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want to leave?

Did you realize the legacy you live now will be the legacy you leave?

The good news is this -You get to choose the legacy you live and the legacy you leave.



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Another American Disaster



This series on "Legacy: Outlive Your Life" will be a three part series focused on what I call

"The Big Three Life/Legacy Questions":

1. The Heart Question: Is my heart growing bigger?

2. The Joy Question: Is my joy going deeper? 3. The Passion Question: Is my passion getting hotter?

In part one we will focus on the heart question.

Is my heart growing bigger?

In other words, is my love for God and for others growing bigger?

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US and Afghan forces lower US flag on base in Afghanistan August 2022

Robservations...

I have written on this at least three other times. Yet here I am again. In operational planning, something I taught for ten years, we deal with making operational plans that can be used in wartime and in military operations other than war (MOOTW). Arguably the biggest factors are defining the objective(s) and strategy(ies). Objectives are "what" I want to do and strategies are "how" to accomplish the objective. Objectives must be clearly defined, measurable and attainable. No wiggle room here, folks. In terms of the Biden Afghanistan withdrawal, I personally do not have much beef with the overall objective of leaving, although I am not sure how clearly defined it was and how they were supposed to measure success of the objective.

My problem is with the strategy. I made a comment and I stand by it. If you had given me the objective of leaving Afghanistan and I could handpick any six men I worked with at Maxwell in our planning course and we would have come up with a better strategy.

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INSIDE THE STATEHOUSE With Steve Flowers

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



SUMMER POLITICAL HAPPENINGS

As the long hot summer ends and Labor Day approaches, let's take a look back at what occurred over the last three summer months, politically.

First of all, it was one of the hottest summers on record. Temperatures soared into the hundreds as early as late June. On one of those late June days, one of the hottest political events of the year occurred. The annual Tomato Sandwich Lunch event hosted by Alabama Agriculture Commissioner Rick Pate was the biggest, yet. The twentieth annual Tomato Sandwich Lunch held at the Ed Teague Arena near the Garrett Coliseum was a must be at event for Alabama political elite.

The Tomato Sandwich Lunch promotes produce from local farmers and encourages people to eat Alabama grown products. Alabama based vendors donate all of the food for the event. Commissioner Rick Pate was a master host to over 500 attendees.

In attendance were U.S. Senator Katie Britt, State Treasurer Young Boozer and Lt. Governor Will Ainsworth. PSC member Jeremy Oden came from Cullman and State Board of Education President Wayne Reynolds came from Athens.

State Judges in attendance were Supreme Court Judge Greg Cook, Criminal Appeals Court Judge Bill Cole, and Civil Appeals Court Judges Matt Friday and Bill Thompson.

Legislators spotted were State Senators Josh Carnley and Will Barfoot, as well as Representatives Jerry Starnes, Margie Wilcox, Van Smith and Ed Oliver.

There were dozens of local County Commissioners from all over the state.

Many of the state's most prominent lobbyists were there along with many of the Governor's Cabinet members.

Alabama Power Government Affairs guru Houston Smith, as well as Alfa Executive Director Paul Pinyan were prominent. In fact, most of Alfa's governmental affairs folks were at this very fun and political event.

During the summer everybody and their brother or at least everyone whoever won a 4-H speaking contest entered the race for the Republican nomination for President. There must be 20 people running against Donald Trump for the GOP nomination. This is just what Trump was hoping for. It splinters the anti-Trump

vote to such a degree that it virtually assures him the nomination.

During the summer, the U.S. Supreme Court decided that Alabama's Congressional districts were gerrymandered to keep Black voters from being able to elect a second Black Democrat to Congress. Alabama currently has six white Republican Congressmen and one Black Democratic Congresswoman, Terri Sewell.

In July, former Alabama Supreme Court Justice Mike Bolin won a special election to fill a seat on the five member Jefferson County Commission. His election was like manna from Heaven for the Jefferson County Republican Party. The commissioner, who departed this important seat, was a Republican.

The commission had a three to two Republican majority. Therefore, it was an important election for the state's largest and most important county.

Mike Bolin had just retired from the Alabama Supreme Court after 18 years on the state's high tribunal. He had been Probate Judge of Jefferson County for 16 years prior to his service on the Supreme Court. He only retired from the Supreme Court due to a state law that prevents judges from running for reelection after age 70.

Bolin is Jefferson County through and through and one of the most respected gentleman and public servants in Jefferson County and Alabama. The imperial county of Jefferson is fortunate that Judge Mike Bolin was available and ready to serve.

His swearing in ceremony occurred on a sweltering hot July 31. The large Jefferson County Courthouse commission chambers was overflowing. It was a congregation of who's who of Jefferson County politics.

Hope you had a good summer. Happy football season and Happy Labor Day! See you next week.

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

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Justice Will Sellers

REMEMBERING PRESIDENT HARDING AND HIS VISIT TO THE MAGIC CITY

One Hundred years ago, President Warren Harding died unexpectedly.

Occupying the White House for a little more than two-and-a-half years, he was a popular president having

been elected with the largest margin of victory of any presidential candidate before or since.

Following his death, several scandals, both public and private, tarnished his reputation and obscured several significant accomplishments.

ars ago, Harding



Presidential visits on such occasions are usually non-controversial and entirely celebratory in nature. No one would have faulted President Harding for the standard congratulatory remarks, but he had a different idea.

To an assembled crowd that totaled more than 100,000, Harding addressed the issue of race relations head on. This should not have been too much of a surprise, as Harding strongly supported anti-lynching legislation that levied a \$10,000 fine in any county in which a lynching occurred and gave federal courts jurisdiction to prosecute local officials for failing to act and indict perpetrators for murder.

When he mounted the rostrum in Capitol Park, Harding saw the clearly segregated audience. And while he used the occasion to congratulate Birmingham on its industrial growth and contributions to economic development, he pivoted and personalized his remarks to advocate for racial equality.

Though he had been involved in Ohio state politics, the highest state office Harding ever held was lieutenant governor; he had been defeated in his lone attempt for governor. He later ran for U.S. Senate, and was successfully elected.



At the 1920 Republican convention, several regional factions deadlocked the balloting and no consensus candidate materialized. When party leaders met in the proverbial smoke-filled room, Harding emerged as the compromise presidential nominee.

In one of history's coincidences, Democrats tapped Ohio Gov. James M. Cox as its nominee against Ohio Senator Harding, one of the few instances when two general election candidates from the same state opposed each other for the presidency.

Unlike his opponent, Harding did not engage in a frenetic nationwide campaign. For the most part he capitalized on the failures of the Woodrow Wilson administration and the dissension within the ranks of the Democratic Party.

He would win the presidency with more than 400 electoral votes.

The economy Harding inherited was in shambles. The country was just getting settled after the dislocations of World War I, income tax rates exceeded 70 percent, government regulations of industry were significant, and unemployment was on the rise.

To address the challenges of a sluggish national economy, Harding appointed Andrew Mellon as Treasury Secretary. Mellon was a banker and technocrat who understood finance and economics better than anyone. With Harding's approval he proposed an economic policy that created the *"Roaring '20s."*

Given such high rates of confiscatory income taxation, capital was not properly employed as high wage earners saw no incentive to work hard and pay more than 70% of their earnings in taxes. The wealthy kept their money in safe investments like low yielding government bonds that shielded interest income from taxation.

Fifty years ahead of the Laffer Curve, Harding advocated legislation that eventually reduced the highest tax rate to 25 percent and completely exempted many lower income earners from taxes. On the expense side of the ledger, he significantly reduced government spending and established a separate budget office to apply business principles to government administration. The result was record growth and low unemployment.

The Harding administration was not in favor of an engaging foreign policy and limited any U.S. involvement in world affairs. One critical exception was hosting a disarmament conference to force the major world powers to limit construction of large naval vessels. But, like most disarmament or other international treaties, unless there is an effort at monitoring compliance with an enforcement mechanism, the treaty is merely a cordial agreement that over time is observed in the breech.

Given Harding's overwhelming popularity, he was invited to visit the Deep South and help celebrate the 50th anniversary of the City of Birmingham.

In words that still resonate today, Harding said, "I believe in absolute equality in the paths of knowledge and culture, equality of opportunity for those who strive, equal admiration for those who achieve. I want to see the time come when black men will regard themselves as full participants in the benefits and duties of American citizenship."

Otherwise, he said, *"Whether you like it or not, our democracy is a lie unless you stand for that equality."*

As these remarks were spoken, loud applause came from the segregated black side of the park while stony silence emanated from the white side. This was the first time that any national Republican so directly challenged the reigning segregation orthodoxy in the South. While southern leaders dismissed these remarks, others saw this as the beginning of a national sea change in dealing with racial politics.

In speaking truth to power, Harding's courage would be attacked by the enemies of justice and fundamental fairness. Though his administration tried to move forward on some of his initiatives, he was unable to muster the votes in the senate to pass civil rights legislation.

Even President Franklin Roosevelt, who had significant majorities in both houses, later refused to champion Harding's anti-lynching initiatives during his own administration for fear of losing southern votes.

Less than three years into his term, Harding died suddenly from what most historians attribute to a heart attack prompted by long-term cardiac issues.

His untimely death resulted in a large outpouring of grief, especially among those who had heard his speech and witnessed his sincerity, but Harding's courage in addressing the issue of race in Birmingham is largely forgotten today.

When several scandals came to light after his death, Harding's popularity waned.

While he was never personally implicated nor accused or profiting from his position, many of the friends Harding had placed in positions of authority were.

Even though several cabinet members suffered the consequences of their greed, Harding's reputation has not recovered from the corruption of his vainglorious friends.

Notwithstanding the scandals, Harding's legacy for electoral success, economic achievements, and national wealth remain unsurpassed.

Will Sellers is a graduate of Hillsdale College and an Associate Justice on the Supreme Court of Alabama. He is best reached at *jws@willsellers.com*.

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By: Rob Tate



ROBSERVATIONS...

LETTERS FROM AFAR...

As a regular Alabama Gazette columnist, it always does my heart good to hear of letters sent to the paper. Good or bad, without feedback, you rarely get a full appreciation of how readers are responding to your

work. As someone who has written a couple of books, several screenplays, over four dozen book reviews, close to 200 columns for the Gazette and other papers and professional journals, I have opened myself up to a lot of positive and negative feedback. I welcome that. But to be a writer, you must develop alligator skin. If you take things personally, you are going to be in for a rough ride. I always take critiques in stride and try to consider the source. A couple of weeks ago, the Gazette called and told me I had a critique via voicemail. I asked if it was good or bad and they just said, "Uhhhhhhhhh." "Okay, just let me listen."

The caller did not leave a name or number and that is fine. I am not going to engage with him since there is absolutely no point, even though he did call me a "maggot" twice in his message. Maggot? Nice! I felt like I was back in ROTC Scabbard and Blade indoctrination for a while. I mentioned this to several friends and they asked me if I was angry. My answer was, "Not at all. Proverbs 20:3, 'Keeping away from strife is an honor for a man, But any fool will quarrel.' They asked me if I was offended. I said, "No. Psalm 119:165, 'Those who love Your law have great peace and nothing offends them." To be clear, however, there was a time....

It is funny how the truth today offends so many people. In Galatians 4:16, the Apostle Paul said, "So have I become your enemy by telling you the truth?" In some circles, the answer to this is a resounding, "Yes." I love hearing what people have to say but when their words devolve into churlish name calling, I have to sit back andtake a deep breath. The great conservative pundit Walter Williams once said that when arguing with a liberal, their modus operandi follows a very predictable path. I have found over the past two decades that indeed this is almost 100% infallible. Because so many of their arguments are incompletely thought out, they must follow this path. Walter Williams called this the "S.I.N. Alert."

The first step of their argument almost always centers around "Skewing the Argument." I may have said one thing but the argument invariably turns around into what they want to say; regardless of what I may have argued. "The sky is blue." "Yeah, but the grass is green." Wha-what?? The next step is to "Ignore the facts." It doesn't matter what facts you present; they will rarely be good enough for the mind that is already made up. You can explain it to them but you can never understand it for them. "A+B=C. It always does. Always." "Yeah, *but A*+*B doesn't* = *D*" "*Uhhh, you're right. But what is your point?*" The final and most unfortunate stage of the S.I.N. Alert is "Name Calling." Once you have regressed to this level, discussion becomes completely moot. First, the name caller has already lost and second, he/she is never going to change their mind. "There is no one so blind as someone who won't see."

When listening to the voicemail through my cellphone, it was very difficult to understand the caller and get his point. I understood some anger directed at, I am supposing, a previous column I wrote where I was discussing dereliction of duty regarding our current President. He mentioned something about Afghanistan and the rest was hard to understand, not because of him but the static through my phone line. But let me reiterate several things here today. First, let me define the term, "Dereliction of Duty." Although more involved than this, here is a basic definition. It is the "failure to conform to rules of one's job. It is a failure or refusal to perform assigned duties in a satisfactory manner." Dereliction of duty is a specific offense under United States Code Title 10, Section 892, Article 92 and applies to all branches of the US military. Since the President is commander and chief of the Armed forces, guess what?

It is certain that President Biden has made a hash out of his first term. Let's take a look at just a couple of derelict areas.

1. Afghanistan Withdrawal. I have written on this at least three other times



No doubt. Leaving hundreds of millions of dollars in equipment and machines, not to mention hundreds of Afghan Allies, behind for the Taliban was abhorrent, and was just this side of criminal. Without any doubt, it was a grotesque Dereliction of Duty. Period, dot, drop the mic.

2. Allowing a Chinese spy

balloon to transit the United States for a week and only shooting it down after it completed its spy mission; **Dereliction of Duty.**

3. Allowing China to buy land within the CONUS (U.S); **Dereliction of Duty.**

4. This administration's flaccid response to the February East Palestine, Ohio train wreck and the President's refusal to still go there. Like I mentioned many times before, I hate Hitler comparisons but in this case it is valid. After all the bombings of Germany's major cities, Hiter refused to go see the destruction for himself. Biden seems to have a similar fear of facing citizens in times of need. This is not his first time and it took a while for him to even go to Maui after the worst fire in American history.

5. The millions of illegal crossings and encounters at the border; **Dereliction of Duty.**



8. Cocaine in the White House. If somebody brought an illegal drug into your house, wouldn't you insist on finding out who was responsible? But of course, they know. Do you honestly believe that the FBI can use facial recognition and identify almost all the January 6 par-

ticipants but do not know

6. The crises in major American cities trying to handle the influx of illegals because of this administration's border policies; **Dereliction of Duty.**

7. Getting mixed up with his son's business dealings in China and the Ukraine, if proven, will be, **Dereliction of Duty.**



Yet here I am again. In operational planning, something I taught for ten years, we deal with making operational plans that

I DID THAT!

can be used in wartime and in military operations other than war (MOOTW).

Arguably the biggest factors are defining the objective(s) and strategy(ies). Objectives are "what" I want to do and strategies are "how" to accomplish the objective. Objectives must be clearly defined, measurable and attainable. No wiggle room here, folks. In terms of the Biden Afghanistan withdrawal, I personally do not have much beef with the overall objective of leaving although I am

not sure how clearly defined it was and how they were supposed to measure success of the objective.

My problem is with the strategy. I made a comment and I stand by it. If you had given me the objective of leaving Afghanistan and I could handpick any six men I worked with at Maxwell in our planning course and we would have come up with a better strategy.

who left the cocaine in the White House? Are any of you buying this? **No**. **Dereliction of Duty.**







Alabama's School Children...A Lost Generation

9. Having a house and offices full of classified documents, **Dereliction of Duty.**

Remember, as the vice-president and certainly a senator, he had no authority to have those in his possession.

Billy Graham wrote that standing firm on truth will bring criticism. That is okay. Alligator skin, remember. Truth is absolute and is never relative. Sorry. As for me, I cannot defend these actions. No matter how much I want the President to succeed, because I want America to succeed, these actions fulfill the definition of Dereliction of Duty. One can grunt, groan, curse, swear, name call or whatever they want but it does not change the truth.

As Jack Nicholson said in the movie A Few Good Men, "You can't handle the truth."

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By David Nichols



David Nichols holds a Doctor of Education degree in education leadership from the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. He has served as a teacher, dropout specialist, reading teacher, school principal, consultant, and a local school board member in two Alabama districts. He is retired and writes on education issues.

School bells are ringing as our children prepare to return to school this month. The little ones are ready with new shoes and personalized book bags. Parents and grandparents believe their children will receive excellent instruction and learning activities.

For others, reality may dim dreams for academic progress. The sad truth is the number of our children who will not likely succeed sufficiently to graduate and move on to college or career goals is unacceptable.

In 2018, Alabama's State Superintendent of Education Eric Mackey recommended, and the Alabama State Board of Education adopted, the federally-funded Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP)the ACAP aligns reading with the Alabama Course of Study and Alabama's Literacy Act. The past two years' student assessment results for third-grade reading were 78% "on grade level" in 2022 and 76% in 2023, a two-point drop. Sounds good, but a closer look is revealing.

The ACAP reading assessment includes four incremental levels for measuring "on grade level." In short, students who score at least one point above the lowest level (Level 1) are eligible for promotion to the fourth grade. Level 2 uses such terms as "reads partially," "answers some questions," and "simplistically recounts." These don't sound grade level-ready for the fourth grade. A provision called the "good cause exceptions" provides Level 1 students with several alternate steps for struggling students' promotion.

The National Assessment of Education Progress's (NAEP), the gold standard of reading assessment, measures all states' fourth and eighth grade reading and math. NAEP's 4th-grade reading assessments are administered to all states every two years. NAEP's 2022 proficiency (on grade level) for Alabama's fourth graders is 28% compared to the national average of 32%. NAEP assessments are more rigorous and accurate than state assessments.

In the October 2022 Education Week, writer Scott Marlon wrote, "NAEP's results carry a clear message for state policymakers: They need to step up in a big way before we lose a generation of students." Alabama's State Superintendent recently told the ASBOE that he'd like to move the state's instructional reading program and assessment closer to NAEP.

According to a US New and World Report article dated May 14, 2019, Alabama's quality of public K-12 education ranked 50 among all states. The message from the State Superintendent and the ASBOE is the same year after year - next year will be better.

Continued on page 13

give I think you will find most impressive. These

ladies and gentlemen are not only civic minded in

serving their state but also communit minded in

the many ways that they have served their

communities which include their religious

While I do not practice before appellate courts I

have had an opportunity to interact with both a

former justice and the current Chief Justice. Both,

at various meetings approached me during meals

asking if they might share diningspace. Both were

unassuming, extremely down to earth and were

more interested in what I had to say than to talk

about themselves. I find these individuals to be

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= $\cdot \cdot$ What is the make-up of the Justices of the $\cdot \cdot$ **ALABAMA SUPREME COURT?**

There may be those that think the Chief Justice and the eight Associate Justices on the Alabama Supreme Court may not be the legal minds as found in the United States Supreme Court. I can assure you that each of them are exceptional as to their backgrounds. They may not on the whole have participated in the Federal judiciary but the brief backgrounds that I will

several committees professionally and in community areas. He has been admitted to serve in multiple Federal courts including the United States Supreme Court.

Justice Brady Mendheim, Jr. is a graduate of Auburn University and of Cumberland School of



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received Law where he his Juris Doctorate. He practiced in civil legal defense for a time before serving as both an Assistant District Attorney in the Dothan area as well as a Circuit Judge for the 20th Judicial Circuit which encompasses the Dothan area. He has served on the faculty of the Alabama Judicial College and on several legal committees.

Justice Sarah Stewart obtained both her BA and an MA from the University of Arkansas later gaining her Juris Doctorate from Vanderbilt University. She practiced privately almost a decade and a half in the Mobile area later becoming a Circuit Court Judge for thirteen years. She, like her fellow justices has

L-R Front: Justice Tommy Bryan, Justice Greg Shaw, Chief Justice Tom Parker, Justice Alisa Kelli Wise and Justice William B. Sellers. L-R Back: Justice Jay Mitchell and Justice Brady E. Mendheim, Jr., Justice Sarah H. Stewart and Justice Greg Cook.

Chief Justice, Tom Parker was elected three times as Associate Justice before being elected Chief Justice in 2018. He is a graduate of Dartmouth College and the Vanderbilt Law School and received the Rotary International Fellowship to study law at Brazil's most prestigious law school. He served with the Attorney General's office, as General Counsel to the Alabama Court System and as legal advisor to a prior Chief Justice. He also served as Director of the Alabama Judicial College to train elected judges. He has been involved with death penalty cases, criminal appeals and constitutional cases. In private practice he was involved in many high profile constitutional cases.

Justice Greg Shaw obtained his Juris Doctorate from Cumberland School of Law (Samford University) and also a Master of Laws (LLM) from the University of Virginia Law School. He previously served as a staff attorney for two prior Supreme Court justices and as a justice on the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals. He has been recognized for many legal positions that he has held. He is also a Master Beekeeper.

Justice Kelli Wise is a graduate of Auburn, has an MPA from AUM and her Juris Doctorate from Jones School of Law. She served on the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals and was at one time the Presiding Justice. She heads a Division of the Alabama Supreme Court. She has volunteered or been selected to serve in many legal, community based or social organizations.

Justice Tommy Bryan is a graduate of Troy University with both a BS and an MS. He received his Juris Doctorate from Jones School of Law. He worked as a staff attorney for the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals, as assistant general counsel for the Attorney General's office and was later elected to the Alabama Court of Civil Appeals. He has been a member of two Alabama State Bar sections and served on some important Supreme Court committees. He is admitted to practice before the Alabama Supreme Court.

Justice William Sellers obtained his undergraduate degree from Hillsdale College, his Juris Doctorate from the University of Alabama and his Masters of Law (LLM) in Tax from New York University. Justice Sellers practiced almost three decades privately, mostly in the business and tax areas. He also has served

served in several legal related and community or social organizations.

Justice Jay Mitchell is a graduate of Birmingham-Southern College with a BA and obtained an MA from University College in Dublin, Ireland. His Juris Doctorate was gained at the University of Virginia. He worked for a prestigious litigation firm in Alabama for many years, considered a top litigator both state wide and nationally. He too has served legal, community and social organizations.

Finally, Justice Greg Cook is the newest Associate Justice elected in 2022. He obtained his undergraduate degree from Duke University and his Juris Doctorate from Harvard University. He served in the United States Air Force becoming a Captain. While Justice Cook practiced over three decades with a prestigious law firm in Alabama he has also authored several legal treatises. While in private practice he litigated in most of Alabama's counties and in fifteen states. He has also served the legal profession even within the American, Alabama and Birmingham Bar associations.

As you can see we have an Alabama Supreme Court with well-educated and experienced jurists. It's hard to believe other states all can have such qualified justices. We can be very proud of our Supreme Court even if we as individuals may not agree with all of their decisions.

This article is informative only and not meant to be all inclusive. Additionally this article does not serve as legal advice to the reader and does not constitute an attorney- client relationship. The reader should seek counsel from their attorney should any questions exist. "No representation is made that the quality of legal services performed is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers."

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LTC John Eidsmoe

2,014 years ago, around the 9th of September of 9 A.D., two events were happening that would change the world.

In Galilee, a Child was growing up who would die on a Cross for the sins of the world.

And 1,500 miles to the northwest, in Teutoburg Forest of northern Germany, some 18,000 Germanic warriors were waiting in grim silence as the 17th, 18th, and 19th Roman legions drew near. Little did they realize that the blood they would spill that day would decide the future of Western civilization and win freedom and preserve common law and republican government for thousands of years to come, that our Founding Fathers would fight for the same freedom in 1776, and that we would fight for the same freedom against federal tyranny today.

For centuries these Germanic warriors and their ancestors had dwelt in these forests, worshipping their pagan gods, living by the old virtues of valor in battle, keeping one's word, and hospitality to strangers, and. practicing decentralized government under laws that protected individual rights -- a system they would eventually bequeath to us.

But now they faced a threat from the south. As the Roman Republic gave way to the Empire, Rome had expanded its power. Some of the German tribes south of the Rhine had acquiesced to Rome's centralizing authority. Rome now looked across the Rhine and claimed northeastern Germania for its own.

The central tool of Roman expansion was perhaps the most disciplined army the world had ever seen. The Roman legions fought in the maniple formation which was similar to the Greek phalanx but more flexible, and their main weapons were short two-edged swords called gladii and rectangular shields which, when locked together in formation, made the maniple almost impregnable. The three legions combined had 15,000 - 20,000 men.

The Germanic warriors were a citizen army of all able-bodied freemen. They were strong and courageous, but they lacked the training or the weaponry of the Romans. They charged in a wedge formation, and their weapons consisted of spears, battle-axes, and a long broadsword that was more powerful than the gladius but less effective in close infighting. They fought effectively as small groups but were unused to fighting together in large armies.

But this time they were united behind a charismatic leader, a Cheruscan prince of northern Germania named Arminius (Luther would give his name the Germanic form, Hermann). Raised as a hostage in Rome, Hermann became an army officer and learned Roman strategy and tactics.. But his heart was with his Germanic kinfolk, and he left Rome as a young man and returned to his people.

Hermann knew his Germanic warriors could not match the Romans in open combat, but he also knew the Romans were unused to fighting in forests and marshes. So he laid careful plans for an ambush.

Hermann caused a rumor to reach the Roman General Varus that two northern

towns had openly rebelled, so Varus brought his legions across the Rhine to subdue them. They followed a road through Teutoburg Forest, and between Kalkriese Hill on the south and the Great Bog on the north the road was so narrow that Varus could march his men only eight abreast, so his army was stretched out for miles. At this point, perhaps, God Who is sovereign over human affairs intervened by sending a torrential downpour, although Hermann and his men probably attributed the rain to Donner (Thor) and Tyr. And so, behind earthen ramparts on Kalkriese Hill, the Germanic warriors waited in stoic silence. As Peter S. Wells wrote in The Battle that Stopped Rome:

"Some of the older men, who had fought against the Roman legions during the campaigns of Drusus, Ahenobarbus, and Tiberius, or who had lost kinsmen in battles with those armies, hated the Romans with passion and were eager to attack the troops and to kill as many as they could. But most were frightened, even terrified, and the prospect of confronting the dreaded legions in face-to-face combat"

At Hermann's signal, the Germans attacked with volleys of thousands of spears, and within seconds thousands of Romans lay dead or dying. With a deafening war-cry the Germans charged into the Roman ranks, dealing death with their battle-axes and broadswords. The battle is said to have continued for three days, but the outcome was decided in the first hour. Over 15,000 Roman soldiers were killed; fewer than a thousand made it back across the Rhine. German losses were about 500 dead, 1,500 wounded.

As a result of Teutoburg Forest, northern Germany and Scandinavia remained forever free of the centralizing influence of Roman law. They continued their Teutonic common law tradition, complete with jury trials and protection for individual rights. Five centuries later, the Angles and Saxons of northern Germany and the Jutes of Denmark crossed the Channel and brought their system of common law to Britain, which became Angle-land or England.

In the following centuries the Anglo-Saxons became Christians. The redeeming work of the Child of Nazareth, and the freedom won by the Germanic warriors, fused together into the English common law. In 890 A.D., when King Alfred the Great prepared his law code for England, the Book of Dooms, he began it with the Ten Commandments and interspersed Scripture passages throughout the text. This same common law was preserved with the Magna Charta, reasserted in the English Bill of Rights, brought to America by pilgrim and puritan colonists, defended in the War for Independence, and enshrined in the United States Constitution.

Meanwhile, back on the continent, Luther revived the memory of Hermann and made him a symbol of Germanic resistance. The northern princes followed Luther, not only because they agreed with his Reformation doctrines, but also because Luther stood for the decentralized principles of the old Germanic common law.

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UNERAL RIPOFFS

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

Page 5

John Martin

funeral industry? Have you ever wondered why just about every product and service related to a funeral is grossly overpriced—with a price that is often not even disclosed until after the family is stuck with paying it?

ave you ever thought about what goes on in the

Welcome to America's most extreme price gouging—gouging that is MANDATED BY LAW.

In our early days, families took care of their own according to their own traditions and religious beliefs. Procedures varied widely. Some might seem repugnant to others with different beliefs. But there were never any problems.

American Indians usually buried their dead in shallow graves about three feet deep, since digging deeper with shells and flat stones was a great deal of work. Chiefs and others of status were buried with grave goods—jewelry, utensils, and weapons for their afterlives. Some of the Midwestern tribes placed their corpses onto scaffolds so eagles and vultures could clean the flesh from the bones, which they later buried. They rarely, if ever, marked their graves.

Americans of European descent buried their dead in wooden boxes about five to six feet deep, usually in church cemeteries or their own family cemeteries. Headstones ranged anywhere from elaborate stone sculptures to simple natural rocks or crude wooden crosses.

Funerals of both natives and Europeans could range from elaborate ceremonies to simple burials. Up until the end of the War for Southern Independence in 1865, our local, state, and federal governments did not interfere or dictate how families took care of their deceased. They left them strictly alone, and everybody was happy with their own traditions.

But then, after John Wilkes Booth committed his dirty deed, government officials arranged a "grand response" to mourn Lincoln's death. They embalmed his body, draped it in black, and placed it onto a train that ran all over the northern states, stopping at cities and towns so thousands of people could view it.

This display of extravagance prompted greedy hucksters to collude with state authorities to impose restrictive licensure laws and concoct a lucrative oligarchy to regulate and limit their competition by law. Over the last century and a half, they have created a ghoulish empire to milk every nickel and dime they can from family estates. In essence, simple, inexpensive family burials have been outlawed.

Today, the licensed funeral directors' cartels have covered every base—who could own and operate a funeral home, conduct memorial services, embalm a corpse, perform cremations, create and sell tombstones, own and operate a hearse, build and sell caskets and vaults, own and operate a cemetery, and provide flowers and a multitude of add-ons. Today, a traditional funeral costs over \$7000.

At the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, Katrina Spade noted that urban cemeteries consume a great deal of valuable land. They also require concrete or steel vaults and caskets of expensive hardwoods. She said, "By one estimate, an average cemetery contains enough furniture-grade wood to build 40 homes." And of course, the bodies are required to be embalmed with toxic formaldehyde. Spade proposed a very simple and efficient means of corpse disposal—composting. "It occurred to me that if you can compost a cow, you can compost a human... I kept working at the idea because I kept finding more and more people who said, 'I would do that.'

Farmers have done it for centuries to dispose of dead animals. In terms of simplicity and low cost, it might be the ultimate disposal method—obviously less costly than burials, and even less expensive and more efficient than cremation, which requires expensive equipment and consumes massive amounts of fuel.

Rules like this stifle competition and allow the legally privileged funeral industries to charge whatever they wish—for legally mandated products and services. To add insult to injury, families are obliged to suddenly deal with them in times of grief, when they are most vulnerable.

The Federal Trade Commission requires that funeral homes provide price lists, but many of them withhold them until seriously pressured. Some have charged higher than listed prices and even threatened to withhold remains until the family paid up.

Of course, we do have some honest undertakers who would like to bring their fees down to reasonable levels. But because the system is already structured around the ripoff prices, the honest ones are afraid to do much discounting, lest they become ostracized by their peers and even have their licenses revoked.

Modern science has proven it unnecessary to embalm a person after death to prevent spreading diseases. Tanya Marsh, a law professor at Wake Forest University, said, "If we did away with embalming as a requirement for licensure and regulations, you would open up the industry to a lot of people who want to help grieving people."

The Institute for Justice is a nonprofit organization that litigates funeral law cases. Its senior attorney, Jeff Rowe, stated, *"Funerals are unreasonably expensive... Our laws have created [a] notion of a bells-and-whistles hearse going down the street followed by a hundred cars going to the cemetery, with a casket and brass handles. Because if you loved your dad, you really want to get the nice casket."*

Spade stated, "In some areas, people have the option of 'natural burial,' where a body is often shrouded in cloth and buried on forested land. It's an approach that has grown in popularity in recent years and can often be done to comply with funeral and cemetery laws...." Embalming, vaults, caskets, and other expensive items are avoided. But this option is only available in rural locations.

Spade emphasizes that human composting requires little energy and emits very little waste. The body is "placed in a vessel and surrounded by organic materials like sawdust and straw. Like vegetable compost, a mix of oxygen, heat and microbes help the body break down over the course of four to six weeks. What's left is compost, bones and medical devices, which are removed. The bones are transported to a special machine that breaks them into small fragments, which are then composted."

Spade said that convincing state legislatures to allow it *"has been arduous."* But in 2015, Marsh has chipped in by informing her funeral law students about human composting procedures. Her students are researching all 50 state laws and examining what changes are needed.

Spade hired lobbyists and courted lawmakers in Washington state, who have already passed her proposal. New York passed it "*overwhelmingly*" just this year (2023). She is now working in Oregon, Vermont, and Colorado.

Many funeral directors oppose it, just like they oppose other permissive reforms. They claim that it limits their ability *"to become involved in the business."*

Another cremation alternative is alkaline hydrolysis, the use of lye to dissolve a human body. The process is also much less expensive and consumes far less energy.

Death doulas are an option for families to avoid the often heavy costs of funeral parlors and licensed directors. They care for the dead at home, and the families hold their services there—like families did prior to 1865.

Spade has founded a company called Recompose. So far this year (2023), it has composted over 100 people.

The bottom line: "Much of the dysfunction in the funeral industry is the result of occupational licensing—the rules that require people to obtain licenses to perform work—gone awry. The litany of licensing requirements guiding everyone from funeral directors to hairdressers could be greatly reduced, or even eliminated. They keep entrepreneurs from starting businesses in the funeral space"

Spade began a nonprofit to raise money for her idea, but an e-mail from "*a law professor*" claimed that there was an "incredible variety of laws" that would not allow it—that human composting was flatly illegal in every state. Legal bureaucracies hammered her for years while she struggled for a rational change. She had run into a massive wall imposed by the funeral cartels. They had no sympathy for giving up their cash cows just to allow families to save thousands of dollars.

Younger families are desperate for simpler, less expensive funerals, like the Ones we had prior to Lincoln's. In those days, a family would wash and dress the body and keep it at home for a few days while the family and friends visited.

There was no embalming, and the odor of decay was minimal if it even existed. The family placed the body in a simple, often crude and home made wooden casket, and buried it anywhere from a church cemetery to a back yard. There were NO government officials meddling with anything.

Today, arbitrary laws can be devastating. In New Jersey, the state's headstonemaker association twisted the arms of state legislators, claiming that churches had *"an unfair advantage"* in selling headstones. The legislators obliged, making church sales illegal.

TEUTOBURG FOREST: THE BATTLE THAT SAVED OUR COMMON LAW

BY LTC EIDSMOE

E Continued from page 4

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he same common laws that stood against the attempts of the Holy Roman Emperor to impose Roman law upon them.

Today, atop Kalkriese Hill in Teutoburg Forest, stands a pavilion with a statute of Hermann the Liberator, facing south and waving a sword of defiance against Rome.

In the German-American community of New Ulm, Minnesota, a 32-foot statue of Hermann stands atop the Hermann Heights Monument, defiantly holding his sword aloft as he faces east toward Rome (and also toward Washington, D.C.).

Teutoburg Forest was more than a great military victory. It preserved and made possible the expansion of our constitutional heritage of Anglo-American common law.

And now, the Biden Administration seeks powers that would dwarf anything the Roman emperors imagined and that would make our constitutional system a thing of the past..

May God give us a leader like Hermann the Liberator! We need his likeness today!

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

SOURCE:

Severns, Maggie, Abraham Lincoln's other legacy: An obsession with open caskets and America's lifelessless death industry, Grid News, December 28, 2022. https://www.grid.news/story/politics/2022/12/28/are-caskets-dated-how-renegade-funeral-activists-are-reshaping-death-in america/?utm_source=Quora&utm_medium=Paid&utm_campaign=Quora -Paid-Caskets-Dated-America



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THOUSANDS OF LEE COUNTY DISSIDENTS

John Sophocleus

run-off. Follow-up to my March 2023 Gazette column:

[https://www.alabamagazette.com/story/2023/03/01/opinion/witness-economic-lynching-in-lee-county/2506.html] is prompted by reports of 6,818 Lee County dissidents who've never paid/stopped paying the fraudulent bills County Commissioners are sending via USPS. A few property owners/residents requested Postal Inspector Office investigation into using USPS soliciting payment for bills that the individual receiving the mail has not contracted with Arrow Disposal for curbside pickup. No political mugger at the 7/31/23 Commission meeting appeared more enraged about victims fighting back than Gary Long, red faced and visibly apoplectic.

A most stirring column this year explains the

economic lynching of Mr. Willie Philpot and his

growing business [ViroTek] killed by Lee County. This

anticompetitive, ACCA/BCA type clown-show of

politburo members is currently led by the most corrupt

'public servant' Commissioner Gary Long. Lee

County voters removed the previous anti-business/

pro-cronyism ringleader [Ham] in the 2022 primary

Last checked, these mail fraud investigations remain open. Some speculate bills aren't being sent across State lines to avoid more serious federal wire fraud charges. If true, sad Commissioners didn't put as much thought into following the law w.r.t. providing trash disposal and offered a little wisdom addressing the real problem - i.e., wrongful dumping into county dumpsters - the excuse used to promote this monopoly wealth transfer to their crony vendor. Little surprise dumping in Lee County has increased these past months, contra to Commissioner Long's flawed logic and poor understanding of how our real world functions.

Lee county observed further vulgarities since the March Gazette column publication. Commissioners are providing county government labour, office space, etc. to collect bills for a private vendor [Arrow] where no individual has contracted with them to provide curbside trash service. August 17, 2023 <u>https://opelikaobserver.com/</u> article by Hannah Goldfinger is entitled: Lee County Sends Delinquent Notices On Trash Contracts. Note the plural. Lee county residents/property owners have constantly asked commissioners to provide a copy of their specific contract (giving the number used in USPS solicitations for payment) that Goldfinger reported are in delinquency.

The only contract (not plural) I have any knowledge of is the monopoly contract with Arrow commissioners obligated the county pay and is in fact regularly paying (with Lee County tax dollars) to this private crony vendor. There's no evidence whatsoever my County is delinquent in spite of this newspaper's pro-politburo reporting. There were many Lee county residents who contracted with and paid private vendors for curbside trash pickup these past decades before commissioner monopolization to their crony contractor. Several made it very clear to commissioners once county dumpsters are reopened (hopefully with sound enforcement of wrongful dumping) they'll happily pay the \$222/yr. as they've done for decades.

One Lee countian [Lance Farrar] despised and heralded for actually reading the Lee County agenda packet requested name and address of so-called '*delinquent*' garbage customers. Probate Judge Bill English told commissioners he asked the ACCA's opinion... this Judge has shown himself an incompetent public servant on matters of this sort for many years and a long time sycophant of ACCA, BCA, et al political theft. ACCA legal counsel directed this inept Judge [public servant English] to an attorney general. Mr. Farrar also questioned commissioner authority/justification for imposing criminal actions/penalties in this civil matter. This was in reference to text on Commissioners' continued solicitations for money via USPS sending '*delinquent notices*' threatening mail fraud victims who continue to refuse paying; asserting '*delinquents*' must appear in court, "*If you do not appear in court on that date, a warrant will be issued for your*



Leverette delivered sobering news to the Lee County Commission regarding a one million dollar revenue shortfall in the first year of its ill conceived garbage collection scheme during their meeting on Monday, July 31st of 2023. Couched in boilerplate euphemisms and almost lost amidst her monotone monologue addressing the "Solid Waste Billing Office Transition", Leverette dropped the bombshell revelation that Lee County had come up one million

Lee County Chief Administrative Officer Holly

dropped the bombshell revelation that Lee County had come up one million dollars short in collection of garbage service fees due to 6,818 residents of Lee County who have not paid for the unwanted regime that has been autocratically foisted upon them. Those nearly seven thousand residents account for roughly forty percent of the total number of 21,000 hapless citizens of Lee County who have been railroaded into a tour of duty with a slapdash ad-hoc curbside pickup program helmed by the LCC that they did not ask for.

Some highlights of Leverette's grim lecture included an unyielding emphasis on the dire need for a newly created position of a "Commission Billing Office Manager" for "Developing enforcement protocols to be used as needed for delinquent accounts". Under the County's updated collections focused final solution, a new "Department of Commission Billing Office" would be established within the County Commission Office. Quoted below are excerpts from Leverette's presentation; Finally, the outlook of the operation has evolved from being a short-term in-house operation to the need for a more permanent solution.

Worthy of note, the Examiner isn't beholden to the Lee County politburo for legal and other ad revenue. The Commission has done its best to make sure others were '*black-balled*' from buying ad space in local newspapers to inform taxpayers. Furthermore the Probate Judge and Commissioners no longer allow citizen comments into the record or broadcast on taxpayer funded video for public viewing. Another abomination first moved and championed by 'public servant' Gary Long.

John Brice, featured writer for the LaFayette Sun newspaper in Chambers County (due north of Lee County) helped break a similar story of several residents being arrested by the City of Valley for unpaid garbage bills due for payment to a private contractor. Most renowned among them was 82 year old Martha Menefield, whose infamous case made both national and international headlines. Menefield's charges were dropped by the District Attorney of Alabama's 5th Judicial Circuit along with dismissal of identical charges against her neighbors.

Knowing the result of that similarly shameful trash debacle north of Lee County, it is revealing Judge English, Commissioner Long and the politburo members who aid and abet them are more beholden to ACCA political theft than trying to limit further embarrassment to our State and Lee County. Looks like more shame is headed my way...

In closing, I asked John Brice to provide some context for this '*follow-up*' column after reporting on similar charges/tyranny dismissed in the courts up in Chambers County. Little surprise this righteous reporter immediately evoked Scripture in reply:

"In the Spirit of Verse Sixteen from the Book of Luke, Chapter Eight, we are shining a light on the Truth hidden by shadow in Lee County through the work of the East Alabama Examiner. 'For there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open' as the Scripture instructs us."

Postscript: Some asked my thoughts on Trump in Montgomery... felt like Felon Hubbard 2.0 - even more Déjà vu with every 'I Believe in Mike Hubbard' minion I saw attending. My forecast is Alabama voters (wasting votes on big government/modern Democrats like Biden and Trump - yes I know he's ''Donning' the Red Jersey at the moment) will re-install Trump with all his corruption. A rational forecast to those who recall voters' adoration and support of Hubbard before Mike was finally removed by the courts instead of more efficiently in the polls. Sadly, the Biden crime family corruption is on par with Trump, who didn't 'clear the field' for Hillary 2016 as planned, but Trump still got his desired protection. Hard to imagine our court system put Butts, Hubbard, Siegelman, et al political thieves in prison; even harder to imagine a day when top politburo members like Biden and Trump are imprisoned for even one of their many wrongdoings.

arrest."

Once again, the ACCA isn't held accountable for their actions in court as this parasitic organisation uses English and Long type sycophants as 'firewall protection' while sucking the wealth and quality of life out of Alabama. With Commissioners paying their monopoly contract using Lee County taxpayer dollars and sending out fraudulent bills to individual(s) NOT contracted with Arrow, seems the courts will have to determine if collections from these fraudulent bills soliciting money for a private vendor are double billing or comingling funds. Pray for no 'Sonny Brasfield' judges to navigate toward a righteous result which upholds contract law and rebukes corrupt policies and/or statutes in violation of lawful contracting.

A more factual assessment of Lee County Commissioners' trash monopoly is entitled, "Lee County is One Million Dollars Short on Garbage Fees, Prepares Crackdown," [https://www.eaexaminer.com/post/lee-county-is-onemillion-dollars-short-on-garbage-fees-prepares-crackdown-on-residents] in an East Alabama Examiner report. Below are some excerpts: Letters to the Editor Welcomed! The Alabama Gazette welcomes your comments, suggestions and editorials. If space permits we will publish your opinions. The Alabama Gazette is the "Voice of Reason" – The "Peoples Paper" in the River Region and Central Alabama. Please remember you can read every issue in its entirety on line.





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Protecting American Soil: A Prudent Step in Troubled Times

Alabama ranks among the top three states in land owned by foreign interest, a startling fact that places at risk Alabama's large number of vital military bases and facilities and, by extension, our national security. Our soil in the wrong hands can function as a base for spy operations, a safe haven for terrorist activities just to mention a few potential consequences. This unsettling reality has not gone unnoticed. Concerned citizen and Lafayette native Greg Lowery, whose family's third-generation farm became a target of Chinese interests took action. His unsettling experience with this foreign adversary led him to the Alabama Legislature. The result was the Property Protection Act sponsored by House Majority leader Scott Stadthagen.

The Act gained the attention of Alabama Senator Katie Britt who weighed in on the matter, stating:

"The ownership of American land by foreign entities is not just a state concern but a national one. The steps taken by Alabama must be seen as a beacon for other states to follow. We must remain vigilant and ensure that our farmland and strategic assets are kept in hands that prioritize American interests." The asymmetry in land ownership policies between the United States and countries like China, where Americans cannot own land, adds another layer of complexity to the issue.

Stadthagen's advocacy for the Property Protection Act (PPA) is significant move. It passed the Alabama House and Senate and was signed into law by Governor Kay Ivey. The law bars hostile foreign governments, including China, North Korea, Iran, and Russia, from purchasing land in Alabama.

The PPA is a symbol of a nation faced with a shifting geopolitical landscape. It strikes a balance between safeguarding domestic interests and avoiding unnecessary provocation.

China's confrontational actions and posturing have only intensified the debate



Perry O. Hooper Jr.

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



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over foreign ownership of American soil. "This is not just about protecting our state. This is about protecting our nation," Stadthagen has emphasized.

By enacting the PPA, Alabama has set a precedent that other states must consider following. Thoughtful measures like this are both prudent and necessary at a time when international relations are in the forefront.

The Chinese Communist Party's aggressive rhetoric and tactics such as confronting our naval ships in international waters serves as a reminder that vigilance is required. By taking measured steps to secure our land, we can send a clear message without resorting to broad bans.

The Property Protection Act, as those on the left naively proclaim, is not about fear; it's about foresight. It's about integrity, not isolation. In our interconnected global economy, we must be vigilant and judicious, protecting our national interests while maintaining our values.

In a world fraught with complexity, the PPA serves as a testament to the wisdom of careful legislation. It's a step forward in ensuring that our soil remains, first and foremost, American.

The only thing that China understands is strong, concise actions, something that the previous U.S. administration clearly demonstrated. The implementation of tariffs in response to China's unfair trade practices was a firm stance that highlighted the administration's resolve. These measures were aimed at addressing issues like intellectual property theft, forced technology transfer, and dumping of their products into our markets. The PPA is another strong action China understands.

With voices like Senator Britt's and Representative Stadthagen guiding the conversation and concrete steps like the PPA, Alabama is leading the way in this crucial aspect of national security. Other states and the federal government would do well to heed the lessons learned here in our great state.



The New England Slave Trade

The enemies of the South are all around. One of the most repugnant is Elizabeth "*The Fake Indian*" Warren. You also have Lloyd "The Wokester" Austin, who seems to have periodic battles with the English language; Mark "*The Mannequin*" Milley, who appears to have had brain surgery that went awry; and a gang of so-called historians who worship at the foot of Abe Lincoln and blame America's "*ills*" on the South. As the Brits would say: bollocks!

hustlers" The political football that leftists and "race incessantly toss around is slavery. (Booker T. Washington warned about grifters who profit by stirring up racial animosities.) Historically, corporate welfare loving Whigs and Republicans also exploited the issue, especially during tariff disputes. History shows slavery has been around since humans have existed and all racial and ethnic groups have experienced it. Regardless of this fact, blame for slavery is routinely dumped on the South, largely due to the dishonest way history is taught.

The trans-Saharan and trans-Atlantic slave trade moved over twenty million Africans from their homes to various locations throughout the world. Roughly five million died in transit. *"The first wave, in the 800s A.D., was carried out in North Africa by Arabs and Berbers, both were non-European Muslims."* This lasted from the ninth to the fifteenth century. It resulted in the enslavement of over ten million Black Africans. It was likely the most brutal in history as relatively few survived and many who did were made into eunuchs.

trespassing, etc. Virginians saw Indians as worthy of learning Christianity.] American slave trading began in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and New York. "*The first ship from America, which embarked in the African slave trade, was the Desire, Captain Pierce, of Salem, Massachusetts.*" The Desire, built in Marblehead, Massachusetts, first sailed in June of 1637 (see John Winthrop's writings). It headed to the Bahamas "*with a cargo of* 'dry fish and strong liquors'...*obtained the Negroes from two British men-of-war, which had been captured from a Spanish slaver.*" Massachusetts' Dr. Jeremy Belknap declared New England rum as foundational to the African slave trade.

Virginia was not active in the slave trade, did not ask for it to be imposed on them, and tried to stop it. None opposed it more vehemently than Patrick Henry and John Tyler, Sr., who "wanted it handed down to posterity that he opposed that wicked clause [in the U.S Constitution] permitting the slave trade." New England shipping companies were chiefly responsible for bringing slaves to the South and these companies had considerable political influence.

Rhode Islanders, Captain James DeWolf of Bristol and John Brown of Providence, (part of the family connected to Brown University) joined forces to protect the slave trade. Indeed, the slave trade "was one of the foundations of New England's economic structure; it created a wealthy class of slave-trading merchants...Even after slavery was outlawed in the North, ships out of New England continued to carry thousands of Africans to the U.S. South." Slave ships were typically owned and controlled by Northerners. No Southern flags flew from any ships; American slave ships did, however, fly the U.S. Flag, i.e., the Stars and Stripes. Virginia actually had no ships involved in foreign trade; colonial laws and subservience to England did not allow it.

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

"Around 1460, Portugal established posts along the coast of Western Africa to trade in African slaves." This was the beginning of European involvement in the trade. Black African capturers, sellers, and profiteers were the constant in both scenarios—those sold or traded were slaves in Africa before they were placed on a slave ship. Northern Europeans could not survive in Sub-Saharan Africa, an area often dubbed "the White man's grave."

In 1562, the English became involved, under Sir John Hawkins. Although several European countries participated, "*England became, on the whole, the leader in this trade, and was unrivaled by any save her daughter, New England.*" Massive profits from the slave trade contributed mightily to the wealth of the British Empire and New England.

The Puritans settled in Massachusetts in 1620, about thirteen years after the settlement of Jamestown, Virginia. They tried, largely unsuccessfully, to enslave the native Indians. The Puritans did manage to export some Indians (mostly Pequots) as slaves if they were considered hostile to the Massachusetts colony; they were sent to the Bermuda's, Barbados, and other locations in exchange for Blacks and material goods. [Conversely, Virginia created laws against trespassing on Indian land, taking their land, killing them for

Enemies of the South are everywhere but none more glaring than the politicians, "*historians*" and "educators" who refuse to admit any facts that fall outside of the government narrative. The worst of the bunch are the cowardly Southerners who dishonor their own ancestors.

Sources:

"The Myth of Northern Innocence: Before Emancipation, The North Perpetuated and Profited from Slavery," by Anne Farrow, Joel Lang, and Jenifer Frank, from Hartford Courant, September 5, 2005; A Defense of Virginia, by Robert L. Dabney; The South Was Right, by Kennedy and Kennedy; Union At All Costs: From Confederation to Consolidation, by John M. Taylor; and War for What?, by Francis Springer. NOTE: Slavery actually ended in 1962 when it was outlawed on the Arab peninsula. Also, Alabama Congressman Mike Rogers has allegedly allowed "Pocahontas" Warren to move forward with the Soviet-inspired "Renaming Commission." If true, one has to ask exactly who Rogers represents. In contrast, there are others who contend it is insulting to have your name associated with the present "woke" military.



COACH TOMMY TUBERVILLE

U.S. SENATOR 🗙 FOR ALABAMA

we have a U.S. Senator, I have the honor of nominating qualified candidates each year for an appointment to a United States Service Academy. U.S. Senator Tommy Tuberville's (R-AL) team hosted another U.S. Service Academy

It is no small step to pursue a nomination to a United States Service Academy, but it is an

opportunity to be a part of the next generation of American leaders and join the ranks of great men and women who came before you.

My office is accepting applications from Alabama students who are seeking a nomination to the United States Naval Academy, Air Force Academy, Merchant Marine Academy, or the Military Academy at West Point for the class entering in July of 2024.

Please remember that in order to be eligible for a nomination each candidate must meet the following criteria:

- Be a United States Citizen at the time he or she enters the Service Academy, and a legal resident of Alabama;
- Be at least 17 years of age, but not yet 23 by July 1st of the year he or she is admitted to the Service Academy (the upper age limit is 25 for Merchant Marine Academy);
- Meet the minimum requirements of the Academy to which he or she is applying.

More information can be found at:

https://www.tuberville.senate.gov/services/academies

U.S. Senator Tommy Tuberville's (R-AL) team hosted another U.S. Service Academy information session in Homewood this week in conjunction with the offices of U.S. Senator Katie Britt, Congresswoman Terri Sewell, and Congressman GaryPalmer.



press_office@tuberville.senate.gov

During the session, students and parents heard about each office's application process from congressional staff and met with service academy representatives.

Senator Tuberville will be partnering with Senator Britt and the Alabama delegation to host more information sessions during the month of August with remaining stops in Troy, Montgomery, and Opelika.

A complete list of times, dates, and locations for each information session can be found at: *https://www.tuberville.senate.gov/services/service-academy-infor-mational-sessions*

The deadline to apply for an academy nomination through Senator Tuberville's office is Monday, October 16, 2023.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact June Reeves-Weir via email: Academy_Nominations@Tuberville.Senate.gov

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September 2023

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Montgomery County Sheriff's Office



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Mark Harrell

Sheriff



Sheriff

Sheriff's Office App

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

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

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



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POLICE OFFICERS PRAYER

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



Bill Franklin

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

LowndesCountyAlabamaSheriffsOffice/ Chris West lead others... I ask for dedication.

AMEN

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The Marine Corps League (MCL) National Organization, State Departments, and **Local Detachments**

Montgomery Area Townsend Detachment 920

The National MCL was founded in 1923. Members of the National, State, and local MCL join together in fellowship for the purpose of preserving the traditions and promoting the interests of the United States Marine Corps. We accomplish this by uniting those who are now serving with those who have served in the Marine Corps. The MCL provides aid and renders assistance to all Marines, former Marines, and to their widows and orphans.The Montgomery Area Townsend Detachment 920 participates in many community activities, such as Veterans events; school programs; placing flags on veteran's graves for Memorial Day; assisting local Marines stationed in the greater Montgomery area; working with the Marine Corps Reserve Unit in Toys for Tots collections and burial Honor Guard detail; presenting Good Citizenship awards to local Eagle Scouts; and hosting a 'Welcome Aboard' picnic for USMC officers and their families at the Air Colleges aboard Maxwell AFB.

Membership in the Marine Corps League is extended to Marines, Fleet Marine Corps Medical Corpsmen, and Chaplains who are on active duty or who have been Honorably Discharged from active duty after having a minimum of 90 days service and have earned the Eagle, Globe, and Anchor. We also accept into Associate Member status those persons who have an abiding love for their country and the Corps. The annual membership is \$35. Interested individuals can find an application form at www.townsendmcl920.org as well as contact information, monthly meeting dates/times, scheduled events, and links to the National and State web sites.

Townsend Detachment 920

Serves the greater River Region in Central Alabama. The Townsend Detachment was established in 1997 and named in remembrance of Corporal Henry "Ben" Townsend, Jr.

Corporal Townsend was a Montgomery area resident who suffered injuries during the terrorist bombing of the Marine Barracks in Beirut, Lebanon. Corporal Townsend was moved to Walter Reed Army hospital where he subsequently died from his injuries.





2 Chronicles 7:14

14 If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. King James Version

www.AlabamaGazette.com



Captain Jerry L. Gantt served five years on active duty in the U.S. Navy and 25 years in the Naval Air Reserve. His Navy Designator was 1325, Naval Flight Officer. His military medals, decorations and awards include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Navy Commendation Medal with gold star, Meritorious Unit Commendation, Navy "E" Ribbon (five awards), National Defense Medal with bronze star, Humanitarian Service Medal, Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Overseas Service Ribbon with two bronze stars and Armed Forces Reserve Medal with Mobilization device and silver hourglass.

(AT) assignments included tours as a student and later as exercise controller with the National Defense University's Reserve Components National Security Course, Congressional liaison duty with the Chief of Naval Operations Plans and Programs Office in the Pentagon and studies at the Naval War College at Newport, RI.



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CAPT Gantt was born July 3, 1945, to his parents, Lloyd and Dorothy Gantt, and he was reared at Slapout, AL, a rural community in Elmore County. He graduated Valedictorian from Holtville High School in 1963 and from Auburn University with a B.A. Degree in Journalism in 1967. While at Auburn, he held leadership positions in Alpha Phi Omega service fraternity, Young Republican and the Auburn Press Club.

His military career began with Officer Candidate School at Newport, RI, for four months where he was commissioned an Ensign August 18, 1967. He completed Basic Preflight aviation training and

Naval Flight Officer School at Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola, FL, and Advance Navigation training at NAS Corpus Christi, TX. This was followed by Antisubmarine Warfare (ASW) training at NAS Norfolk, VA, and Patrol Squadron 30 (VP-30) at NAS Patuxent River, MD. He then joined his operational fleet squadron, Patrol Squadron 16 (VP-16), homeported at NAS Jacksonville, FL, in February 1969 along with four former Auburn classmates. They changed the VP-16 mascot from the "*Eagles*" to the "*War Eagles*," a designation that remains to this day.

At VP-16, he was assigned collateral duties as Public Affairs Officer and Assistant Administrative Officer and assigned as Tactical Coordinator for a P-3A "Orion" ASW patrol plane aircrew directing 12 officers and enlisted personnel. He deployed to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, tracking the first Soviet nuclear submarine detected in the Gulf of Mexico and also to the Maritime Patrol School at Londonderry, Northern Ireland, NATO exercises out of Norway and routine ASW missions from Bermuda, the Azores and Sigonella, Sicily.

In December 1971, CAPT Gantt was released from active duty and pursued a Master of Arts in Journalism and Communications Degree from the University of Florida. He affiliated with the Naval Air Reserve at Jacksonville, FL, and he was assigned to Patrol Squadron 62 (VP-62) where he served in every department including three department head positions. During his 13 years in the reserve squadron, he deployed to Rota, Spain, Kindley Field, Bermuda and Lajes Field in the Azores. He accumulated more than 3,600 flight hours as Tactical Coordinator in the P-3A/B "*Orion*" maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft.

He was transferred to Volunteer Training Unit 7474 (VTU-7474) in April 1985 and served as Seapower Department Head until selected as Commanding Officer of Naval Air Facility Mayport augment unit (NAF 0174) in February 1987. In August 1988, he returned to VTU-7474 as Chief Staff Officer. He joined the local team of Command Excellence Seminar facilitators and conducted the senior leadership course annually. His active duty for training CAPT Gantt was recalled to active duty in 1991 to serve as Project RESTAR (Reserve Transition and Recognition) Officer for Naval Air Reserve Jacksonville to assist reservists mobilized during Operation Desert Storm. He designed and implemented a program to monitor the welfare, safe return, and public recognition of more than 400 deployed reservists and organized welcome home media coverage. He was awarded the Navy Commendation Medal and Letters of Commendation for his innovative performance of duty in this endeavor. He assumed command of VTU-7474 in October 1991 where he was responsible for employment of upwards of 50 senior officers in



support of Naval Air Reserve Jacksonville and its augment and sustaining units. CAPT Gantt retired from 30+ years of military service September 1, 1997.

While serving in the Naval Air Reserve, CAPT Gantt worked at Jacksonville University as Director of Publications where he managed production of all campus publications 1980-1984. He earned a Master of Business Administration Degree from Jacksonville University while employed there. He later served as VP Marketing at Jax Navy Federal Credit Union which is now Vystar Credit Union 1986-1990. He worked as Assistant VP Marketing for Merrill Lynch Credit Corporation 1993-1997 serving as communications strategist and national product manager for a portfolio of mortgage products designed to manage the liability side of clients' investment balance sheet.

After CAPT Gantt's military retirement, he returned to Montgomery as a research and writing specialist at the Air Force Research Institute at Maxwell AFB for more than 10 years serving as content editor for Strategic Studies Quarterly, the Air Force's flagship academic journal. As project manager, he coordinated the content editing, copy editing, quality assurance and graphic production team. He also edited topline books such as Professor Colin Gray's Airpower for Strategic Effect, William Arkin's Divining Victory and Phillip Meilinger's Bomber, a history of the Strategic Air Command. He completed course work for a Ph.D. degree in public policy from Auburn University and was named to Phi Alpha Alpha honorary.

CAPT Gantt is a member of First United Methodist Church of Montgomery where he has served as an usher, greeter, Sunday School president, speaker and delegate to the Southeast Jurisdiction Heritage Foundation Commission. His former wives are now deceased, and he has no children. His interests include photography and world travel.

CAPT Gantt's conclusions about his military service:

"The freedom that we enjoy is not free. That is a cliché, but it is very true. I never saw combat, but we served as a frontline deterrent during the Cold War. It was very rewarding working with such outstanding men and women who were willing to give up a weekend a month and two weeks during their summers. I had some wonderful people working with me. I wish that I could do it all over. I am ready to go. Send me!"

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September 2023



IST SGT SANDRA DEE LUCAS: AGE 64

st Sgt. Sandra Lucas served 20 years in the U.S. military including four years in the Navy reaching the rank of Petty Officer 2nd Class and 16 years in the Alabama Army National Guard. Her Navy Enlisted was a Specialist (46S). Some of her awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Meritorious Unit Award, Army Commendation Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, Joint Service Achievement Medal, Army Achievement Medal with Triple Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster, Navy Achievement Medal, Air Force Achievement Medal and Army and Navy Good Conduct Medals. She was also awarded the Navy Superior Civilian Service Award, the highest honorary award the Chief of Naval Operations may bestow on a civilian.



Sandra was born May 13, 1959, to her parents, Trinidad Mora, a U.S. Navy veteran, and Cathline Johnson, at Wichita, KS, where she graduated from Campus High School in 1977. She received a B.S. in English from American Military University in 2019.

1st Sgt. Lucas volunteered and enlisted in the U.S. Navy in April 1977. She spent four years in the U.S. Navy completing eight weeks of Basic Training at the Naval Training Station at Orlando, FL, followed by 12 weeks of training in Meridian, MS, to become a Yeoman at YN "A" School, followed by assignment to Washington, D.C.

working at the Bureau of Naval Personnel as a yeoman with the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, the highest-ranking Navy enlisted person. After completing her Naval service, she worked in the civilian sector eventually becoming the Director of Manpower and Modernization for the Chief of Naval Operations responsible for refurbishing and modifying Surface service ships.

Lucas attended the Brookings Institute as a Brookings Fellow. During that time, she served in the office of U.S. Representative J.C. Watts from Oklahoma with whom she became Deputy Chief of Staff for OK-4. Eventually she met and married the love of her life. Following her husband John to Sacramento, CA, to support a base closure, they relocated to Montgomery, AL, where she worked for Governor Robert R. Riley as director of constituent services, military advisor and deputy chief of staff. While working for Gov. Riley, she volunteered and enlisted for service in the AL National Guard in 2013.

After returning from her first deployment, she was appointed by Gov. Riley to serve as external affairs officer for the AL Emergency Management Agency. Lucas' second deployment was to Afghanistan, and the third was to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. She had various short-term assignments to Romania, South America and disaster recovery response areas. 1st Sgt. Lucas retired from military service in May 2021.

1st Sgt. Lucas has had a diverse career within the U.S. military with private administrations and non-profit organizations. She is the Assistant Commissioner

for Outreach and Engagement at the AL Department of Veterans Affairs. She and her staff are responsible for reaching out to veterans ensuring that they have all the benefits that they have earned. They also host public events to raise awareness about Veteran Suicide.

Lucas and her husband, John, have been married for 29 years. They enjoy riding their motorcycles on the back roads in Ala. They attend the Church of the Highlands at Montgomery, AL, where she serves on the prayer team. She also enjoys running, reading and quilting. She is a member of the VFW, American Legion, Sunrise Rotary and Montgomery Chamber's Ambassador program.

Lucas sums up her military service stating, "Serving in the U.S. military was the opportunity that I needed to succeed. The military filled in the missing pieces of my early rearing. I received a sense of pride and discipline, and best of all, was the camaraderie. I lost the selfishness and arrogance of a young woman."

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER LUCAS REMINDS US THAT WE ARE NOT ALONE. IF YOU THINK OF HURTING YOURSELF OR OTHERS, CALL 988 AND PRESS 1. IT IS NOT A WEAKNESS TO ASK FOR HELP.

ALL-AMERICAN DESIGNATION AWARDED TO VFW SMITH-WYNN POST 96



Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Smith-Wynn Post 96, under the leadership of the Post **Commander Robert C. Carr, received the All-American** Post Designation from the VFW National Headquarters for 2022-2023. Commander Carr and VFW Post 96 have earned this designation two of the last three years.

The All-American Award exists to recognize exceptional leadership and teamwork, authentic accomplishment in

membership growth and VFW core programs. The All-American Post Criteria include: (1) Membership greater than 100%, (2) Must conduct two Membership recruiting events, (3) Post-Election Report must be submitted to National and (4) Meet all the following Program Participation Criteria: These Criteria are : (1) Voice of Democracy - minimum of one entry advanced to District judging, (2) Patriots Pen - minimum of one entry advanced to District judging, (3) Hold a fundraiser with the proceeds going to Veterans & Military Support Programs Services, minimum of \$100, (4) National Citizenship Education Teachers Award – one entry advanced to the next level of judging, (5) Post must submit a community service report to their department for submission to the All-American Dashboard NLT 30 June 2023 and (6) Buddy Poppy-Purchase five per member in the Post. The Membership Department of the Veterans

of Foreign Wars of the United States administered this prestigious award from the National Membership Program. By earning this Award, Commander Carr demonstrated how important membership, veterans service, and VFW youth programs are to the continued success of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.





AWWW-RIGHT ! TIME TA SHOW OUR VETERANS THAT YOU SUPPORT THEM!!

WIREGRASS HONOR FLIGHT **RUCK MARCH**

PUT YOUR GRIT, DETERMINATION, AND STAMINA TO THE TEST!

Saturday, September 9th, 2023 8:00 AM **National Peanut Festival Fairgrounds** 5622 Highway 231 South Dothan, AL. 36301

A unique endurance event, the Wiregrass Honor Flight Ruck March will task participants to carry 25# on their backs in the form of a "ruck" and make their way along our 5k course.

Wiregrass Honor Flight is a non-profit organization

Memorials for their wars - WW2, Korea, and now Vietnam. This ruck serves as a fundraiser. *Wear your red, white, and blue and come ruck or walk.

REGISTER AT RUNSIGNUP.COM



LTCOL MARK STEPHEN BARNHART: AGE 69



LtCol Mark Stephen Barnhart served 26.5 years in the United States Marine Corps. He served as a Naval Flight Officer flying F-4 Phantoms and F/A-18D Hornets with 3900 flight hours in fighter jets. His major squadron billets included Aircraft Maintenance Officer, Operations Officer and Commanding Officer. LtCol Barnhart was the director of day one flight training (Aviation Preflight Indoctrination) for the Naval Aviation Schools Command at Naval Air



Station Pensacola in the late 80's and saw some 3500 new officers embark upon their aviation careers. He stood duty as an academic instructor and the Senior Marine at the Air Command and Staff College and ultimately instructed at the Air War College prior to his retirement in 2002. His medals, awards, citations and decorations included: Meritorious Service Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (two), Navy and Marine Corps Achievement, National Defense Service Medal (two), SEA Service Deployment Ribbons (five), Navy Unit Commendation, Expert Rifle Badge and Expert Pistol Badge.

LtCol Barnhart was born March 15,1954 to Carl and Chrystal Barnhart in Refugio, TX, and he graduated from Refugio High School in 1972. He enrolled at Texas A.&I. University, and during the summer prior to his senior year, he attended the Platoon Leaders Class at "The Basic School" on Marine Base Quantico, VA. Upon his graduation with a B.A. Degree in Mathematics and a minor in Computer Science in 1976, he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps.

LtCol Barnhart's Marine military service included an extensive series of assignments including five deployments overseas in the Western Pacific theatre (West PAC). His military education and service include: (1) The Basic School at Marine Corps Base Quantico, VA, for six months in 1976, (2) the Naval Aviation Flight School at Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola, FL for 18 months learning to fly the T-2, T-A4 and T-39 aircraft where he earned his wings, (3) training to fly the F-4 in 1979, (4) Naval Fighter Weapons School (Top Gun) for six weeks in 1980 at Naval Air Station (NAS) Miramar, CA, (5) Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Instructor Course (WTI) for six weeks at the Marine Corps Air Station, Yuma, Arizona, in 1981, (6) Amphibious Warfare School for 10 months at Marine Base Quantico, VA, in 1983, (7) Aviation Safety Officer School Aircraft Mishap Investigations at the Naval Post Graduate

School, Monterey, CA, for five weeks in 1985, (8) Marine Corps Command and Staff College (distance learning) in1985, (9) F18 Conversion Training for six months at Marine Corps Air Station El Toro, CA in 1991 and (10) Air War College at Maxwell AFB, AL for 11 months in 1995. He taught at the Air War College for one year, and he retired in October 2002.

LtCol Barnhart's civilian education beyond his undergraduate degree included: (1) Master of Science Degree in Management from Troy University in 1989, (2) Master of Science Degree in Human from Resource Management Troy University in 1998, (3) ISO 9001 Internal Auditor Training (Quality Practitioners, Inc.) Inc. in 2003. (4) Associate Project Manager (Federal Market Institute in 2004 and (5) Advanced Leadership Course (VECTRUS) in 2014.



LtCol Barnhart and his wife, Kimberly, have been married 48 years, and they have two children, 6 grandchildren, and 3 great-grandchildren. He

enjoys playing with his youngsters as well as hunting and fishing. He has continued working as a civilian contractor at Maxwell AFB in airfield operations since 2002.

The Barnhart family attends Cain's Chapel Methodist Church at Holtville, AL. He has served as the President of the Downtown Optimist Club at Montgomery, AL. He was recently the Commandant of the Townsend Detachment #920 of the Marine Corps League in Montgomery, AL. and has been a member since 1997.

LtCol Barnhart's conclusions about his military service are:

"It was a privilege to serve. It was very hard, challenging and rewarding. We knew that we were doing something special for our country. During my whole life, I wanted my Mom and Dad to be proud of me, and I feel that I achieved that. My father-in-law served as a Marine, and he influenced me into becoming a Marine. My wife, Kim, was key to the successes we had, as we did it together. The highlight of my Marine Corps service was as Squadron Commander of Marine Fighter-Attack (All Weather) Squadron-242 at El Toro, CA. Both my son and daughter have served in the USAF, and I am proud that they felt the calling to do so. Semper fi."

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older person is defined by the Social Security Act as someone over age 60. This abuse takes many forms - including physical, emotional, and sexual harm, neglect, and financial exploitation. More than 1 in 10 older adults experience some form of abuse each year. That number is likely much higher because elder abuse is often underreported- especially in underserved communities.

Abuse victims typically show emotional and behavioral red flags, such as depression, unusual fear or anxiety, or intentional isolation. Many victims are abused by someone they know or trust. It's important to look for unusual changes in behavior around:

- · Family members.
- Staff at inpatient facilities.
- Hired or volunteer caregivers.
- People in positions of trust like doctors or financial advisors.

You can also help make a difference by checking in with older loved ones Looking for warning signs of mistreatment is the first step to preventing abuse. Signs of physical abuse include br uises, burns, or other unexplained injuries. There may also be signs of neglect like:

- Poor nutrition or hygiene.
- Lack of necessary medical aids like glasses or medications that a caretaker should be providing.

There may also be indications of financial abuse. These may include:

• Unpaid rent.

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- Sudden changes to a will.
- Unusual changes in money management.
- Large, unexplained financial transactions.
- Mortgages despite sufficient financial resources.
- Allowing someone new to access bank accounts.

If you suspect that someone is a victim of elder abuse, don't ignore it! If you or someone you care about is in a life-threatening situation, call 911. If you suspect that something isn't right - but nobody seems to be in immediate danger - contact:

- Your local Adult Protective Services at:
- https://www.napsa-now.org/help-in-%20%20your-area/
- The National Center on Elder Abuse at: 1-855-500-3537 (ELDR).

Take some time to call or visit with an older adult. Ask if they are okay and listen to what they tell you. Pay attention to signs of abuse or unusual behavior. Most of all, don't be afraid to report instances of suspected abuse. Please share this information with those who need it.

You can also find additional local resources by searching the Eldercare Locator for your community at: https://eldercare.acl.gov/Public/index.aspx

REPRESENTATIVE PAYEES HELP YOU MANAGE YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY

Social Security benefits are part of the retirement plan of almost every American worker. If you're among the many people covered under Social Security, you should know what your future benefit may be. Monthly benefit payments will likely be an important part of your retirement income.

We base your benefit payment on how much you earned during your working career. Higher lifetime earnings result in higher benefits. If there were some years you didn't work or had low earnings, your benefit amount may be lower than if you had worked steadily. If you never worked and did not pay Social Security taxes, you may be eligible for spouse's retirement benefits. You must be at least 62 years old, and your spouse must already be receiving retirement or disability benefits.

people. Perhaps you have not applied for Social Security retirement benefits because you're still working or are delaying applying so you can get the higher benefit. If you're age 70 or older, you should apply now for the benefits you're

them because you are 70 or older. Did you know that you can receive benefits even if you still work? Your earnings can increase your monthly benefit amount - even after you start receiving benefits. Each year that you work, we check your earnings record. It's possible your latest year of earnings is one of your highest 35 years.

owed. Your benefits will not increase if you continue to delay applying for

If so, we will automatically recalculate your benefit amount and pay you any increase due.

You can claim your retirement benefits now. The best and easiest way to apply is with a personal my Social Security account. You can create your free account at https://www.ssa.gov/myaccount/ Once you create your account, you can get an estimate of how much you might receive each month based on when you want to start receiving benefits and then apply.

In your account, you can also:

- Access our publication like the fact sheet for workers ages 70 and up.
 - Find your Full Retirement Age.
 - Learn about benefits for your spouse and family members.
 - Apply for benefits.
 - Manage your benefits once you start receiving them.

We're here to help you secure today and tomorrow and we invite you to learn more about applying for retirement benefits at: https://www.ssa.gov/apply on our website. Please share this information with those who need it.

FOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT SOCIAL SECURITY THAT CAN HELP YOU PLAN YOUR RETIREMENT

Some people who receive monthly Social Security benefits or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments may need help managing their money.

When we receive information that indicates you need help, we'll work with you to find the most suitable representative payee to manage your benefits.

A representative payee is someone who receives your monthly benefit payment on your behalf and must use the money to pay for your current needs, including:

- Food.
- Clothing.
- Personal care items.
- Housing and utilities.
- Medical and dental expenses.
- Rehabilitation expenses (if you have a disability).

If you need help managing your benefits, tell a Social Security representative that there is someone you want to be your representative payee. Your representative payee should be someone you trust and see often, and who clearly understands your needs. Social service agencies, nursing homes, or other organizations are also qualified to be a representative payee. Ask them to contact us.

You can write to us within 60 days of being assigned a representative payee if you don't agree that you need one or if you want a different representative payee.

We also offer Advance Designation, which allows you to designate someone to be your representative payee in the future. There may come a time when you can no longer make your own financial decisions. You and your family will have peace of mind knowing that someone you trust may be appointed to manage your benefits for you.

Our retirement page at: https://www.ssa.gov/retirement is a great place to start mapping out your retirement plan. For example, have you considered:

- Which factors may affect your retirement benefits?
- What is the right time for you to start receiving your retirement benefits?
- What you need to do after you apply for retirement benefits?
- What documents you need to provide us for your retirement application?

You can use your personal my Social Security account at:

https://www.ssa.gov/mvaccount/ to get an instant estimate of your futur retirement benefits. You can also see the effects of starting your retirement benefits at different ages. You may also wonder about:

- Benefits for a spouse or children.
- How work affects your benefits.
- Medicare.
- Whether you will have to pay taxes on your benefits.

You can learn more at: https://www.ssa.gov/retirement

Please share this information with family and friends to help them prepare for their retirement.

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You can submit your Advance Designation request when you apply for benefits or after you are already receiving benefits. You may do so through your personal my Social Security account at: https://www.ssa.gov/myaccount/ or by calling and speaking to a Social Security representative.

You can find more information at: https://www.ssa.gov/payee/



in hand

ACROSS

14. Rest

21. Cereal

4. Evidence

8. Animal house

11. Hearth residue **12.** Polecat's defense

13. Kind of deposit

15. Vocal number

17. Room coolers

23. Cheat, in a way

26. Farm carts 29. "The

30. Cleanser

31. "Alice

33. Feel as if

42. Shadow

45.

32. February gift

34. Almost falls

40. Person indicated

44. Vision provider

muffs

46. Upper hand

48. We _____ family

49. Darn, as socks

16. Construction vehicle, for short

Musketeers"

_ Live Here Anymore"

19. Lowest in consideration

36. Word often before after

47. What some caddies carry

1.

YLES MELLOR CROSSWORD

Myles Mellor is one of the top crossword writers in the world. Published in over 1000 magazines, newspapers and web outlets. Over 20,000 crosswords published worldwide. Visit him at: http://www.themecrosswords.com/

Also see his CBS interview at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ems-BZqvohY&t=22s

DOWN

- 1. Two quarters
- 2. Eastern land mass
- 3. At that point
- 4. Interactive promotional outlet, wit.com
- 5. Grown-ups
- 6. Audio qualities
- 7. Neck of the woods
- 8. They do checkups
- 9. Historic time
- 10. Fishing equipment
- 18. With less delay
- 20. Strategy
 - 22. One marching in a column
 - 24. Fountain for one
- 25. At this time
- 26. Combat
- 27. Green light
- 28. Motion
 - 29. Musician's tapper
 - 31. Scheme
 - 33. Garden tool
 - 35. Checklist bit
 - 37. Cancel a bill
 - 38. Sized up
 - 39. Use a book
 - 40. Sure!
 - 41. Crew member
 - 43. Marshaled
- 50. Unpaired

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September 2023



This series on "*Legacy: Outlive Your Life*" will be a three part series focused on what I call "*The Big Three Life/Legacy Questions*":

- 1. The Heart Question: Is my heart growing bigger?
- **2.** The Joy Question: Is my joy going deeper?

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3. The Passion Question: Is my passion getting hotter?

In part one we will focus on the heart question. Is my heart growing bigger? In other words, is my love for God and for others growing bigger?

Jesus said, "Love one another as I have loved you." - John 15:12

And the disciple named John wrote, "Dear Friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves is born of God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love." – 1 John 4:7-8

Is you heart growing bigger towards God, your spouse and family, your friends, others and especially those in need?

Your heart is either growing bigger or it is shrinking. Perhaps, it could also be plateauing. If it is growing bigger that means you are experiencing deeper empathy, care and concern for others. If your heart is growing bigger, you can more easily express love and care for other people in your life and for those in need.

If your heart is shrinking, your heart may be growing callous and hard towards others and their needs, hurts and struggles. The Bible talks a lot about people with hard hearts towards God and other people. It is actually pretty easy to get a hardened heart that feels like it is shrinking and growing colder. Our hearts grow hard, cold and callous towards others when we feel hurt, betrayed, abused or offended. When this happens to us, we sometimes withdraw from people, and we do not want to invest the emotional energy and time for fear of getting hurt again. Our hearts begin to shrink and become hardened as time goes on.

Your heart may also plateau. This happens when we experience no feelings at all towards God or others. We may go through seasons where we feel nothing at all. We feel apathetic. We are numb and have no feelings of empathy or concern for others. This is also a very unhealthy place to linger for long periods. It can be the beginning stages of a shrinking heart that is becoming hardened and cold as ice.

This heart question is the very most important question and is a top three question we need to ask ourselves regularly. If our love for God and for others is not growing, then we are missing the whole point of life and why God created us in the first place. Paul states in **1** Corinthians 13, I can have all the gifts and talents in the world and can fathom all mysteries and have all the knowledge available to humankind, but if I do not have love I am nothing. I can have the faith to move mountains, give all I have to the poor and even sacrifice my life to save others, but if I do not have love, I gain nothing.

So, if you want to live and leave a legacy, start by focusing on this question everyday and asking God to help you grow a bigger and bigger hearta more loving heart. You cannot fake love. You cannot fake a big heart. People know if you really love and care for them. And the one thing people will remember most about you is the love you have for them. There is an old saying that I have found to be so true. "People don't care how much you know, till they know how much you care." The most important thing about you is how you love.

Recently, I lead a mission team, along with my wife, to Honduras. We had 15 people from our church who went to serve at a ministry called Forgotten Children's Ministry located at Finca Grace or Grace Farm just North of Tegucigalpa. I serve on the Board of this great ministry that rescues children off



Legacy, Outlive Your Life: *Part One* The Big Three Life/ Legacy Questions



the streets of Tegucigalpa. Many of these children are in danger on being sold into sex trafficking or they are living in abusive conditions where they experience neglect and trauma.

There are a number of activities team members participate in while on a mission team to Forgotten Children's Ministry. We spend time with and invest in the children. We do repair or building projects on the campus. And we go out to serve in various impoverished communities near Grace Farm or adjacent to the massive trash dump of the city of Tegucigalpa. The slums around this area are expansive and are some of the worst living conditions I have ever seen. The people that live around this garbage dump work in the dump rummaging through the trash piles to collect plastic bottles, glass, metal or anything of value to sell to make a living.

When we visit the houses in these neighborhoods, we come with translators and with gifts of rice and beans. We introduce ourselves, ask about them and their families and inquire as to how we can pray for them. We also offer to pray with them and for them. Often, many of these folks will invite Jesus Christ into their lives for the first time. It can be a very humbling experience to say the least.

One day on the recent trip while we were visiting these neighborhoods around the city dump, we came to a man's house. He was probably in his thirties and, when I first saw him, I prejudged him. He looked like a gang member or a drug dealer to me. I whispered to my wife, "*let me check this guy out first before our group goes into his house.*" Our team had divided into smaller groups of 5 to 6. I asked if we could visit him and to my surprise he said "*yes*". I entered the house first to check it out and make sure it was safe. I immediately noticed his right arm was shaking, and that he obviously had a disability of some kind. Our team warmly introduced themselves and ask about him. He said he lived alone and worked in the dump, because he couldn't get another job due to his disability as he pointed to his arm.

He looked nervous but warmed up to us when he realized we were interested and concerned about him. He shared with us about himself and that he lived alone. We offered him a gift of rice and beans which he was glad to receive. One of our team asked him if he believed in God, and he said he did. We then asked if he had ever invited the Lord into his life. He said no but was open to doing so. We led him in a prayer to invite Christ to be his Lord and Savior. After he prayed that prayer he said with tears in his eyes, "heaven has come to my house today." It was a powerful and beautiful experience for all of us. Tears came to my eyes as I realized I had misjudged this humble man. After I hugged him goodbye, I headed for the door and the Lord whispered to me, "Lester, keep your heart growing bigger." I knew what he meant. We must be intentional about our hearts growing bigger. We must constantly be asking that heart question, "Is my heart growing bigger?" I have been in the ministry for 40 years. I have served on countless mission teams and seen tremendous needs in many countries and right here at home. I have preached about "loving others as Christ has loved us." But I still needed to be reminded to keep loving others. Keep caring about other peoples needs. Keep seeking a big heart that has room to love and care for others. This man's name was Joshua John, and I never will forget him or his face.

Jesus tells us in **Matthew 25:31-41**, that whenever you offer water to the thirsty, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick or welcome the homeless, we do it unto him. So, as I looked into Joshua John's face that day, he looked like Jesus to me in distressing disguise. And I will always remember Jesus' whisper, *"Lester, keep your heart growing bigger!"*

If you want to live and leave a legacy, keep asking yourself that question, *"Is my heart growing bigger?"*



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Judge Peggy Givhan

When we reach the month of September, we say goodbye to summer. Labor day barbeques and festivities abound. The children settle back into the routine of school, vacations have been planned and

executed, and conversations begin to wrap around football whether it be college or high school. September is also a transition month as far as gardening is

concerned where some annuals have flagged and need to be pulled out, and some perennials have flagged and need to be cut back. Caladiums, which we planted back in late May, have seen better days with the tough decision whether to pull them out or save the bulbs over the winter. My rule of thumb on this question is to keep the bulbs and replant one more time. The leaves on caladiums get smaller the longer they are held over. Now I have recycled the old bulbs after the second year and planted new bulbs with them the next spring with good results. When holding them over, I store them in brown paper sacks dusted with Sevin powder, and place them in a garden shed to keep the bulbs from freezing.





you have verbena, dusty miller, and blue salvia, then just give them a slight haircut and additional fertilizer. As I have stated above, the caladiums and vinca will look ratty and if not today, then soon. Pull these up and replant with perhaps chrysanthemums or other flowering plants found on the open market. Look for impatiens, petunias, begonias, pansies, dianthus or other perennials which will bloom through frost and fill in the blank spaces. Now that we are facing cooler night time temperatures,

t is time to perk up the garden for a fall look. If

geraniums and petunias will thrive. So cut these back, fertilize and water them in. Watch them come into their own. Tropicals such as plumbago, hibiscus, bougainvillea, should be well until frost, so cut back slightly and fertilize.

PLANT OF THE MONTH--MEXICAN HEATHER

•Mexican heather(cuphea hyssopifolia) hails from Mexico and Guatemala and this genus comprises over two hundred species distributed over the Americas. It is also known as false heather, hawaiian heather or elfin herb. It needs about 4 hours of sun a day and is hardy in zones 7 and 8. The lifespan of this perennial is about 8 years, grows to about 12-18 inches and is virtually disease free. Blooming all throughout the summer, butterflies have an affinity for these blooms. These plants do well as a filler for the garden and also do well in a pot garden. I planted perhaps 20



several years ago, left them in the ground over the winter, and have had just a couple that did not come back in the spring. Mulching would probably have helped in an especially bad winter. After the first freeze, the leaves turn brown but the roots live on. I showcase them as front row or second row status in the garden and they do well with verbena and petunias. The pink and magenta blooms do not have to be deadheaded which is a blessing since there are thousands. In zones 9 and 10 this is a small evergreen shrub. Another attribute worth sharing is that they are easy topropagate by taking cuttings, dipping in a rooting hormone and planting in potting soil. My advice to my readers is to plant these Mexican Heather and just sit back and bask in their beauty all summer. Also these plants are readily available in all nurseries and big box outlets.

Very importantly, I should not need to remind everyone to WEED, WEED, WEED!

& HAPPY LABOR DAY!

GOOD GARDENING





Gary Miller has written Outdoor Truths articles for 20 years. He has also written five books which include compilations of his articles and a father/son devotional. He also speaks at wild-game dinners and men's events for churches and associations.



One of the aspects I dislike about hunting and fishing is getting ready for the first day.

Whether it's the first turkey hunt of the year or the first deer hunt, there's always the need to make sure nothing is forgotten on that opening day. One of my on-going paranoias is to be in a tree stand when a deer walks by and realize I have forgotten my trigger release. I've actually dreamed several times about such an episode. The first day of fishing is the same way.

Gathering up rods and reels and making sure licenses are bought and boat registrations are up to date always makes me have second thoughts about going. As a result, I dread making that first trip because I'm usually spending all day getting ready. There's got to be a better way. There is. The seasons that are the easiest to come into are the ones where I begin getting ready weeks before opening day. It's

really not that hard. Except for fishing, there are concrete opening days for most hunting seasons. With a little backward planning, it's easy to give myself plenty of time to gather up my gear a little at a time.

When I do that, I'm not pressing to get ready just before that opening day. I just arrive seamlessly. Instead of an all-or-nothing night, I just do a little at a time to where it almost seems I'm doing nothing. Spending ten minutes, weeks before an opening day, seems insignificant at the time and relieves so much pressure the day and night before a big hunt. I love it when that happens.



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There have been times I have decided to stay at home just because I was not willing to take the time to get everything together and accounted for. After that first time, things are just so much easier because most of the stuff never leaves my hunting vehicle. I decide to go, hop in my little SUV, and boom! I'm hunting.

For years, I've made promises and plans to have everything organized and put in a particular place before that first day. And I do a pretty good job of having most of my stuff in one area. But the time between the last day of the season and the next opening day seems to cause my gear to disperse in regions all around my house and storage buildings.

What goes for opening days also goes for the most difficult moments of our life. While these occasions may not have specific days and times, they are certain. Most people panic when they happen because they are caught completely unaware. Those who handle these situations the best are the individuals who have been putting a little spiritual truth into their lives day by day and week by week.

Don't wait until you're under the pressure of a pending circumstance. Stow away God's word now and you will be ready and prepared when the day comes.





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September 2023



Home Town Community News

NOTICE! Please send Patricia your family and friends: BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES, WEDDINGS AND EVENTS to:



Patricia Killough

alabamagazette@gmail.com



What a sight! Grandfather Carl Boyd and Granddaughter Madison Williams celebrated their birthdays together at Prestons Restaurant in Luverne, Alabama. "Grandy" turned 69 on August 19th, while Madison turned 15 on August 21st.

Close family enjoyed a good meal with the duo and the birthday kids even received a slice of birthday cheesecake to celebrate this occasion. Look at the smile on Madison! This will be a memory she surely will remember!!



- Joe & Jean Douglas
- Don & Barbara White 4
- Gary & Lyda Crowe 7 Ralph & Brenda Davis Steve & Paige Stringer
- Albert & Brenda Sharpe (3rd) 12
- 14 Terry & Tammy Boyd (5th)
- 16 Skip & Connie Mainor (10th)
- 17 Andy & Lori Meadows
- 18 James & Sarah Glass (12th)
 - Tony & Janie Drake 21
 - James & Sherry Tucker 22
 - Larry & Linda Browder 24
 - Jimmy & Linda Perdue (54th)
 - Chuck & Betty Holmes (40th) 25 26 Jose' & Susan Guevara
 - 28 Morgan & Ashley James
 - Chris & Kelley Grantham

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

Allen, Robert Steven 44	July 16, 2023
Scott, Larry Earl 76	
Gibson, Joan Yvonne Healy 88	July 30, 2023
Brown Jr., Henry Leo 81	
Meckler, Margaret Ann 83	
Massey, Jr., James Benjamin 81	August 02, 2023
Mims, Sarah Julian 82	August 02, 2023
Mims, Sarah Julian 82 Crowder, Inabelle Godwin 102	August 03, 2023
Kornosky, James Michael "Mike" 62	August 03, 2023
Bishop Jr., Kenneth Fletcher 74	
Graham, Douglas "Doug" Lee 83	August 05, 2023
Manasco, John Michael 80	
Melton, Louise B. 94	
Paglione, Dorothy Lea 88	August 05, 2023
Carr, Robert "Chester" 95	August 06, 2023
Edwards, Burl A. "Tony" 67	August 07, 2023
Jones, William Lawrence 94	August 07, 2023
Sides, Jean Lindsey 93	August 07, 2023
Hall, John David 67	August 09, 2023
Graves, Gary Lynn 68	August 10, 2023
Rabren, Donald "Don" Vernon 86	August 10, 2023
Walsh, Barbara L. 93	August 11, 2023
Porter, MD Charles McGavock "Mac" 88	August 12, 2023
Slaughter, Emma Lee 92 Warren, James Andrew "Drew" 73	August 10, 2023
Warren, James Andrew "Drew" 73	August 20, 2023
Robinson Jr., Dan G. 93	August 23, 2023
Norris, Julia Fay Bradshaw 96	
Vallancourt, June Carol 87	August 27, 2023

HAPPY 102ND BIRTHDAY!!



Happy Birthday to Mrs. Sue **Boyd Drake! This wonderful** woman turned an amazing 102 on August 5, 2023! She unfortuantely had to cancel her "party of the century" when she turned the BIG 100, due to COVID restrictions; she's making up for it through her following birthdays! She celebrated this special day at her home in Florida she was still surrounded by her close family from Alabama including 2 nieces from Montgomery. Those of you that have been lucky enough to meet this wonderful lady, please take a moment and wish her many, MANY more birthdays! We love you Aunt Sue!

PPY BIRTHDAY!

- 1 Joe Boyd (84th)
- 2 John Hannon
- 3 Dian Majors
- Leslie Riley 4 Jimmy Dick Gary French
- Tim Riley **Britney Williams**
- 5 Glenda Gary Joyce Moore (83rd)
- 6 Ethleen Bazzell (84th) **Bonnie Edwards** C. J. Faulk (88th)
- 7 Tanner Grant Mary Beth Hughes (2nd) **Richard Kirksey** Ruby Law (70th)
- Adam Broadway 8
- Kendra Devon Lamar Madison Lane
- 10 Peggy Chesnut Bamberg (91st) Kenneth Deavers

Jace McClelland (10th) Betty Russell

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- 18 Eddie Spivey
- 19 Beth Cline
- Bobby Hudson 20 Lynn Davis
- Carol Hudson
- 21 Marlee Day Smith (14th) Kristen Taylor Sarah Kate Taylor
- 22 Tom Garlington David Webb
- 23 Kim Guy Era Hall Kirksey Jones
- 24 Barbara Berg Ava Catherine Crowe (15th) Lynda Maddox **Catherine Preston** Chrystal Rahn R. J. Seevers
- 25 Brenda Abrams Linda Abrams



Terry	Dotherow

- 11 Traci Weafer
- 12 Catherine Jane Grubbs (17th) Brian Hudson
- 13 Donna Mulcahy Debbie Partridge (66th)
- 14 Elaine Webb Amanda Whitfield (39th)
- 15 Shannon Flores (51st)
- 16 Phyllis McCalman
- 17 Ashlee Lynch Mike (Pete) Moore Mandy Stringer (20th)
- 18 Dale Jones

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- Rocene Fowler Betty Gafford Sue Meredith Baxter Moseley (28th) 26 Barbara Mitchell 27 Roy Stephens (94th) 29 Elvin Stanton 30 Scott Borders (61st)
 - Lydia Brown Kim Butler Susan Feaga Hunter O'Neal (19th) Mike Smith

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Jeremiah 29:11





Barbie is into leadership these days and Ken was just an accessory from the start. Snow White will no longer be being kissed by a prince. There will be no more of that nonsense. She doesn't want a good man to come along and partner with her to make life better – she wants to be a leader – though she know little about either.

Leadership is a popular word right now, but examples of real leadership have never been harder to find it seems. As popular as it is, you would think we would see more of it. And who knows, maybe through these cinematic models – featuring toys – there will be budding examples of leadership all over the nation.

That might be a positive societal shift...having more genuine leaders and fewer meaningless influencers. Because there are certainly differences between those two aren't there? Just as there is a difference between leader-ship and showmanship. A person who can showboat may pull attention, but that doesn't mean they have the skills required to be a leader.

Real leaders, are more than an online personality. Leadership is more than one quality. It is a blend of qualities that form a distinction between great people and average people. Qualities that are never compromised. Strong leadership involves a fearlessness of sorts – a fearlessness perfectly counterbalanced by self-discipline, love of others, and the type of humility that comes from believing in God.

Love for our fellow man is a type of respect. Respect for the dignity of others. Having sensitivity. Real leaders exercise this type of humanitarian love. It is character in action.

I am not talking about leaders who are CEO's. I am not talking about politicians or people of position. They too should have leadership ability, but the leaders I am talking about are those among us who keep their head during emergencies. The people who have the ability to handle difficult problems and intricate situations with wisdom, clarity, fairness, and courage. Because leaders do not exist in the abstract. Leaders exist in specific situations. Sometimes simple situations.

At some point in our lives, we are all offered the opportunity to lead. Mothers lead every day.

When there are facts and evidence that show the leader is correct, they have to be steadfast and strong in their belief. Unwavering.

But constructive leaders, will also make it a habit to also reflect on their own character and personal integrity. And if the facts show they made a poor decision, or had an improper reaction, or chose the wrong words or way to act then they must admit they were wrong. A strong leader, knows how to issue meaningful apologies. A sincere apology can hold an almost miraculous healing power. It can lift burdens and reverse hearts aimed toward hate. It can unite the splintered. It can fix the broken. It can soothe like a balm.

People are not plastic like Barbie and life is no fairytale. Never before have we needed more true leaders, but we need real ones, not toys just seeking How many times does it happen in the Bible? Look at Abraham and Sarah. God told them that they were to be parents at the age of 90. I'm sure they were thinking, "What?!?!". Another example is Noah. God told him to construct an Ark because in a couple of years there was going to be a massive flood. "Huh?!?!" If it makes sense to God, it doesn't have to make sense to us. Trust Him.

We have all had those situations in life. A friend of mine just went through

one of these situations where she had a job offer that would advance her

career. It was something that she has always wanted. Something that she had

always envisioned. Yet, she felt God saying, "this isn't it". So, she had to trust

God and turn down the job. She is trusting God for the future.

Isaiah 55:8 says, "Your thoughts are higher than my thoughts. Your ways higher than my ways."

We have to have faith that God has a plan that is bigger than ours. So I'll say it again. If it makes sense to God, it doesn't have to make sense to us.

Many Blessings!

site.trisstonwrightburrows.com



Continued from page 3

Alabama's School Children...A Lost Generation By: David nichols

Factors that impact Alabama's quality of education

Alabama schools and universities have lowered or removed traditional

attention and playing pretend.

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

The way banking should be. Image: Constraint of the state of the state



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"The Rigged Resume"

My denomination is now in a circular firing squad. The latest misadventure is a candidate for national office who admitted falsifying his resume, crediting himself with degrees he'd never earned.

The intriguing thing is he worked for a Baptist group in another state for 15 years and no one seemed to care about his resume.

I remember a discussion about educational credentials when I served as youth member of our pastor search committee. I'm grateful my church gave me this experience as a high-schooler. This is how Baptists get a new pastor—we go to another church, hear their preacher and then convince him it's God's will he come to us. This creates a perpetual chain reaction since the church he left then elects a committee to do the same thing.

A member of our committee discounted looking at college or seminary transcripts. He reasoned many students work long hours and maybe didn't study like they'd wished to. Now that I've been one of those students, I appreciate his empathy. It's said that seminary is designed for a single student with no financial obligations. If one of these stats change, the situation grows more intense.

I remember talking with our county denominational leader when I was about to graduate from Auburn University. I served a church in the area and asked his counsel about remaining another year at the church and continuing the part-time construction job I had. He advised me to go to seminary as quickly as I could in order to ensure a better future.

standards required for college admittance. The demise of rigor and merit decreases the value of diplomas and degrees.

A survey of twelve Alabama universities revealed all but one dropped the 50-year requirement of high-stakes entrance exam scores - ACT or SAT. Instead, they consider less rigorous opt-out test provisions. Ignored is the abundance of scientific research studies that show a direct correlation between scientifically developed entrance exams and academic success.

Some university teacher preparation programs produce fewer teacherready graduates. As a result, hundreds of graduates need additional help to pass the PRAXIS exam. ASBOE had the support from several heads of teacher preparation programs to lower the PRAXIS score required to obtain certification by the ALSDE.

There are more questions than answers to remedy the downward spiral of Alabama's education system. One promising development in the 2022 record \$8.2 million education budget is allowing for-profit teacher education programs. Despite resistance, Alabama's legislature should consider charter schools. They have proven successful in other states.

REFLECTIONS By: Michael J. Brooks

I'm grateful for my seminary experience, but today we have more options. Online education and satellite hubs allow ministers to remain in their places of service and get needed training.

I've taught at a number of community colleges along the way and, of course, each school wants an official transcript of grades and verification of graduation. But no church that I recall asked any details about my educational credentials. They simply accepted the resume as written. Thus I understand how easy it would be to fraudulently enhance a resume.

I occasionally wear a Harvard baseball cap, and several have asked if I attended Harvard. I sometimes reply affirmatively, neglecting to tell the inquirer that it was for only one week at an educational conference!

Sadly, modern churches must do criminal background checks and credit reports for prospective employees.

I remember a former church getting calls from creditors because we didn't do this and the staff minister owed more money than he could pay.

We were naïve not to do due diligence.

Intentional deception isn't the norm for the overwhelming majority of gospel ministers. However, public failures like this embarrass the church of Christ.

"Reflections" is a weekly faith column written by Michael J. Brooks, pastor of the Siluria Baptist Church, Alabaster, Alabama. The church's website is: https://www.siluriabaptist.com/

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September 2023



Southern Cuisine Chef David Spooner, Retired Chef

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

The type of roux used in Cajun cooking is indeed important and can significantly impact the flavor, texture, and overall character of many Cajun and ethnic dishes. Roux is a mixture of equal parts flour and fat (traditionally, oil or butter) that serves as a thickening agent for sauces, stews, and gumbo in Cajun cuisine.



IN CAJUN COOKING. THERE ARE GENERALLY THREE MAIN TYPES OF ROUX. CLASSIFIED BASED ON THEIR COLOR AND FLAVOR:

1. WHITE TOUX: This is the lightest and has the shortest cooking time. It is made by cooking the flour and fat together just until it's combined and has a pale, creamy color. White roux has a subtle flavor and is used for dishes that require a thickening agent but without adding too much color or distinct flavor.

2. BIONDE TOUX: Slightly darker than white roux, blonde roux is cooked a bit longer until it develops a golden color. It has a slightly nutty aroma and flavor and is commonly used in dishes like étouffée or cream-based soups.

3. Brown roux: This is the darkest and richest of the roux varieties. It is cooked for a longer time until it turns a deep, rich brown color. Brown roux has a more pronounced nutty and toasted flavor and is a key component in classic Cajun dishes like gumbo and jambalaya.



The choice of roux depends on the specific dish being prepared and the desired flavor profile. For example, gumbo, which is a staple in Cajun cuisine, typically calls for a dark brown roux as it adds a distinct nutty flavor and deepens the color of the dish. Conversely, a delicate seafood bisque might use a light blonde roux to provide a smooth texture without overwhelming the delicate flavors of the seafood.:

> THE FOLLOWING RECIPE FOR ROUX COMES FROM ALTON BROWN AND IS MY PREFERRED METHOD TO MAKE A ROUX. REMEMBER THAT THE FIRST LINE IN A MANY CAJUN RECIPES IS:

Overall, the type of roux used in Cajun cooking is an essential element that contributes to the overall taste and texture of the dish, making it a crucial technique in this rich and flavorful cuisine. brown roux

skrimp, sausage and okra gumbo



1 ½ teaspoons dried thyme 1 ½ teaspoons kosher salt 1 teaspoon freshly ground

3 (14.5-oz.) cans diced tomatoes

2 pounds unpeeled, medium-size

raw shrimp, peeled and deveined 1 pound Conecuh Sausage cut

Sprinkle Creole seasoning like

Amount of roux needed for thick-

ening made from Alton Brown's

black pepper

broth 2 bay leaves

2 cups fresh cut okra 1 (32-oz.) container chicken

into coin size pieces

Tony Chachere's to taste

Hot cooked rice

recipe.



Ingredients:

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- 6 tablespoons butter
- 2 cups finely chopped onion
- 2 cups finely chopped green bell pepper
- 2 cups finely chopped celery
- 5 garlic cloves, minced

Directions:

In a separate skillet cook sausage, drain and set aside.

Melt butter in a large dutch oven over medium heat. Add onion and next three ingredients, and saute for 15 minutes or until vegetables are tender.

Stir in the thyme, salt and pepper, cook 1 to 2 minutes.

Stir in Roux as needed for thickening and mix well.

Stir in tomatoes, okra, broth and bay leaves.

Bring to a boil over medium-high heat; cover, reduce heat to low, simmer 30 minutes. Add cooked sausage, shrimp and creole seasoning.

Cook 3 to 5 minutes or just until the shrimp turns pink. Remove and discard the bay leaves.

Serve over rice and with crusty bread.

Ingredients:

Put the 1 stick of melted butter and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup flour into a cast-iron skillet and whisk together to combine.

Place on the middle shelf of the oven, uncovered, and bake at 350 degrees for 1 1/2 hours, whisking 2 to 3 times throughout the cooking process.



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zucchini soup

Ingredients:

- 4 cups sliced zucchini
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 1 bunch green onions, chopped
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 tsp pepper
- 2 (8-oz.) pkgs. Cream cheese
- 1 tablespoon dill or more to taste



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Cook first five ingredients until tender; add cream cheese and dill. Place in blender and mix until smooth. Serve cold.

Remember to always monitor your blood sugar levels and speak with your healthcare provider about any dietary changes.

