issue.

Lincoln added, “And open Charleston, etc., as ports of entry, with their ten per cent tariff. What, then, would become of my tariff?” ... “I ought to have known this sooner! You are too late, sir, too late! Why did you not come here four days ago, and tell me all this?” Baldwin replied: “Why, Mr. President, you did not ask our advice. Besides, as soon as we received permission to tender it, I came by the first train, as fast as steam could bring me.” Another fact omitted by Lincoln was that he had authorized reinforcement of Forts Sumter and Pickens on March 29 and the ships were preparing to sail.

Second Meeting: A.H.H. Stuart confirmed the accuracy of Baldwin’s account to Stonewall Jackson’s Chief of Staff, Rev. Robert L. Dabney. Stuart, William B. Preston and George W. Randolph, spoke with Lincoln on April 12-13, 1861, and received a similar message. “I remember,” says Mr. Stuart, “that he used this homely expression: ‘If I do that, what will become of my revenue? I might as well shut up housekeeping at once.’” Lincoln insinuated he opposed war; however, the day after their meeting the train on which they returned to Richmond carried the proclamation calling for 75,000 troops to coerce the seceded States.

Third Meeting: Another compromise effort was detailed in the April 23, 1861, edition of the Baltimore Exchange and reprinted in the May 8, 1861, edition of the Memphis Daily Avalanche. This involved a meeting between a group led by Dr. Richard Fuller, a preacher (and Southern Baptist who baptized Annie Armstrong) from the Seventh Baptist Church in Baltimore, and Lincoln.

The article states:

We learned that a delegation from five of the Young Men’s Christian Associations of Baltimore, consisting of six members each, yesterday (April 22, 1861) proceeded to Washington for an interview with the President, the purpose being to intercede with him in behalf a peaceful policy, and to entreat him not to pass troops through Baltimore or Maryland.

Fuller conducted the interview and offered a plea for peaceful recognition of Southern rights. Lincoln responded, “But what am I to do? ... what shall become of the revenue? I shall have no government? No resources?”

In the first paragraph of the April 19, 1861, Blockade Proclamation, Lincoln stated his fiscal concerns: “the laws of the United States for the collection of the revenue can not be effectually executed ...”

Lyon Gardiner Tyler (son of President John Tyler), relying heavily on his father’s insight, explained:



...the deciding factor with him (Lincoln) was the tariff question. In three separate interviews, he asked what would become of his revenue if he allowed the government at Montgomery to go on with their ten percent tariff ... Final action was taken when nine governors of high tariff states waited upon Lincoln and offered him men and supplies.

Dabney summed up Lincoln’s actions: “His single objection, both to the wise advice of Colonel Baldwin and Mr. Stuart, was: “Then what would become of my tariffs?” Lincoln saw a free trade policy in the South as an economic threat to the North that could not be allowed. Dabney lamented, “he preferred to destroy the Union and preserve his [redistributive] tariffs.”

This unnecessary war benefitted the federal government, railroads and other government-connected corporations, and the bankers who financed and profited from the war and its aftermath.

Sources: “Interview Between President Lincoln and Col. John B. Baldwin, April 4th, 1861, Statements and Evidence,” at: <https://archive.org/details/interviewbetween00bald>; Bruce Gourley, “Baptists and the American Civil War: April 23, 1861,” In *Their Own Words*, April 23, 2011, <http://www.civilwarbaptists.com/thisdayinhistory/1861-april-23/>, (As reprinted in the *Memphis Daily Avalanche*, May 8, 1861, p. 1, col. 4); Lyon Gardiner Tyler, *The Gray Book: A Confederate Catechism*, 1997). Originally printed in Tyler’s *Quarterly* in Volume 33, October and January issues, 1935; and <https://archive.org/details/interviewbetween00bald> – *State of Indiana & Indiana State University*.

Confederate Memorial Day is April 26, 2021
Lest We Forget.

Many Never Returned.



Photo courtesy Library of Congress

The impoverished people of the South had no money for headstones, even for those who did return.

A generation later, your grandfathers and great-grandmothers scraped together enough money to honor the memory of those patriotic sons of the South who challenged an army invading their country, threatening their families and homes.

This is why Confederate Monuments were erected!

Confederate Memorial Day is April 26th. Lest we forget.

Sons of Confederate Veterans
Alabama Division, alscv.org.

Support local Law Enforcement



Sheriff Derrick Cunningham



Montgomery County, Ala. Sheriff's Office

(334) 832-4980 ♦ www.montgomerysheriff.com

Anyone entering a County building is required to wear a mask or face covering, have their temperature checked, and practice social distancing.

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:

- Go to your phone's setting icon
- Scroll down and click "Applications"
- Scroll down to "MCSO" or "Montgomery county sheriff "O"
- 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!

Community Relations Events

As you can imagine with the COVID-19 pandemic, our Community Relations events have been postponed or cancelled. We are monitoring the situation closely so please check back monthly for updates.

Social Media

Social Media

Facebook Sheriff of Montgomery Alabama
Instagram Mcsoal
Snapchat mcso.alabama
Twitter MG_Twitter



Chief Deputy Kevin J. Murphy

COURTHOUSE ANNEX I CONSTRUCTION

- As renovations progress on Montgomery County Annex I, located at 100 S. Lawrence Street, the public entrance and security screening will temporarily move to the entrance on Adams Street between Lawrence Street and Perry Street.

Autauga County Alabama

SHERIFF'S OFFICE



Sheriff Joe Sedinger

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.autaugasheriff.org

162 W 4th St, Prattville, AL ♦ (334) 361-2500

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Autauga County Sheriff's Office



Supporting Autauga County Nonprofit's



PAHS
Prattville / Autauga Humane Society
Give Hope to the Animals
Bleach, Dish Soap, Toilet Paper,
Laundry Detergent, Puppy &
Kitten Chow (No Red Dyes)
Cat Litter - Clay Type, Dog &
Cat Toys & Treats, Ink: Epson
220, 822 HP: 950, 951, 902



Autauga Interfaith CARE CENTER
Feed the Hungry
Monetary Donations
Can Goods
Please no clothing at this time



Bringing Loved Ones Home
Monetary Donation
The Average Cost to Outfit a Person
with a Bracelet is \$375.00
Make Checks Payable to: Project Life Saver



BUTTERFLY BRIDGE
CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER
AUTAUGA COUNTY
Protect the Children
Juice Boxes, Pop Tarts, Individual
Packed Snacks, Microwaveable: Mac
& Cheese or Chef Boyardee
Canned Soft Drinks, Bottled Water,
Lysol, Paper Towels, Hand Soap,
Copy Paper, U.S. Postal Stamps,
Small Art Canvases, Journals,
Light Bulbs, Trash Bags 13 & 30 Gal.



River Region
PREGNANCY CENTER
Save the Babies
Diapers, Wipes, Baby Shampoo,
Lotion, Diaper Rash Cream,
Play Pins, Boppy Pillows,
New Car Seats
(They can not give used ones)

The Autauga County Sheriff's Office is Supporting our local nonprofits. The Sheriff's Office will be taking donations from April 1, 2021 - June 1, 2021. If you would like to help one or all of these great organizations you may drop your donation off at the Sheriff's Office or mail to: 162 West 4th Street Prattville, AL 36067 or call (334) 361-2500 for someone to come pick up your donation when in the area. Donations may be monetary or something from the organizations wish list. As a Thank You the Sheriff's Office will be providing a lunch for your kind and thoughtful donations. When the date and time are set for a drive through lunch we will make sure to contact you. Thank You for all your help and support for the Autauga County Sheriff's Office and our community.

Southern Gardening

Potpourri for April



Judge Peggy Givhan

April to me is a joyful month of budding spring blooms with lots of flowering trees and shrubs. The dark days of winter have given way to cool nights, mild day time temperatures, plenty of sunshine and usually plenty of showers. As they say, “April showers bring May flowers,” Easter on April 6th, reminds all of God's love for mankind and the many blessings He has bestowed upon us. The Easter season would not be complete without Easter baskets filled with colored straw, jelly beans, chocolate rabbits, peeps and other familiar candies. And here comes Peter Cottontail, hopping down the bunny trail. All of this gives the world hope of better days ahead.

Some tasks that need to be completed now fall into 3 categories, weeding, adding fresh soil and fertilizing. Remember when we first started the garden beds, the slate so to speak was blank. Referring to the plan we devised, we added fresh garden soil, fertilizer and then either seed or the plants. The first thing we could do this month is to refurbish the soil. If you have to dig up some perennials and heal them in, I would do it. If you have sown some seed in an area of the bed, just work around it. About a 1-inch of soil will do the trick – I call it a top dressing. Next I fertilize with a commercial fertilizer 8-8-8 or 10-10-10 and work it into the soil. In June I use a time-release choice. Now plant your cool weather annuals such as petunias, begonias, geraniums and other perennials. If some perennials you wanted are not available, substitute. Make sure that the light, height, and water requirements fit that particular area of the garden. April is the proper time to fertilize bulbs that have finished blooming. Let the blooms and leaves completely die back, becoming yellow and limp. Cutting them back to the top of the bulb will insure they have been nourished for strong blooms next spring.

If you have plants in containers such as ferns, parlor palms, sago palms, then take this opportunity to repot them. Some nurseries throw away black plastic pots and upon asking, would let you carry them home free. The new pot needs to be at least 2-4 inches wider than the old one. When repotting, you will

observe the roots are very tightly wound with the roots twining around the root ball. Break up this maze and let those roots out of that prison. You can even cut off about 4 inches from the bottom, which will jumpstart the roots once they have a new fresh "home". I use an outdoor table, garden shears, and a sharp knife to man handle the roots and to repot with fresh soil.

PLANT OF THE MONTH – MEXICAN HEATHER (Cuphea hyssopifolia)

I have had very good luck with this perennial in my garden. A colorful woody stemmed plant that originated in Mexico and Guatemala with mauve to light lilac-colored tiny flowers, Mexican Heather is a great addition to any flowerbed. It is very hardy and can withstand low temperatures in winter. Just mulch heavily so that the roots do not freeze. I must have over 20 plants at the farm in Dallas County, which I mulched with pine straw. A month ago, the temps got down to 15 degrees for a couple of nights, and yesterday I did see shoots appearing from the roots. Drought resistant and with few pests, I use these as fillers around taller flowers such as zinnias. They are constant bloomers and carry the beds when I have had to pull out and replace other flowers. These plants look great in mass plantings or large drifts and should perform well until a killing frost. Mexican Heather can be found in nurseries and big box stores around the Montgomery area.



HAPPY EASTER AND GOOD GARDENING.



Stan Hurst
Sports Writer



From Pigskins to Rawhides

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

The Alabama Gazette's Sports Writer, Stan Hurst, had to take the month off. We look forward to hearing from him again in upcoming issues. In the meantime, we were fortunate to have a great article sent in for this space.



REAL MEN PLAYED SOFTBALL

Contributed by Kim Evans

Slow-pitch softball was extremely popular during the 1970s and 80s, and in 1977, with the opening of Lagoon Park, a state of the art complex, Montgomery became the epicenter of the softball world. Countless teams traveled here from all over the southeast and beyond nearly every weekend during the spring and summer to compete in top-notch tournaments. The local leagues were competitive and well organized, with games scheduled every night of the work week. All teams were sanctioned by the Amateur Softball Association (ASA), the governing body of organized softball. Many championship teams and great players were products of the Lagoon Park legacy.

On March 13, 2021, three of these outstanding local players were inducted into the Alabama ASA Hall of Fame at a banquet held at the Belk Center in Tuscaloosa. Brother Beaird, Steve Bailey, and Mike Pirtle were among the 16 softball legends from across the state to be honored at this annual event. Master of Ceremonies Jerry Logan welcomed the crowd of approximately 150, followed by Rev. Herman Bell's rendition of our National Anthem, which he played on his harmonica (with all in attendance proudly standing). A delicious meal, catered by George Robertson's BBQ, was served prior to the induction ceremony.

Sadly Brother Beaird passed away in October of 2020, a victim of Covid-19, but was admirably represented by his brother, Bill. With a picture of Brother placed on a table on the stage, the three Montgomery men graciously gave their acceptance speeches, with each one giving thanks and credit to God, family, teammates, coaches, sponsors, and the selection committee for their roles in contributing to the successful softball careers. Bill read a speech that Brother had written a year earlier, providing an emotional and inspiration moment for all in attendance.

Former ASA State Commissioner Pat Atkinson presented each inductee with a handsome plaque. Afterward, many pictures were taken, fist bumps replaced handshakes, and war stories of the "glory days" were recanted. It was a good time had by all.

Congratulations to Bro. Beaird, Steve Bailey, and Mike Pirtle on their selection to the Alabama ASA Hall of Fame. And thank you for graciously and humbly representing the Montgomery area and the entire softball community in such a professional and honorable manner.

For more information or to submit a nominee, visit: www.alabamaasahalloffame.org



Alabama ASA Hall of Fame 2020 and 2021 inductees: Bill Beaird holding a picture of Brother Baeird, Mike Pirtle, and Steve Bailey at state softball HOF induction ceremony held March 13, 2021.

2020 Alabama ASA Hall of Fame Inductees

James "Brother" Beaird (dec.)	Slow Pitch Player
Mike Delozier	Slow Pitch Player
Rodney Ethridge	Fast Pitch Player
Tina Rood Hopper	Slow Pitch Player
Donny Jones	Slow Pitch Player
Jean Lewis (dec.)	Slow Pitch Player
Michelle Lewis	Slow Pitch Player
Clark Livingston	Meritorious
John Plott	Fast Pitch Sponsor

2021 Alabama ASA Hall of Fame Inductees

Steve Bailey	Slow Pitch Player
Sonny Burnette	Fast Pitch Player
Gary (Babe) Entreken	Slow Pitch Player
Wallace Miller	Umpire
Mike Pirtle	Slow Pitch Player
Charles (Pete) Wickham	Meritorious
Lori Westbrook Wyatt	Slow Pitch Player



The Alabama ASA Hall of Fame Trust sponsors the Hall of Fame Ceremony annually, honoring eight individuals who have brought attention to the great game of softball through their performances through much of their lives, whether by playing, managing, umpiring, sponsoring, administering, or a combination of these skills, and/or a high level of promotional support. We thank them, salute them, and honor them by placing them into the Alabama ASA Hall of Fame.



Belk Activity Center, Home of the Alabama ASA Hall of Fame
Photo: <http://www.alabamaasahalloffame.org>

The Lagoon Park Softball Complex, recognized as one of the premiere softball facilities in the United States, hosts most of the area's league and tournament play. Each of the six Lagoon Park softball fields feature closely manicured clay infields, Tifton Bermuda Grass outfields and seating for 1,000. Photo: www.montgomeryal.gov

"THE PEOPLE'S PAPER"

1B

THE ALABAMA

Gazette

Montgomery, Autauga, Elmore, Crenshaw, Tallapoosa,
Pike and Surrounding Counties

Community
Lifestyles



Alabama Gazette Distribution Area

Dorothy Alice Mariah Adams and Nelson Straub Bean, Jr.

Joined in Holy Matrimony

March 13, 2021

*Spring is in the air and the
bride's bouquet is flying.*

Dorothy Alice Mariah Adams, daughter of Sam and Mary Adams, and Nelson Straub Bean, Jr., son of Nelson and Kimberly Bean, were bound together in Holy Matrimony March 13, 2021 at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Montgomery.

The church was elegantly decorated with soft white and pink roses as the attendees listened to glorious music from organist Ed Patterson and cellist Chin Mei Lei. Reverend Patrick Curles officiated. Included in the wedding party was the groom's father and brother as best men and a score of groomsmen and bridesmaids.

The bride's sisters, Mary Elizabeth Grant and Sarah Ross Adams (pictured with the bride, left) participated in the blessed event by singing the Lord's Prayer and

reading scripture, respectively. The father of the bride gave Ali away.

The Montgomery Country Club proved to be an excellent venue for the reception. Beautifully flowing was the elegant double staircase as guests entered the Grand Hall to be served with champagne flutes. Guests gleefully watched Nelson and Ali take the first dance. Delicious food and drinks lasted throughout the night. The couple joined hands to cut the ceremonially delicious bride's and groom's cakes. Family and friends partook in the revelry to include a toast made to the newlywed couple by Ali's Mystical King of Athenians.

The musical entertainment provided by Az Izz, of Atlanta, kept the party rocking well into the wee hours.

The happy couple made their departure out the front of the MCC and down the steps lined with a dazzling array of sparklers by cheering onlookers.

A restored 1965 Volvo, which holds a special memory for the family, gently glided Nelson and Ali to a restful night at the Renaissance Hotel in the honeymoon suite where they prepared for an extended honeymoon in Hawaii.

Upon a successful return from their jaunts to several lovely islands, including Maui and Lanai, the couple will reside in Birmingham.



All Photo Credits to David Robertson of Robertson Photography.

Send in Your Engagement Announcements & Wedding Events!

We will be happy to print your announcements and events in upcoming issues of the Alabama Gazette.

Send to: ALGazetteSubmit@gmail.com (Length of article and size/number of pictures allowed as space permits)



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Dr. Martha Poole Simmons

Honoring Our Heroes

**Brigadier General Trent H. Edwards:
Age 53**

Brigadier General Trent H. Edwards served 30 years in the United States Air Force. His Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) was Financial Management and Comptroller. Although he was trained as a financial manager, he really excelled in taking care of people by connecting and empowering people at the individual and organization-level. This highly decorated officer received the following awards and decorations: Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit with Oak Leaf Clusters, Bronze Star Medal with Oak Leaf Clusters, Meritorious Service Medal with five Oak Leaf Clusters, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal with Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Force Achievement Medal, Air Outstanding Unit Award with four Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Force Excellence Award with Oak Leaf Clusters, National Defense Service Medal with bronze star, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Services Medal and NATO Medal.

General Edwards was born April 4, 1967, to his parents, Kelvin and Royaline Edwards, in Portsmouth, NH. He was reared in Kittery, ME, and graduated from Traip Academy in 1985 followed by graduation from North Carolina A&T State University with a B.S. Degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing. Later, he received a Master's Degree in Human Relations from the University of Oklahoma in 1996 and a Master's Degree in National Security Studies from the Air War College, Maxwell AFB, AL in 2008.

Entering military service in May 1990, General Edwards's first Air Force assignment after finishing college was serving as the Deputy/Accounting/Finance Officer, 401st Comptroller Squadron at Aviano, Italy, July 1990-July 1993. He continued to be deployed overseas first serving at Kunsan AB, South Korea, as Chief Financial Services, 8th Comptroller Squadron June 1993-July 1994. Then he served as Deputy Commander, Regional Accounting Finance Office, Osan AB, South Korea, July 1994-July 1995 followed by serving as 7th Air Force Budget Officer, 51st Fighter Wing, Osan AB, South Korea. His next overseas assignment was as Chief, Financial Analysis, 18th Comptroller Squadron, Kadena AB, Japan.

Following his overseas assignments, General Edwards completed nine assignments within the USA. First, he served as Chief Budget Integration Branch, Comptroller Directorate, Headquarters Air Education and Training Command at Randolph Air Force Base (AFB), Texas, August 1998-October 1998. Continuing at his location there, he served as the Aide to Commander, Headquarters AETC, October 1998-July 2000. He next moved to the Washington, D.C. area and first served as Chief, Congressional Affairs, Legislative Liaison, Office of the Secretary of the Air Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, VA, July 2000-October 2001. This was followed by serving as Legislative Fellow to Congressman J.C. Watts Jr. at Washington, D.C. October 2001-October 2002. His next assignment was serving as Subject Matter Expert to the Financial Management Transformation Office, Financial/Comptroller Office of the Secretary of the Air Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, VA, October 2002-January 2003.

General Edwards served in leadership as the Commander, 92nd Comptroller Squadron Fairchild AFB, WA, February 2003-June 2005. He also deployed to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba in 2003. He next served as Commander 88th Comptroller Squadron, Wright-Patterson AFB, OH, July 2005-June 2007. He deployed once

again in 2006 to Iraq where he served with an Army Special Operations unit. He completed training as a student at the Air War College, Maxwell AFB, AL July 2007-May 2008 and then returned to the Pentagon to serve as the Senior Military Assistant, Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), Washington, D.C., June 2008-May 2009. He served in a combat zone at Kabul, Afghanistan, as the Director, Programs and Comptroller, CJ8, NATO Training Mission and Combined Security Transition Command May 2009-May 2010.

Returning to the mainland, General Edwards completed five assignments. First, he served as the Commander, 28th Mission Support Group, Ellsworth, AFB, SD, August 2010-June 2012. Then he served as Commander, 42nd Air Base Wing Maxwell AFB, AL, June 2012-May 2014, and then he served as Commander, 37th Training Wing, Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, TX, June 2014-May 2016. Next, he served as Director, Programming, Financial Management and Comptroller, Headquarters Air Force Space Command, Peterson AFB, CO, June 2016-December 2017. His last military assignment was Director, Budget Operations and Personnel Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Financial Management and Comptroller, the Pentagon, Arlington, VA, retiring December 1, 2019.

Since his military retirement, General Edwards has worked as Senior Vice President of Military and Community Development at the Montgomery, AL, Chamber of Commerce. His main interest is to ensure, grow and protect the mission at Maxwell AFB and at Gunter AFB Annex and to facilitate this community's continuation of support for the military. He is also President and CEO of his own company, T.H. Edwards Consulting, LLC.

General Edwards and his wife, Vanessa, have been married 18 years, and they have a 13 year-old son named Dylan. He is proud to have served and to be a husband and a dad. They enjoy hanging out together such as watching movies and eating good food, and they enjoy cooking. They participate in the virtual worship services of Agape International Spiritual Center. He serves the Montgomery community by serving on the Board of Directors of the Montgomery Council on Aging (MCOA). He serves on the Board of Directors at Navy Federal Credit Union, and he also serves as a mentor with the Tiger Woods Foundation and as an advisor to the Air Force Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion. He joys exercises such as playing golf and running.

General Edwards' conclusions about his military service and his life are, "After serving 30 years in the military, it was my honor and privilege to take care of those who raised their hand to support and defend the Constitution of the United States and to take care of them and their families as they sacrificed so much to protect our freedoms and democratic way of life. It is always about the man, woman, Sailor, Soldier, Airman and the Marine who have come from all walks of life and decided that they are going to dedicate a portion of their life to serving our nation. It is always the people and the amazing things that we can accomplish when we work together for a common cause. Now often when former Air Force personnel come up to me, they might thank me for mentoring them or remind me of a time that we worked on a project together or shared time together with our families. There is nothing more rewarding than this. It is all about others, treating everyone with respect and dignity and helping them to become the best version of themselves. To grow, mentor and develop the next generation of leaders is an awesome responsibility and privilege. This is a team sport, and it takes the entire military team to succeed and that includes families. Family members serve and sacrifice as well. We have to ensure our policies, processes and procedures also support spouses, children and extended families. Leadership sets the tone and creates the right environment and the atmosphere where people can not only serve the mission, but they can also ensure they can take care of their families. The things that I am most proud of are my family, my wife and my son. I would not be where I am today without their love and support. I am proud and happy to be back in Montgomery. I believe in Montgomery. There is so much potential here, and I am committed to doing my part to help grow the Montgomery community. The best way to impact change is to live here and be a part of it."

MSGT Robert C. Carr Jr: Age 56


MSGT Robert C. Carr Jr. served in Alabama Air National Guard for 29 years. His Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) was Munitions Systems Craftsman 2W071. His awards and decorations include: Air Force Commendation Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Force Achievement Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, Meritorious Unit Award, AF Outstanding Unit Award with Valor Device with five Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Reserve



Forces Meritorious Service Medal with eight Oak Leaf Clusters, National Defense Service Medal with one Service Star, Iraq Campaign Medal with One Service Star, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon with Gold Border with one Oak Leaf Cluster, AF Longevity Service with four Oak Leaf Clusters, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with two Hourglasses with "M" Device, Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon (Rifle), AF Training Ribbon, AL Commendation Medal with one Device, AL Veterans Service Medal, AL

National Emergency Service Medal, AL Faithful Service Medal with six Devices and AL Active Duty Basic Training Medal

MSGT Carr was born December 4, 1963, to his parents, Robert Chester Carr Sr. and Martha McGowan Carr at Montgomery, AL, where he was reared. He graduated from Jefferson Davis High School in 1982, and he joined the Alabama Air National Guard January 26, 1984, during the time of the Cold War because he wanted to serve his country. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree from Auburn University at Montgomery in 1991. In addition, he earned an Associate Degree in Applied Science-Logistics Management from the Community College of the U.S. Air Force at Maxwell Air Force Base.

MGST Carr has had a variety of experiences in employment. At the age of 16, he began work at a Food World grocery store beginning as a Utility Clerk and working his way up to Cashier in the Produce Dept. and then with the Meat Dept. completing 10 years of part-time work while he was in school resulting in his earning vested retirement when he reaches age 60. He worked as an insurance representative with his dad with the State Farm Insurance Co. for eight years. Then he operated his own Insurance Agency with Farmers Insurance Group for 22 years retiring in 2015. He served 20 years as a member of the National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors (NAIFA) where he served as President of the South Central Alabama Association and served on the Board of Directors of N.A.I.F.A. Alabama.

MSGT Carr served with the U.S. Air Force 187th Fighter Wing of the

Alabama Air National Guard at Dannelly Field ANGB, Montgomery, AL. At the time of his enlistment, the unit had just converted from the McDonnell Douglas photo-reconnaissance RF-4C to the McDonnell Douglas F-4D Phantom II, a tandem two-seat, twin-engine, all-weather, long-range supersonic jet interceptor and fighter-bomber. In 1988, the 187th began to receive early General Dynamics F-16A/B Block 10 Fighting Falcons, a single-engine supersonic multirole fighter. By the time MSGT Carr retired, the unit had upgraded to F-16C/D Block 30 Fighting Falcons. His duties included "Ammo" dealing with receiving, inspecting, storage, buildup, configuring and transporting munitions to the flight line. Those who have served in AMMO all know the acronym I.Y.A.A.Y.A.S. During his last five years of service, he was transferred from "Ammo" to the Quality Assurance Office and served as the QA Inspector for the "Ammo" Element. He was deployed on active duty to a classified location in 2003 to the Middle East with the 410th Air Expeditionary Wing for the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom and again in 2006 with the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing at Balad Air Base Iraq. During his off duty time, he volunteered to serve in the Balad Air Force Theater Hospital OR and ER, a level 1 trauma center which boasted a 98% survival rate for wounded Americans and Iraqis. This is where he witnessed the true horrors of war. In addition, he deployed on active duty to Korea and then to Argentina where the 187th was called upon for a diplomatic mission to help normalize military relations with the Argentine Air Force after relations chilled because of the United States support of Britain during the 1982 Falkland Islands War. He distinctly remembers a DOD official stating, "The 187th with its professionalism, expertise, and 'Southern Charm' were perfect for this delicate reintroduction." MSGT Carr retired from military service December 31, 2012.

MSGT Carr and his wife, Brenda, have been married 27 years, and they have one child. He takes care of his elderly father. He has been a member of Frazer United Methodist Church for 27 years, and he sings tenor in the choir at the traditional services. In addition, he has sung with the Frazer Good News Singers and the Frazer Men's Quartet. He has been a member of the Dixie Lions Club of Montgomery for 32 years, served as its secretary for 10 years and is currently serving his fourth term as President. He has been awarded the Melvin Jones Fellowship Award by Lions Clubs International. MSGT Carr is a life-time member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of The United States (VFW) and is now serving his third term as Post Commander of Smith-Wynn Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 96. In addition, he serves as the VFW Department of Alabama District Five Quartermaster, and he is a member of the American Legion Post Two in Montgomery, AL.

MSGT Carr's conclusions about his military service are, "When I was a kid, I was always very patriotic. I always loved my country. In my teens, I traveled to other countries with my dad. Being a young person and seeing the hardships and lack of freedoms in many other countries and what people had to go through, I knew when I got back home that I lived in the best place there was to live. I still wanted to continue with a career in business, but I also wanted to serve my country as well. That is what drove me to serve in the Alabama Air National Guard. The main things being in the military taught me were discipline, camaraderie, being there for your friends, and loyalty to the organizations for which I was a part. That in turn, taught me how to be loyal to God. It taught me to care for something other than myself all of the time and how to work together as a team. I learned how to organize to get things done. The Air Force Core Values; Integrity, Service Before Self, and Excellence in All You Do, still guide me today."

COL Margaret Leah Compton: Age 60

COL Margaret Leah Compton served 32 years and eight months in the Alabama Army National Guard. During those years, her decorations and medals included the Bronze Star, Meritorious Service (6th award), Army Achievement (2nd award), Meritorious Unit Commendation, Army Reserve Component Achievement (4th award), National Defense Service (2nd award) and Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal.

COL Compton was born March 29, 1960 to her parents, Jerry D. Compton and Margaret Compton in Montgomery, AL, where she was reared and graduated from Jefferson Davis High School in 1978. Then she graduated from Troy University with a B.S. Degree in Psychology with minors in Sociology and Criminal Justice. She worked as a dental assistant and obtained a dental hygienist's license.

In 1987, COL Compton joined the Alabama Army National Guard. She was an enlisted Soldier for five years and then attended the Alabama Military Academy Officer Candidate School where she was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. Her military occupational specialty (MOS) as an officer was Military Police, Human Resources, Adjutant General and Quartermaster. COL Compton worked full time with the National Guard throughout the state. In 2004-2005, she deployed to Iraq with a Military Police Battalion as the Executive Officer. After she returned from deployment, her unit was sent to assist the Mississippi National Guard after the devastating Hurricane Katrina hit that state. COL Compton remembers the eye opening and humbling experience like it was yesterday.

When reflecting upon her military service, COL Compton says, "I loved working with Soldiers and Airmen and their families especially at the time of the service person's deployment. Serving in the military has been so personable and rewarding. To wear that uniform every day and represent your State and your country knowing you made a difference and what you believe in, I get chill bumps just talking about it. I loved every minute of it. I have so many good friends that are like family to me that I would have never met. I feel like I was an asset to the National Guard and will never regret any of it."

Since her military retirement, COL Compton spends time with her family and friends. She is a member of Frazer United Methodist Church at Montgomery, AL. She enjoys boat riding at Lake Martin, going to the beach and raising her two Dachshunds, Lilly and Molly.



Luther Zeagler Rosser: Age 95

Luther Zeagler Rosser served five and one-half years in the U. S. Navy, the Merchant Marines and the U. S. Army during 1943-1948. Rosser was born September 30, 1925, to his parents, Warren and Myrtle Rosser in Lagrange, GA, and he graduated from Boys High School in Atlanta, GA in 1943. He volunteered for military service and served as a cadet in the U.S. Navy followed by service in the Merchant Marines and the Army in the 10th Infantry Division.

Rosser served in the United States Merchant Marines which provided the greatest sealift in history between the production army at home and the fighting forces scattered around the world in WWII. He was exposed to extreme dangers. Merchant ships faced danger from submarines, mines, armed raiders, destroyers and the elements. About 8,000 mariners were killed at sea, 12,000 wounded of whom at least 1,100 died from their wounds, and 663 men and women were taken prisoner. Some were blown to death incinerated, drowned, or frozen around the globe during WWII. Mariners suffered a greater percentage of war-related deaths than all other U.S. services. Casualties were kept secret during WWII to keep information about their success from the enemy and to attract and to keep mariners at sea.

Rosser served in the Battle of the Atlantic, and it was not what one usually thinks of as a "battle," since it did not take place in one location in a limited period. It was a Battle of Control over shipping in the Atlantic and lasted from September 1939 through May 1945. Germany's submarines (U-Boats) tried to sink merchant ships faster than the Allies could build them.

After his military service, he worked as an agent with a Life Insurance Company of Alabama for 40 years during his adult life. He had two sons, four grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren. He has been a member of the Kirkwood Church of Decatur, GA, and the Mt. Zion Baptist Church of Montgomery, AL. During his leisure time, Rosser has enjoyed fishing, hunting and playing golf.

Rosser recalls seeing many destroyed ships along the Atlantic coast. His recollections about his military service are, "I got out of the service because I didn't enjoy the aspect of my getting killed and having to kill other people. That was not my cup of tea. I considered serving as an obligation. I had experiences under adverse conditions meeting people of various backgrounds and getting along with them. This was a learning process. Today, I feel that we have been very fortunate. From the military standpoint, you go with what they give you. I was thankful that I survived, and I was thankful for the people that I had met. It afforded me opportunities that I might not have had otherwise. It was a great experience."



Veterans love reading *The Gazette*!



(right)
Col James Salminen
U.S. Air Force



(above) **Cpl Ronald Balkcom**,
U.S. Marine Corp

(left) **Col Mark Dierlam**, U.S. Air Force

Central Alabama VA used Technology to Help a Grieving Community Living Center Resident

Recently, one of Central Alabama Veteran Health Care System's (CAVHCS) New Horizon Community Living Center (CLC) Veterans, Jessie Barnes Sr. experienced a personal loss. Barnes Sr., a Marine Veteran lost his son, Jessie Barnes Jr., an Army Veteran.

Because of COVID-19 and its restrictions, Barnes Sr. was not going to make it to his own son's funeral; and that was unacceptable to the CLC staff.

"When the wife notified the staff of the passing of their son, the CLC felt the loss especially since he has been a long time Resident at the CLC", said Dr. Audrey Hodge, Associate Chief of Staff (ACOS) for Geriatrics and Extended Care. "We arranged a quiet and serene location for the resident with the staff surrounding him for comfort."

Ana Cintron, a CLC Clinical Social Worker, receiving the notification and agreed to be there for the Veteran. Using cell phones and iPads, Cintron, Ms. Kim Echols, a CLC nurse and Dr. Hodge accessed the virtual viewing of Barnes Jr.'s funeral. "Despite his loss, Mr. Barnes was thankful to be a part of his son's going home service. He sang with the hymns and smiled when his son was honored with the playing of the Taps," said Cintron.

Mrs. Shirley Barnes, Barnes, Sr.'s wife was very appreciative of the assistance given to the Veteran. "I really appreciate everything they have done. Mr. Barnes and his son were very, very close and he really, really wanted to be a part of this."

"I would like to express my gratitude to them for making his attendance possible," said Barnes. "This was a very low point in our lives and they helped him to be able to be a part of something that he would have missed if he would not have been at that facility."

CAVHCS' New Horizon CLC has maintained a five-star facility status, for consecutive quarters, since 2019. This rating places CAVHCS' CLC among the top performers of the Veterans Health Administration when related to elderly care.



Jessie Barnes, Sr. accompanied by Ana Cintron, a CLC Clinical Social Worker and Dr. Audrey Hodge, Associate Chief of Staff (ACOS) for Geriatrics and Extended Care during the viewing of his son's going home service.

For more information about VA Community Living Center visit https://www.va.gov/GERIATRICS/pages/VA_Community_Living_Centers.asp

Maria Vinson, CAVHCS Public Affairs

Veterans Celebrating Birthdays

Dr. Donald E. Hayhurst:

April 1, 1924, age 97

Trent H. Edwards:

April 4, 1967, age 54

John Gibson Hamilton:

April 4, 1936, age 85

Marvin G. Smith:

April 13, 1923, age 98

John L. Cannady:

April 15, 1958, age 63

Wanda Sue Mehlhoff:

April 14, 1949, age 72

John L. Zent:

April 23 (yr unk), age 95

Larry H. Stevenson:

April 29, 1947, age 74

A. Wyndol Murrah's: 99th Birthday Celebration



On March 10th, Dr. Martha Poole Simmons presented the citation from AL Governor Kay Ivey, the commemorative coin from the AL Department of Veterans Affairs and the proclamation from **Montgomery Mayor Steven Reed** in which he declared March 14, 2021, to be **A. Wyndol Murrah Day** in Montgomery to the **WWII veteran, A. Wyndol Murrah**. Dr. Simmons represented the American Red Cross, and she felt so blessed to have this opportunity to honor him on his 99th birthday in the presence of his two daughters and one son-in-law at Wyndol's home.

Wyndol's article was printed in the November 2020 issue of the *Gazette*.



Drive-by Parade held for 97th Birthday of Dr. Donald E. Hayhurst, WWII Vet



On April 1, 2021, a Drive-by Parade was held in the Center Park of Millbrook in honor of **Dr. Donald E. Hayhurst, WWII vet**. Parade participants included Millbrook's Police and Fire Departments, members of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), veterans, other friends and neighbors. Admiral Kent Davis, Commissioner of the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs presented a citation from Governor Kay Ivey, while Mr. Amir Farooqi, Director of the Central Alabama Veterans Healthcare System also presented recognitions.



If you know of a Veteran who deserves to be honored, please email: alabamagazette@gmail.com



Veterans are entitled to a patriotic ceremony at their funerals. Raymond Keel will provide this service for free!

Call him at 334-233-8736

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



5 Hobbies to Keep Your Body & Mind Healthy & Happy

As the pandemic continues to restrict many of the places you are able or inclined to go, finding ways to stay active is important for keeping the body and mind healthy and happy. Here are some ideas for new hobbies to try.

• **Learn a language:** Bonjour! ¡Hola! With an array of online language classes and tutorials available at your fingertips, learning a new language is more accessible than ever. Start now while you fantasize about a post-pandemic vacation overseas.

• **Play an instrument:** Learning to play an instrument is not only a great distraction for the current moment, it can provide you with years of joy as your skill develops. Consider starting your musical journey on a Casiotone keyboard. By connecting the keyboard to the free Chordana Play app, you can easily learn to play your favorite songs from downloaded MIDI files. Once you've mastered the instrument, the portability of the keyboard will come in handy, whether you play solo or join a band.

• **Become a home chef:** From sushi to soufflé to dumplings, there are likely a range of dishes you have never attempted making at home. Tackle your culinary bucket list, one-by-one.

• **Go hiking:** There is no better hobby for staying fit and communing with nature than hiking, which works every muscle of the body, boosts cardiovascular health and even improves mood and mental well-being. Track your hike using a wearable tech tool geared for outdoor enthusiasts, such as a watch from the Casio's Pro Trek line. Quad Sensor technology packs all the measurements you need into one compact hiking watch, including a compass, altitude/barometer and temperature measurements, along with an accelerometer that tracks step count. Calorie calculations use both step count and altitude information to take upgrades and downgrades into consideration, and data is recorded by the Pro Trek connected app.

• **Volunteer:** At a time when many people are struggling, consider volunteering your time to serve those in need. There are plenty of safe, socially distant volunteer opportunities, from delivering meals to the homebound, to video conferencing with socially isolated seniors to helping boost adult literacy via remote tutoring.

Amid the ongoing pandemic, staying busy and positive may take creativity. However, discovering new hobbies and pursuits you love can nurture the body, mind and soul. (StatePoint)

MACOA continues to serve seniors!

The Montgomery Area Council On Aging (MACOA) SERVING SENIORS FOR 48 YEARS!

The Montgomery Area Council On Aging assists senior citizens by providing services to promote independent living, by offering opportunities to enhance quality of life, and by increasing community awareness of senior issues.

You can help! MACOA needs volunteers once a week to deliver meals.

If you can help, please call 334-263-0532.

115 East Jefferson Street / Montgomery, AL 36104 / <https://www.macoa.org>



Are you looking for an independent living community designed for seniors who are able to care for themselves and wish to live independently?

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SUDOKU

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Answers on pg 5B

Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

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By Kyle' D. McKinney
kylle.mckinney@ssa.gov
(334) 479-1242--Cell
(334) 272-7630--Fax



Alabama Public Affairs Specialist, Social Security Administration
4344 Carmichael Road, Suite 100, Montgomery, Alabama 36116



Faster Processing of Disability Claims for People with Alzheimer's Disease

Today, more than 5 million Americans are living with Alzheimer's disease. Since the onset of Alzheimer's can occur in people before they retire, it may strike during an individual's working years; preventing gainful employment as the disease progresses.

As a result, people must come to grips with a devastating diagnosis while losing their salary and benefits. People with Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers must figure out how they'll pay for care. Our benefits and services are vital to people with early-onset Alzheimer's who are unable to work and have no other source of income.

For over a decade, Social Security has included Alzheimer's disease in our Compassionate Allowances program. The Compassionate Allowances program identifies debilitating diseases and medical conditions so severe they obviously meet our disability standards. Compassionate Allowances allow for faster processing of disability claims for individuals with Alzheimer's disease, mixed-dementia, and Primary Progressive Aphasia.

You can read more about our Compassionate Allowances program at www.ssa.gov/compassionateallowances. To learn more about how Social Security disability insurance works, visit our disability page at www.ssa.gov/disability. Please share these resources with friends and family.



Social Security's Many Online Services

There's probably been a time in your life when you've wondered, "Can I do this online instead of visiting a Social Security office?" The answer is more than likely yes, and you can find more information about our online services at www.ssa.gov/onlineservices. Online, you can apply for retirement and disability benefits, appeal a decision, and do much more.

We've organized our Online Services webpage into four popular categories for easy navigation:

- Review Your Information. You can access your secure, personal information and earnings history to make sure everything is correct.
- Apply for Benefits. You can apply for retirement, disability, and Medicare benefits without having to visit a local Social Security office.
- Manage Your Account. You can change your direct deposit information and your address, if you are receiving benefits, online.
- Find Help and Answers. You can find answers to your most frequently asked questions, as well as links to publications and other informational websites.

You can also access personalized information with your my Social Security account. *This is a useful resource even if you are not receiving benefits.* You can:

- Request a replacement Social Security number or Medicare card.
- Get personalized retirement benefit estimates.
- Get estimates for spouse's benefits.
- Print proof that you do not receive benefits.
- Check your application or appeal status.
- Read your Social Security Statement.

If you are receiving benefits, you can:

- Request a replacement Social Security number or Medicare card.
- Set up or change direct deposit.
- Print a Social Security 1099 (SSA-1099) form.
- Opt out of mailed notices for those available online.
- Print a benefit verification letter.
- Change your address.

Please let your family and friends know they can do much of their business with us online at www.ssa.gov.



Financial Literacy Month, a Perfect Time to Plan for Your Future



April is Financial Literacy Month, a time focused on educating people about the importance of planning for a secure financial future. Social Security is a vital part of any financial plan. We have online tools to help you understand your potential Social Security benefits and how they fit into your financial future.

You should periodically review your Social Security Statement with your personal my Social Security account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount. Your Statement is an easy-to-read summary of the estimated benefits you and your family could receive, including potential retirement, disability, and survivors benefits.

Additionally, our Plan for Retirement tool in your my Social Security account allows you to run various benefit estimate scenarios. You can compare different future earnings and retirement benefit start dates for how they could affect your benefit amount.

Start improving your financial literacy today by logging in to your my Social Security account. If you don't have an account, create one at www.ssa.gov/myaccount.

New Fact Sheets Added to Your Online Statement

Your Social Security Statement tells you how much you or your family can expect to receive in disability, survivors, and retirement benefits. It also provides a record of your earnings history and other valuable information. And now it's even better!

We've added new fact sheets to accompany the online Statement. The fact sheets are designed to provide clear and useful information, based on your age group and earnings. They can help you better understand Social Security programs and benefits.

The new Statement fact sheets cover the following topics:

- Retirement readiness for workers in four age groups.
- Workers with non-covered earnings who may be subject to the Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset.
- Social Security basics for new workers.
- How people become eligible for benefits (for people who have not earned enough work credits).
- How additional work can increase your future benefits.
- Medicare readiness for workers age 62 and up.

The best way to get access to your Statement and the new fact sheets is by using your personal my Social Security account. If you don't have a personal my Social Security account, be sure to create one at www.ssa.gov/myaccount.

To learn more, visit our Social Security Statement webpage at www.ssa.gov/myaccount/statement.html. Please share these resources with your friends and family.



Please help inform others by sharing these messages with family and friends.
Kyle' McKinney, SSA Public Affairs Specialist, kylle.mckinney@ssa.gov

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CENTRAL ALABAMA AGING CONSORTIUM (CAAC) is a part of a state-wide aging network that provides a variety of Home and Community based services to the region's senior and disabled populations and their caregivers. CAAC coordinates services for these targeted populations in Montgomery, Autauga, and Elmore counties. The primary goal is to develop, coordinate, and support services in the community that support an active and independent life-style where those we serve can live and thrive.



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(800) 264-4680



SUDOKU solution from pg 4B

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5	6	3	7	4	8	1	9	2
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Senior Fun Facts

Seniors in America are the fastest growing group of consumers buying new computers and logging time online. In fact, older adults aged 55 years old and older log the most usage online with 33 hours a month spent on sites like Facebook and 7.6 million senior internet surfers. Seniors make more life transitions than any other age range.



Land That I Love: Restoring Our Christian Heritage

Bobbie Ames' erudite collection of prose, first published in **The Alabama Gazette**, will serve humanity, and more specifically, the Christian community, for generations to come. We at the Gazette are humbled and honored that Bobbie chose our publication to share some of her greatest treatises. Bobbie undoubtedly stands as one of the foremost Christian writers of this or any generation. Her book can be purchased at the link below.

<https://www.nordskogpublishing.com/product/land-that-i-love/>

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PRESENTED BY
HIRAM

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6:00 PM

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All proceeds benefit Montgomery Ballet and every ticket comes with a complimentary ticket to the next ballet production. Tickets can be purchased on Montgomery Ballet's website: <https://montgomeryballet.org>.

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Online, in-person & at home
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MMFA
Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts

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DEADLINE IS THE 20TH OF THE PRIOR MONTH TO EVENT DATE.

One Special Grandmother Shares Talents & Traditions with Homeschooled Girls



A group of young homeschool girls were invited to a Tea Party and to bring their American Girl dolls on Friday, February 19 by Madilyn Sellars of Lagrand. The surprise for the youngsters was when they arrived at Madilyn's grandmother's house for their party they found Barb Grimes there setting up the

kitchen table for a special opportunity for them to do a canvas painting of their doll or something else they chose to paint.

As some of party members started painting, others began the tea party in the dining room. Serving the attendees were Barbara Harrington, Madilyn's grandmother and Madilyn's mother, Meredith Sellars. They enjoyed a variety of teas, cookies, muffins as well as tea sandwiches.

The young ladies attending were Lela and Savell Moody, Mary Ellen and BeBe Azar, Hannah and Savanna Haberkorn, Lyla Grimes, Barb's granddaughter Lydia Morgan, and Georgia Cauthen. After everyone finished their painting and refreshments the girls gathered for photographs before giving hugs and hoping for another party soon.



Women of Hope is a group of caring and compassionate individuals who desire to help educate, promote awareness, and provide hope for individuals and families coping with and dealing with the affects of breast cancer.

Visit: www.thewomenofhope.org

WOMEN OF HOPE is a non-profit Foundation for Breast Cancer Support and is classified by the U. S. Department of the Treasury as a 501 (c)(3) organization under the code of the Internal Revenue Service.

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Fairies have taken over the Shakespeare Garden!

We've not had an actual fairy sighting yet, but we've discovered tiny fairy doors throughout the garden. Come see for yourself! To welcome the fairies – and let our friends admire their handiwork – we've planned some springtime fun. Fairy Doors and the Spring Music Series is free and family-friendly.

Spring Music Series – April 3-May 1 | Saturdays and Sundays | 2–4 p.m.

For more information, visit: <https://usf.net/Fairy-Doors/>



YARD SALE

HUGE INDOOR YARD SALE

RAIN OR SHINE

Woodland United Methodist Church
4428 Wallahatchie Road • Pike Road, Alabama 36064

Friday, April 30, 6 PM - 9 PM
Saturday, May 1st – 7 AM - NOON

Everything priced to sell! Furniture, antiques, books, clothes (many with tags still on!), baby toys, glassware, appliances and so much more ... Follow the signs!

All proceeds used to support our Mission Teams.
Masks are required.

NEW! Classified Ads

DEADLINE: 20TH OF MONTH PRIOR TO PUBLICATION

Email Submissions to ALGazetteSubmit@gmail.com. Picture Ads are \$5/mon. Please email quality pictures. Number of pictures and length of text dictated by available space. \$5 fee can be sent via PayPal to alabamagazette@gmail.com. Classifieds can be submitted by mail, postmarked no later than the 20th of the month prior to the issue, and picture payment can be made by check to Alabama Gazette and sent to: 12 E. Jefferson St., Montgomery, AL 36109

WANTED: 1958-1962 Chevrolet 260 cubic inch, 6 cyl. engine used in 2-ton trucks & some school buses. Call: (205) 712-5157

WANTED: YOUR CLASSIFIED AD! Send us your for sale item(s) to ALGazetteSubmit@gmail.com. Must be emailed or mailed. No phone calls.

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



There is a glimmer of hope on the horizon. With improved numbers pertaining to the pandemic, people are now feeling safer and are tired of the restrictions that were placed on restaurants and even family gatherings. There is hope that the restaurants we missed for the past months will start back. Even new restaurants should open with fare that the chefs have been developing, waiting for their turn to shine. Families are getting tired being cooped up in their homes and will visit missed neighbors. They can invite them to their homes and serve new dishes to show off their kitchen skills they have honed for the past months. ***It is SPRING! Time to enjoy life!***

For our part in getting back to a normal routine, we invited two couples to dinner. This group had been meeting and enjoying each others company and meals for months until it was ended for safety reasons. We had scheduled a dinner party many times, but it just never seemed to be the right time. Until now. A sign of the times in which we live came out during our dinner. Even as much we hated the restrictions placed on us, we were conscious of the fact that since we only had six people for dinner, the 11-foot long table seemed adequate for social distancing. But as usual custom at a dinner, the three men were in the living room and the three women were in the kitchen before the meal. Plenty of room there.

Spicy Pecan Crusted Chicken Thighs

INGREDIENTS:

- Nonstick cooking spray, for the wire rack
- 1 cup pecans
- 4 boneless, skinless chicken thighs
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 large eggs
- 2 tablespoons hot sauce
- 3 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 3 tablespoons melted butter



Photo:Morgan Anne & David Spooner
Make 4 servings

METHOD:

- Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.
- Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and place a wire cooling rack on top, then spray with nonstick cooking spray.
- Chop the pecans so they have a consistency of coarse breadcrumbs, then set aside.
- Sprinkle the chicken on both sides with salt and pepper.
- Add the flour to a shallow dish, then whisk the eggs, hot sauce and 2 tablespoons Dijon in a second shallow dish.
- Mix the pecans, salt and pepper in a third shallow dish.
- Dip the chicken in the flour, shaking off the excess, then in the egg mixture, then in the pecans.
- Place on the wire rack. You can stop here and refrigerate the chicken until you are close to dinner time and then bake until cooked through, 20 to 25 minutes.
- Mix remaining tablespoon of Dijon and melted butter and drizzles over warm chicken.

You have two of the courses for a "gathering again" dinner. That is half of the courses that are normally served for a dinner. The missing two is the salad and the dessert. I served a Caesar Salad. But it was anything but authentic. The story how the Caesar Salad came about starts, according to Michael "Falcon" McCutcheon a graduate Johnson & Wales University and former chef at the Culinary Institute of America, on a Fourth of July weekend in 1924 in Tijuana, the (Cardini) restaurant experienced such a rush that most of Cardini's ingredients were 86'd. (If you don't know the term 86'd, it means that the restaurant is out of something or it was old and thrown out) Instead of throwing in the towel and closing up shop, Cardini decided to do what most good chefs and restaurateurs would do, he utilized the ingredients he had available: Dijon mustard, romaine lettuce, Parmesan cheese, lemons, Worcestershire sauce, garlic oil, salt, pepper, eggs, and one-day-old bread. With these 10 ingredients, Caesar Cardini whipped up a beautiful salad and served it table-side, and the Caesar salad was born in Mexico. In a traditional Caesar, raw egg is one of the most important ingredients because it gives the dressing a creamy texture. To experience a authentic Caesar Salad you need to go to a white table cloth restaurant that prepares and serves the salad table-side. My salad might not have been authentic but my dessert is an authentic one developed by my grand-daughter, Morgan Anne.

Morgan Anne's Poundcake Strawberry Trifle

INGREDIENTS:

- One half of full-size bundt pan pound cake. (Recipe for pound cake follows.)
- Two pints of fresh strawberries
- One container of Extra Creamy Cool Whip
- One large can of self-serve whipped cream
- One cup of sugar



Photo:Morgan Anne & David Spooner

METHOD:

- Macerate the strawberries: Wash strawberries, remove the green tops.
- Slice the strawberries and place in bowl with a splash of water.
- Add two cups of sugar to strawberries, stir, then set in refrigerator.
- Thick slice the pound cake and then cut into small bite size cubes.
- In a large trifle bowl, layer the bottom with the pound cake cubes.
- Next top the pound cake layer with one third of the macerated strawberries.
- Top that with one third of the cool whip.
- Keep layering the strawberries and cool whip until the bowl is full.
- Top with extra strawberries and decorate with whipped cream.
- Refrigerate until time to serve.

Our first meal together since Covid-19 was an easy meal to prepare once you got through the prep. The vegetable dish had the longest prep time. But was a dish along with the protein that can be prepped ahead of time so you did not have to spend all your time in the kitchen and less time entertaining your guests. The vegetable dish was a melody of potatoes, green beans, an onion and mushrooms. I am not giving you the precise measurements for the ingredients, but you need one or two small potatoes per person, sliced but not too thin and skin-on. A package of steam-in-the-bag fine (skinny looking) green beans. For six people I used two bags and it was too much, unless you are planning for leftovers for lunch the next day. Two large containers of whole mushrooms or one prep-sliced. They cook down a lot. Chop a half of an onion and saute in butter and oil. When onions are soft add mushrooms and cook until tender and most of the moisture is cooked off. Remove from pan and keep warm. Add more oil and butter if needed and add potatoes and cook on medium heat until tender and partially browned but not falling apart. While potatoes are cooking put steam-in-the-bag fine green beans in the microwave and cook as per package instructions. When potatoes are done, gently toss in onions and mushrooms and then the green beans. Salt and pepper to taste and serve either in a large bowl or on a platter.

While most of the recipes I search for trifles used either store bought angel food, short bread or sponge cake, I did not find one that used a tried and tested homemade pound cake. This recipe for pound cake is somewhat denser than cakes used in other trifle recipes. And when used in this trifle recipe, it will produce a sweeter and a heavier bodied trifle. This is my wife's pound cake recipe with the extra add-on to make a lime pound cake.

Anne's Pound Cake

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 sticks butter – room temp.
- 1 cream cheese – room temp.
- 3 cups sugar
- 6 eggs (I use jumbo or extra large) – room temp.
- 3 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- Vanilla



Photo:Morgan Anne & David Spooner

METHOD:

- Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
- Cream butter and cream cheese until fluffy.
- Add sugar, mix until fluffy.
- Add eggs one at a time, mixing well after egg.
- Add baking powder to the flour and stir in a little.
- Slowly add flour and baking powder to the mix.
- Add the vanilla and you can't add too much!
- Mix until everything is just blended together.
- Pour into greased and floured bundt pan.

(For Lime Pound cake See below)

- Bake 285 for 1 hour and 20 to 40 minutes depending on your oven. Start checking it after 1 hour and 10 minutes. Stick toothpick in to check if it is done. Let sit in pan for 8-10 minutes then invert on to your serving dish. Let cool completely.

For Lime Pound Cake, after adding flour, add:

- 2-3 Tablespoons lime zest
- 1/2 cup fresh squeezed lime juice

For Lime Glaze:

Once cake has cooled, mix the following and drizzle over cake:
1 cup confectioners sugar
Juice from a lime (I had to use 2 limes – might need more to get the consistency for a glaze...just depends on the limes!)

*Good food is all the sweeter when shared with friends!
My favorite flavor of cake is more!*

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USDA Extends Waivers for Summer Food Service Programs

As the COVID-19 Pandemic continues, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has announced the nationwide extension of several waivers that allow all children to continue to receive nutritious meals under the USDA Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). These flexibilities are now available through September 30, 2021, instead of expiring June 30. The waivers allow organizations to have options to ensure all children have access to meals at various locations throughout the state.

"Break for a Plate," Alabama's Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), provides two nutritious meals every day during the summer months to children, regardless of household income. A joint effort of the Alabama State Department of Education and the USDA, "Break for a Plate" served a record 3 million meals to children in 2019.

For more information on Break for a Plate, or to find a distribution location near you serving children free breakfast and lunch, visit www.BreakforaPlate.com.

Home Town Community News

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.

Patricia Killough
Community Editor



APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Magan Gramling
Linda Mann
Ann Pascal | 13 Kim Golson
Lillie Ben Harris
Sherry Knight
Patrick O'Mailia
Jimmy Sellars
Franklin Williams (42nd) |
| 2 Ronnie Broadway
Helen Gordon (92nd)
Ken (Buddy) Hicks
Christopher Kenmore
Patricia Killough (71st)
Colby Mills
Ruth Neilson | 14 Brenda Blackburn
Chuck Holmes |
| 3 Cole Andrews
Winston Webb
Emily Claire Needham (13th) | 15 Skylar Campbell (23rd)
Moseley Higgins (21st) |
| 4 Owen Scott Edwards (13th)
Bill Younkin | 16 Judy Barnes (70th)
Shannon Holmes (42nd) |
| 5 Prasertsi Atkinson
Kitty Graham
Steve Stringer
Coleman Taylor (25th)
Edwina Davis Walker | 17 Donna Daffron Allen (76th) |
| 6 Lew Baxter
Brenda Caprara
Evelyn Claire Carter (6th)
Ann Orr (83rd) | 18 Julia Norris
Slade Rhodes
Eunice Broadway
Samuel Sullivan |
| 7 Winford Collier (88th)
Caroline Handey
Bea Ward | 19 Haley Boyd (28th) |
| 8 Debra Ehrlich
Cynthia Mull
James White
Clara Wright | 20 Frank Grove |
| 9 Rev. Melvin J. Hendricks (68th) | 21 Jennifer Champion
Emily Garner James
Betty Kirksey (92nd)
Queen Elizabeth (95th)
Anna Beth Taylor
Amanda Taylor |
| 10 Jean Douglass
Wade Norris
Jimmy Grubbs
Hayden Ward
Travis Ratliff | 22 Sue Arant
Tammy Orr
Brandy Terrell
Alice Guntharp
Sarah Kathleene Selvage (6th) |
| 11 Mae Bishop
Margaret Boyd
Buddy Handey
James Griffin | 23 Shane McKinley
Jud Parenteau (12th) |
| 12 Sally Brown
Morgan McGough
Carolyn Perry
Tim Sansom
Dalton Stephens (11th) | 24 Bara Edwards
25 Blane Campbell (24th)
Don Cooley
Debra Kinman
Barbara Ratliff |
| | 26 Joe Cotney
Betty Strickland |
| | 27 Erik Box
Julie Livingston
Wayne Watkins
Landyn Whigham (11th) |
| | 28 Johnny Johnson |
| | 29 Katie Moseley (23rd) |
| | 30 Luke Adams |

Happy Anniversary

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 Warren & Doris Miller (59th) | 12 Jason & Kaycee Wiggins |
| 2 Bobby & Mickey Ann Boyd (33rd) | 20 Jeremy & Stacy Dickinson |
| 3 John & Patricia Killough (50th) | Jimmy & Barbara Pugh (65th) |
| Milton & Wanda Madison (11th) | 21 Russ & Valerie Russell |
| Shawn & Katie O'Mailia (11th) | 22 Lamar & Glenda Boyd (49th) |
| 6 Clint & Tiffany Hammock | Jim & Phyllis Fenn |
| Pat & Lonnie Smith (53rd) | 23 Zack & Geri Azar (44th) |
| 7 T. G. & Margaret Batley (65th) | 24 Byron & Pam Lynch |
| Richard & Susan Feaga | 25 Bill & Dee Russell |
| 8 Eric & Melony Gwin | 27 Scott & Heather Russell |
| 9 Tony & Gail Dixon (27th) | 30 Aaron & Kayla Ramer (11th) |
| 11 Herb & Mary Sue Meadows (46th) | (Send us YOUR Anniversaries!) |

JOHN AND PATRICIA KILLOUGH CELEBRATE THEIR 50TH ANNIVERSARY WITH A QUICK TRIP AND SURPRISE PARTY...

Sunday, April 4, at Mt. Hill Baptist Church, John and Patricia Killough's daughter, Stephanie, and Patricia's sister, Connie, and niece, LeeAnn, surprised the couple with a trifle lemon cheese cake for their 50th Wedding Anniversary. This was after the couple took a quick trip to Laurel, Miss., host city of Home Town featuring local home renovators, Ben and Erin Napier



Richard Neal Bollinger, Former City Councilman Dec. 7, 1949 - March 20, 2021

Bollinger, Richard Neal, 71, lifelong resident of Montgomery, Al went to be with the Lord on March 20, 2021 after a valiant battle with cancer. He is survived by his wife of 28 years, Cheryl Lynn Bollinger; his children, Stephanie "Pete" Bollinger McGough (Chris), Jeff Josey, Patrick Haigler (Kristan), and Ashley Boswell; his brother, Alan Bollinger (Stephanie). He was also known as "Granddaddy" to eight grandchildren that he admired and adored.

The complete obituary can be found online: <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/montgomery-al/richard-bollinger-10115460>



101-yr-old Veteran Passes Away ~ March 22, 2021

WWII veteran, **Walter Mabry Whetstone**, passed away March 22, 2021, at the age of 101. He was the oldest living veteran in Elmore County, and he served in the Army in the liberation of Italy. His article was published in the March 2020 issue of the *Alabama Gazette*.



Alabama Gazette's Sympathy to the families of...

Heydon, Helen Lind, (97)	Feb 26
Keating, Michael R. Col. USAF (Ret.) (86)	Mar 1
Olive, Norman (91)	Mar 3
Fleming, William Albert "Bill" (79)	Mar 4
Clayton, Gary L. (84)	Mar 9
Bell, Bertha Reagan (91)	Mar 10
Hunker, Edith "Edie" McColluch (74)	Mar 10
Jackson, Janie Maria (71)	Mar 10
Parsons, Sr., Milton Kirkpatrick (91)	Mar 14
Brackeen, Anne Mae (93)	Mar 15
Norman, Robert Hudson (85)	Mar 15
Summerlin, Ethel Louise (91)	Mar 15
Waller, Rev. John Gary (87)	Mar 15
McWilliams, Dianne English (81)	Mar 16
Philhower, Margaret Medlock (81)	Mar 16
Ackerman, Dolores Rebecca "Becky" Sellers (68)	Mar 17
Strickland, Robert Hamilton (92)	Mar 17
Umstead, Dorothy Jean Moncrief (80)	Mar 17
Eiland, Sr., Douglas Edward (94)	Mar 18
Bradford, Jr., Robert William (76)	Mar 19
Harris, Ethel Elizabeth Weippert (89)	Mar 19
Bollinger, Richard Neal (71)	Mar 20
Drumwright, Mark Henry (73)	Mar 21
Devore "Jon Da'Voe-Shelby" Jones (53)	Mar 21
Fry, David Allen (89)	Mar 23
Hudson, Freddie "Joe" (68)	Mar 23
Wallace, Doris Jean Rester (91)	Mar 23
Teel, Leahland (93)	Mar 25
Burt, Wanda Newsome (82)	Mar 26
Dawson, Katherine "Kitty" Garrett (83)	Mar 26
Jenkins, IV, John Michael "Mike" (79)	Mar 27

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In Memory Of

Jackie Aldridge Simmons	April 1
Grover Howard Redden	March 31
Pamela Jean Bolden	March 31
Roselle Violet Baker	March 31
Henry F. Tylicki Sr.	March 30
Margaret Carolyn Parks Carlson	March 29
Frances Bonnie Wilson	March 29
Ethel Mae Crawford	March 28
James Thornton Forehand	March 25
Elizabeth Jane Douglas Morris	March 24
Mary Drayton Hadden Mizzell	March 23
Mary Nell Martin	March 21
Murrell Young Rose	March 21
Mary Katherine Garner	March 18
Clifton H. Myers	March 13
Fred Weeney Mann	March 9
Mary Jean Jennings Womble	March 9
Betty Trussell Calloway	March 8
Whitman "Nick" Pace	March 5
Katie Sullivan	March 5
James A. "Jim" Poole	March 3

TODAY'S WOMAN

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



By Amanda Walker

Tears & LAUGHTER: What is the Significance of Alabama History in 2021?

Sometimes, when I am in Montgomery, I make it a point to go out and have lunch with Hank and Audrey.

Usually, I take fried chicken.

They don't ever say too much, and neither do I really. Nobody sings. If you are there and hear lonesome music, it's probably only in your head ... or maybe your heart.

I go, I guess, for the silence, or the solace. It is a feeling. There is an energy there. Or maybe a spirit. I'm not sure. It is not something you can reach out and touch or take a picture of, at least not without it looking like a couple of equal opposite graves with benches. But you can commune with them for a while, and find stillness within the rush and noise of historic downtown, where the Capitol towers and the State House stands.

I seldom visit when there aren't fresh flowers placed gently and purposely. Tributes still, to Hank Williams, and to Audrey, too, for as they say ... if there had been no Audrey, there would have been no Hank.

Hank was first buried in the main section of Oakwood Cemetery on January 4, 1953, but then was relocated to what became the annex on January 17, 1953. The move was made at night because of the number of visitors to the gravesite. A larger plot was needed to eventually accommodate other family members, and allow for visitation.

You can drive right up to the two Georgia marble monuments like a front door. Like a portal to another time. Oakwood Cemetery and its annex spans 120 acres. It started in 1819, the same year Alabama became a state. It is the home of over 200,000 burial sites. When you sit there with Hank and Audrey, you are surrounded by layers of history.

It was first called a free burial ground. The land was donated. It was open to all people. There are heroes and villains alike buried there. The rich and the poor, blacks and whites. Politicians, preachers, teachers, and attorneys. Slaves, their owners, and anti-secessionists. Beloved mothers, infant children, slabs with first names only, many lost to the yellow fever epidemic, and that precious man who started Coca-Cola Bottling Company.

There is a Jewish section in the cemetery that closes late in the evenings. Those headstones are marked with the names of birth countries, like Bavaria and Prussia.

The last time I visited it was raining. I took time to loop by the row after row of identically shaped tombstones of Confederate dead that cover a whole hillside. There are 780 should you count them, a few Union soldiers included. All sons of somebody. Surely they were not all bad men, but all evidence of the six Civil War hospitals once located in Montgomery.

There are epitaphs, and final remarks, Greek Revival-style mausoleums, Art Deco gravestones, and broken slabs. There are ornate fences, Gothic statues, and simple grey stones marked with only a date.

If the residents of Oakwood Cemetery could wake to where we are today, what would they think of us and this state we have created since they left it? Would they look forward with great anticipation at potentials and possibilities, or would they be blocked from moving forward by the pain, failures, and shortcomings of the past?

This cemetery, like all old cemeteries – in all cities, and towns, and far out forgotten places – holds proof that not all history is beautiful. Some of it is hard to even look at strait.

But for every voice who questions why we would celebrate or remember or ever hold dear a history such as this, is another that counters ... with a history such as this, how can we not?

Amanda Walker is a contributor with AL.com, The Selma Times Journal, Thomasville Times, West Alabama Watchman, and Alabama Gazette. Contact her at Walkerworld77@msn.com or at www.facebook.com/AmandaWalker.Columnist.



Ms.Wheelchair America/
Alabama 2005

Trisston's Tidbits ...

By Trisston Wright Burrows
www.trisstonwrightburrows.com

"Weeds of Life"

The beautiful sights of Spring are beginning to show out. Buttercup, tulips, and many other flowering delights are starting to bloom.

Such beauty!

For those of us who enjoy gardening, sometimes life happens and maybe we are just not able to tend to our gardens for a while.

Unfortunately, when this happens, weeds grow...and lots of them!

If you think about it, the weeds, much like things in life, can sometimes be deceiving. They look pretty but they can easily overtake the real flowers. Some are easy to remove and some need to be raked. In order to enjoy the true beauty, the weeds have to be removed.

Now, any of us can probably do the weeding solo; however, when it (life) seems overwhelming, isn't nice to have someone come along side of you to help pull the weeds?



Photo by Mira Pavlakovic/FreeImages.com

“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.” – 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Are you willing to get in the weeds of life with people? We need each other.

A wise person once said, “A person's most useful asset is not a head full of knowledge, but a heart full of love, an ear ready to listen, and a hand willing to help others.”

Many Blessings!

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Family Sunshine Center Recognizes April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month 'The 20th Annual 'Theme is "Use Your Voice"

This April, **Family Sunshine Center (FSC)** will join organizations across the country to recognize Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM), a time nationally dedicated to raising public awareness about sexual violence and educating communities on how to prevent it. This year, FSC is marking the 20th anniversary with the theme **“Use Your Voice”** to encourage individuals to speak up and use their voice to prevent sexual assault, show their support for survivors, stand up to victim blaming, shut down rape jokes, correct harmful misconceptions, promote everyday consent, and practice healthy communications with children.

The facts about sexual violence are heartbreaking:

- Every 73 seconds someone in the United States is sexually assaulted. Every 9 minutes, that victim is a child.
- 1 out of every 6 American women has been the victim of an attempted or completed rape in her lifetime
- 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will be a victim of sexual assault before they turn 18.

“If history has shown us nothing else, it is that individual voices can create change. When they work together, we build lasting change that impacts the communities in which we live and work” said Tay Knight, Executive Director at the Family Sunshine Center. “Even though we are still struggling with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we invite all voices to join us both physically and virtually as we work toward changing the culture across all of our communities with the goal of ending sexual violence once and for all.”

Photo by Jack Moreh / freerangestock.com



During SAAM, Family Sunshine Center will bring the theme of “Use Your Voice” to life through Facebook Live education events happening every Friday at noon; the topics are:

- April 2: How to talk about Sexual Violence
- April 9: Victim Blaming
- April 16: Are you supporting Rape Culture
- April 23: What is sexual assault
- April 30: How to support a survivor

FSC will also be using social media to share statistics, prevention education, and events all month long. Some of these events include Wear Teal Day on April 6 and Denim Day on April 28. For more information on 2021 Sexual Assault Awareness Month events, please visit our website at www.familysunshine.org.

About Family Sunshine Center

The Family Sunshine Center is dedicated to ending family violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking through comprehensive services and community-based outreach and prevention education. We foster hope and healing through immediate response, safe haven in crisis, advocacy, counseling, and support, so that victims may be empowered to lead safe, violence-free lives.

About Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Launched in April 2001 by the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC), Sexual Assault Awareness Month is an annual awareness and prevention campaign observed in April and is coordinated each year with assistance from anti-sexual assault organizations throughout the United States.

Contact: Katherine (Kat) Rodman, MFA, Communication Specialist, Family Sunshine Center, 334.220.0118, krodman@familysunshine.org www.familysunshine.org, <https://www.facebook.com/FamilySunshineCenter/@familysunshinecenter>, <https://twitter.com/FSCGivesHope>



Dr. Lester Spencer
Lead Pastor
St. James United Methodist Church
9045 Vaughn Road, Montgomery, AL

Soul Searching

3 Simple Steps To Discover Who God Created You To Be

Would you take 3 simple steps to discover who God created you to be?

Sounds too easy? Maybe. Maybe not. Try taking the steps and see for yourself!

I learned these 3 steps and started trying to practice them years ago when I first read a little book by John Maxwell entitled, Think On These Things. I share them now with you.

Step 1: Discover Your Potential

I love the story of a young farm boy whose father raised chickens in the mountains of Colorado. One day the adventuresome boy climbed a high place in the Rockies and found an eagle’s nest. He took an egg from the eagle’s nest and brought it back to the farm and put it under a setting hen. The hen sat on the egg until it hatched. So, out came a little eaglet along with the chickens as the nest of eggs hatched. They all started living the “chicken life” together. The eaglet thought he was a chicken as he didn’t have a mirror to tell the difference. He was content living the chicken life.



As the eaglet grew however he felt this strange desire to fly and soar. Every once in a while he would think to himself, “There is more to me than being a chicken.” But he never did anything about it until one day he saw an eagle flying over the chicken yard, and the eaglet said “that’s me ... I am like that eagle!”

The eaglet felt the strength in his wings as he stretched them out. He said to himself, “ this little chicken yard is not for me. I was made to fly and soar high up in the blue sky, and I was designed to see the mountain peaks, valleys and rivers.

He had never flown, but the power was there within him so he soared to the top of a hill and then into the blue sky. From there he flew to a high mountain peak. He had finally discovered he could fly and soar as he was created to do!

If you are content to hang out in the small fenced in chicken yard, you will miss out on everything you were created to be. If you are content to hang out with small minded people, you will limit your thinking. If you live with critical people, you will become critical. If you associate with negative and defeated people, you will end up being a negative and defeated person. If you are content with “living with the chickens”, you will end up a chicken.

One of the greatest days of you life will be when you discover you can fly... when you discover your potential. You and your talents are not an accident. You’re not a statistic lost in the shuffle of humanity. You are special in God’s eyes and you have distinct gifts and talents. Inside you is enormous potential. Just waiting to be developed and put to use.

Step 2: Dedicate Your Potential

“Your talent is God’s gift to you. What you do with it is your gift back to God.” – Leo Buscaglia

Give to God all you have to offer. Dedicate your talents and your giftedness to the Lord and ask him to use you to your full potential. It is only by God’s grace and with God’s help that you can become all you are meant to be.

The Apostle Paul recognized this when he said, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” –Paul, Philippians 4:13

Step 3: Develop Your Potential

God is concerned not only about who you are but also what you can become.

In order to develop your potential to it’s fullest capacity, it will be necessary to implement the following things in your daily life:

A. Develop a positive self-image.

Your actions are a direct result of how you see yourself. It is not an accident that as your self-image improves, your performance improves with it. If you believe you have little to offer the world, you will sit and contribute nothing. Practice seeing yourself as God sees you.

B. Realize you are responsible for developing your potential.

Work on developing your potential everyday. Read books and articles advising you and encouraging you to grow your potential. Study under and listen to positive people who can help you grow. Realize that God does not judge you nearly as much by what you are as on what you become.

C. Get acquainted with others who are reaching their potential.

It is not by chance that winners spend time with other winners. It is a well documented fact that after Roger Bannister broke the 4 minute mile, which most people thought could never be done, within 10 years 336 other men had accomplished the same feat. Why? Because they were exposed to someone who exhibited more potential than many felt they had.

What is your capacity? What is your potential?

I challenge you to get on your knees and ask God to help you to be your best and reach your full potential. Then, get up and discover your potential, dedicate your potential and develop your potential.

Now, go out and break a record! ~ Lester Spencer

Join Saint James Church Sunday Morning:

8:00 Outdoor Cafe	11:00 Traditional service
10:00 Contemp service	9-9:30 Open Communion

We invite you to check out Saint James Church! Our hope is you will connect with God's transforming love through WORSHIP, discover a place to BELONG with others, and find the joy of living out God's love as you learn to SERVE others. – Lester Spencer

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HONORING A YOUNG LIFE LOST TO CANCER



Kristin Michelle Brown
June 30, 1988 – March 23, 2021

Kristin Michelle Brown age 32, succumbed to cancer Tuesday, March 23, 2021

by Chelese Beck

Cancer is such a nasty word. It's ugly. It's unforgiving. It's devastating.

In my 51 years, I’ve been grateful to never have to experience the loss of a loved one to cancer. I’ve never faced the death of a close friend, and certainly not at such a young age.

While working on this issue of the *Alabama Gazette*, I received “that” call ... the one that says it’s over. She’s gone. While I was as prepared as possible, it didn’t stop the gut-wrenching tears that followed. I am grateful that I was alone because I needed that time to grieve without anyone telling me it would be OK. That she was in a better place. That she was no longer suffering. I know all of that. Knowing it doesn’t stop the hurt.

We had only been friends since 2014, but we certainly did a great deal of living during those few years. It was only while going through numerous digital images that the extent of our amazing friendship became so apparent.

Our friendship was unique. as she was young enough to be my daughter, but we bonded over our love of horses. And the age difference didn't stop us from sharing so many adventures ... from trail riding in three states to country concerts to road trips to rodeos to a cruise for her 30th birthday.

Then came the summer of 2020 and with it that horrible word: **Cancer**. While Cancer wasn’t new to Kristin, as she had already faced it and triumphed over it several times, this go-round she was given 5 years: a generous gift. It gave her time. It gave us time. Or so we thought.

When Kristin told me the Cancer was more invasive than ever before, I couldn't find the courage to ask her prognosis. I didn't want to think the worst. Once she told me, we began to have more open and bold conversations.

Last fall, she tearfully asked, “Why me? What did I do to deserve this?” I couldn't answer her, but she really didn't expect me to. She just needed me to listen. God never answered her. I still don't know why either. I don't pretend to know why bad things happen to good people. At least not like this.

We talked about her Bucket List and the adventures she wanted to have. We talked about riding together when she was better. We discussed how people told her she shouldn't or couldn't do certain things when she mentioned them.

I told her to do what she wanted and live her life! What was the worst thing that could happen ... she could die? I was glad for our candidness about one of the worst subjects you could possibly discuss under the circumstances.

Kristin was tough. She wasn't a quitter. But she never got to fulfill her Bucket List. She didn't get 5 more years. Why couldn't we have had 4 or 3 or 2?

Why weren't we given ANY of that time to make more memories?

Obviously God had other plans. It doesn't shake my faith. I am angry at God, believe me! But I reach deep within to find that faith hidden inside and remind myself that no matter how I feel or what I think, God is still in control. God is still good. I have to believe this. I can't get through this otherwise.

As I headed home that fateful afternoon, it began raining, and I thought, God cries, too. I've experienced it before in times of death. Yet I knew those tears weren't for Kristin ... they were for those of us left behind who are hurting.

Kristin had accepted Christ as her savior. I take comfort in knowing that Kristin is now walking with Jesus! She’s whole! NO MORE CANCER!

At the same time, my heart aches for Kristin's parents. She was their only child. Many of us have more than one child and still don't figure this parenting thing out. They had one shot, and NAILED IT!

I know that Kristin's parents were so proud of the woman she became! She was responsible and caring with strong work ethics. She was outspoken and brave. She was loving and compassionate. I was so blessed to be her friend.

While Kristin never had her own children, she had a mother's heart. She loved other's kids as her own. She loved her horses, Roany and Nevada. And I know her sweet pup, Zoey, is going to miss her as much as we do.

Kristin had a contagious zest for adventure. She loved anything outdoors. Besides horseback riding, she loved fishing and mud riding! I cherish the memories we had of doing so many of those things together. Even now, I can hear her laughter and our memories are running on repeat through my mind.

Believing that Kristin is truly gone from this earth is not yet a reality. What hurts the most is knowing we can't make more memories. However, I thank God that we have the memories we do.

The greatest thing I'm thankful for is that Kristin left this world having accepted Christ as her savior. There's no doubt that she is alive and shaking up the heavens right now with her undeniable spirit.



We miss you Kristin ... but one day we'll ride together again!