



Christ is Born



And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.

2 And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.

3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

8 And there were in the same

country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Luke 2
King James Version



A Season for Giving! \$1,000

The Alabama Gazette will again present \$100 cash to ten deserving people in the Tri-County area.

Send in your nomination letter stating why you think your friend or family deserves \$100 cash for Christmas.

Please include address and phone numbers of your nominee.

All nominations must be received by December 16th.

Winners will be notified by December 19th.

Email the Gazette at alabamagazette@gmail.com

or send your letter to

**The Alabama Gazette
12 E. Jefferson Street
Montgomery, AL 36104**

If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I hear from Heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

2 Chronicles 7:14

*This verse was used by Dwight D. Eisenhower when he took his the oath of office in 1953.
It was also used by Ronald Reagan as he took his oath in 1981 and 1985*

Let us pray for
President,
Barack Hussein Obama
and his family
as they begin the
next phase
of their future.

Let us please pray for
our President-elect,
Donald J. Trump
and his family during
his transition in
leading our
country.

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The Education Station...

Verna Hall Research Award 2016 Recipient Mrs. Bobbie Ames

Chesapeake, Virginia – November 11, 2016 - Acknowledging outstanding lifetime achievement in education and America's Christian history has been the purpose of the Foundation for American Christian Education for over fifty years. Periodically, the Foundation awards an individual of distinguished service with the **Verna Hall Research Award**. This year the recipient of this prestigious award is Alabama native and leader in Christian education **Bobbie Mae Hackney Ames** of Montgomery, Alabama.



*Bobbie accepting award at FACE "Reason for Hope" Conference
Bobbie Ames Lifetime Achievement Award*

Delegates at the "**Reason for Hope**" Conference held November 11-12 in Virginia Beach, Virginia, gave Mrs. Bobbie Ames a resounding ovation as they heard the story of Mrs. Ames' accomplishments in founding and establishing Christian schools, in political and community service, and in her scholarly writing for publication in Christian history and government. Conference participant, **Carey Dudkovsky**, Executive Vice-President of the **Foundation for American Christian Education** said, "Mrs. Ames' life and work are an inspiration to parents, grandparents, teachers, administrators, and scholars."

Mrs. Ames was born in Washington, North Carolina, attended Greensboro College, then East Carolina Teacher's College, now East Carolina University, majoring in Elementary Education. She married **John Brewer Ames** in 1950 and lived in Selma, Alabama and later in Marion, Alabama while raising their five children, **Elizabeth, John Jr., David, Laurie, and Jim Hackney**. Today, there are 12 grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Mr. and Mrs. Ames founded Perry County Christian School in 1965, where Mrs. Ames taught and was the school administrator. She pursued graduate work in Library Science and a Masters Degree in School Administration.

Over the years, Bobbie was active in Republican political circles, having served as President of the Federation of Republican Women at the county and state levels, and as Republican National Committeewoman from Alabama, from 1968-1972.

Mrs. Ames built a library at Emerald Mountain Christian School to preserve and to assure vital and pure research with over 45,000 volumes in the collection. This valuable research source has enabled her to write for an area newspaper, *The Alabama Gazette*, for the last six years writing on issues of education and history from the Biblical worldview.

Today Emerald Mountain Christian School's mission has expanded into an outreach and research division called "*The Hoffman Education Center for the Family*." Son **David Ames** is the headmaster of the school with the very able help of **Joanna**, his wife.

The Foundation for American Christian Education commends the life and contribution of Mrs. Ames to the field of Biblical Classical education and America's Christian History and Heritage.

*Press Release from the Foundation for American Christian Education.
FACE.com*



Bobbie and David at the Jamestown Church at Jamestown Island, Virginia



Statue of Pocahontas



Memorial to Captain John Smith



Memorial commemorating Jamestown as the first permanent colony of the English people, the birthplace of Virginia and of The United States. May 13, 1607



Jamestown Church on Jamestown Island



Inside the Statehouse with Steve Flowers

Steve Flowers is Alabama's leading political columnist.
His weekly column on Alabama politics appears in over 60 Alabama newspapers.
He may be reached at www.steveflowers.us



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

It is Christmas time, and since Alabama is one of the most charitable states in the nation, I would expect that many of us are in the giving mood and plan to help many worthy causes across our great state. Unfortunately, it appears that some recent rulings by the Alabama Ethics Commission are going to make it more difficult for charities across the state to raise the funds that they need to serve our communities.

Many charities in Alabama are concerned that an unintended consequence of recent Commission interpretations of the ethics law is that it could restrict the ability of public officials and employees and their family members to be involved in fundraising for charities and other organizations that they support, including public schools and universities.

You may not be aware, but there are over 300,000 public officials and employees at the state and local level who are covered by Alabama's ethics law. Many of these individuals are leaders in their communities, who are appointed to positions of public responsibility such as school boards and water boards. Not surprisingly, these same individuals are often also involved in supporting a number of worthy causes and charities by helping with their fundraising and serving on their boards.

The problem is, over the past year or so, in an effort to implement what they seem to believe the law requires, the Ethics Commission has issued guidance that places restrictions on the ability of public officials and employees to help charities by seeking donations from various individuals, businesses, and organizations.

While their intentions are no doubt good, the broad language of these rulings has caused major issues for charities across the state. This is because a number of those charities rely on individuals, who happen to be part-time members of public boards who are covered by these ethics laws. As a result, charities are asking anyone involved in a public body not to fundraise for them no matter how much they have done so in the past. I do not expect that anyone was thinking about these

situations when they amended the ethics laws back in 2010, but it appears that this is another one of those unintended consequences of a well-intentioned law.

To make matters worse, under the Commission's interpretations of these laws, the restrictions on charity fundraising also seem to apply to the family members of these 300,000 public servants who are raising money for a charity. This means that these rulings affect the ability of many more Alabamians. There are probably close to one million folks who help raise money for the charities that they support.

Hopefully, the Commission will clear up this confusion. However, if they do not, I expect that the outcry will be so great that the Legislature will take action.

Remember that this is not the first time we have had problems with broad interpretations of the ethics laws at Christmastime.

Back in December 2011, you may recall, the Ethics Commission issued rulings that raised a lot of questions and concerns about the ability of public school teachers to accept Christmas gifts from students under these same ethics laws. The concerns arose then because of some of the changes to the law that had gone into effect earlier in 2011.

The Commission's rulings in 2011 did not, in the end, clear things up very much for students and their teachers in time for Christmas. However, in the following legislative session in 2012, the Legislature amended the ethics law to make it easier for students to give Christmas gifts to public school teachers and coaches. The legislative fix was needed to address an unintended consequence of the law.

I think we are all hoping this current problem for charitable fundraising is resolved by the Ethics Commission in time for Christmas. We do not need our charities and other worthy causes to suffer an unintended consequence of a well-intentioned law.

December 7, 2016



Ronald A.
Holtsford

A Personal Experience: Health Law, Health Care and Me



In September I had began to feel pretty rough, so bad that I actually went to the doctor. It was determined that I had a gallstone pancreatitis caused by a gallbladder with stones (of course) and my gallbladder needed to come out. Having had no prior abdominal surgery my surgeon was happy that I had a "virgin belly", a pretty funny term.

I know that my health insurance went up significantly last year and significantly again this year. Thank

you President Obama for a real piece of work. Insurance now seems to rely on age rather than experience as previously done and I'm afraid that my rates now greatly exceed my age many, many times over. I understand that some families are paying in the \$1500 to \$2000 range per month. Those are medium to higher range plans but the deductibles and copays for lower range plans can be very significant; I have seen as much as a \$10,000.00 deductible.

I am in the process of trying to sort out my bills and making sure that my providers have considered my gap insurance. I received a bill from the hospital, one for my CT, one for the emergency room doctor who I don't think I really needed to see because I was told to go to the ER to be admitted; we already knew what was going on. I received a bill from the surgeon, one from the anesthesiologist and last but not least the hospitalist. The deductibles added up to a few thousand dollars but they had not considered the gap insurance so I will see what happens. I have had to become my own advocate to make sure that these entities stay on top of my insurances. Do you remember when your doctor admitted you and came to see you in the hospital? Now the hospitalist drives the process and they don't know anything about you until they walk in your room and flip open your chart. The first one that I saw I got to tell him I was having surgery in a few hours and he charged me for that! When my surgery was over the surgeon came by and said I could go home that afternoon but the hospitalist who didn't come by again that day did not discharge me so I stayed an extra night and another hospitalist came by the next morning and released me. The hospitalist drives the system. I don't question the abilities of the hospitalist but they don't know me and in a follow up visit my surgeon told me the hospitalist allowed me to go back to work sooner than he would have allowed.

With all of the new regulations on health care providers no wonder the cost has gone up. This wonderful technology has greatly improved health care delivery but it obviously has a price. New Medicare payment models for certain sections of the health care industry are now in a trial phase. Basically those that are more efficient in the delivery of health care will be paid more. While efficiency includes fewer hospital returns for treatment of an already treated condition I'm guessing there is also pressure to further decrease the length of stay; my experience shows that conflicts with using hospitalists. Health care is becoming a balancing act with the survival of independent clinics that provide top-notch specialty services and trying to not be absorbed by large hospital systems that look at the bottom line rather than the services that have been provided to the community.

It has become evident with the number of health insurance companies dropping out of the marketplace that the goal of the Obama administration was to become a one-payer system, i.e. the government. Remember the phrase, "I'm from the government and I'm here to help you"? I don't know where Blue Cross, Humana, Viva and the others will fit into this unless it's as a secondary insurance, gap insurance and a Medicare supplement. The goal of progressives is to follow a European style government that we figured out two hundred and forty years ago does not work well for Americans. When my wife and I were in the Republic of Ireland ten years ago and listening to **Sky News** the rage that day was over a twenty something year old woman that died while waiting on some type of scan that was scheduled six months away under her socialized medicine program. Those that can afford it do a private pay in the afternoons after doctors have completed their government obligations. We can only pray that a Trump administration will really get a grip on what Obama's administration has complicated.

The heroes of my health care were the employees that I know have suffered from literally little or no raises and increasing health insurance premiums. I think about the nurse in the ER that got me a food tray after I had missed lunch and been there for hours. I think about the nurse in the holding area after I left the ER while waiting on a room. I laid on a small stretcher that my feet hung off for a few hours but the nurse did everything she could to make me comfortable. I think about the nursing assistant that took me to my room telling me about a gentleman that she spoke to and how he worked two shifts at different places to care for his family. The nurses that cared for me on the floor were equally great and made sure I had everything that I needed. I think about the very nice young man that rolled me to surgery and though very busy respectfully and reverently waited while one of my pastors prayed with my wife and me. These employees of the local hospital were great and I really appreciated them. I hope that the hospital values these employees as I did.

I pray that each of you have a blessed Hanukkah or Christmas and for Christians to think about a loving God that sent His Son to earth in the form of a baby to grow and teach us about our loving God and to finally give over his life as a sacrifice for those that will call on the name of Jesus for salvation.

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.

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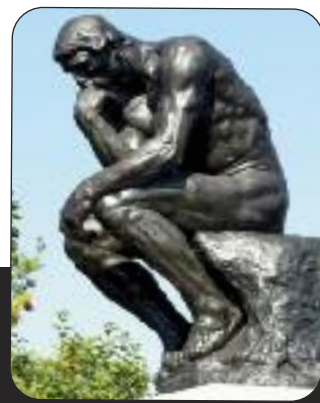
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John Sophocleus

THINK



Bush 2000 versus Trump 2016: A Tale of Two Victories

No doubt my most read text from years of writing for the *Alabama Gazette* is "Ten Years After" (Jan. 2011 column) explaining how Texas Gov. George W. Bush became the 43rd US president although VP Al Gore received more votes in the general election. Some readers have asked for similar analysis on the recent result where Mr. Trump won the Electoral College with a much greater electoral vote margin yet STILL lost the popular vote by 668,483 (according to AP reports) or even more according to other sources.

"W" was the third US president to win the Electoral College (50.5%/49.5%) without winning the popular vote 50,456,002 to 50,999,897; the 271-266 result fell one short of 538 because a DC elector abstained. In 1876, Rutherford B. Hayes squeaked by Samuel J. Tilden in the Electoral College 185-184, despite losing the popular vote 4,284,020 to 4,036,572. In 1888, Benjamin Harrison won the Electoral College (58%/42%) over Grover Cleveland by a 233-168 margin, while losing the popular vote 5,537,857 - 5,447,129. Cleveland came back to beat Harrison in 1892 as the first and only president thus far to serve two **non**consecutive terms.

The response by a number of Gore supporters (including then NY Senator-elect Hillary Clinton and another big govt. champion Donald Trump) to this inconsistency between the Electoral College and popular vote was to do away with the Electoral College. This debate is nothing new, the only difference for those like Trump is this time the 'rigged system' proffered his desired duopoly result. Abolishing electors will not likely happen given the majorities required for an Amendment, unless this simply becomes another Constitutional provision ignored by extremists who've 'progressed' our Nation toward the mess we're in today - more on DC electors distortion later.

Widespread ignorance from the pop press explaining why this occurred adds to the 'fuzzy picture' which results under the current House of Representatives (HoR) result. States with small populations have a more-than-proportionate influence in the electoral college. It seems unlikely the small States which benefit from the current (unconstitutional) size of Congress, would support a Constitutional amendment to eliminate the electoral college. In fact, Ms. Clinton's position put her publicly at odds with the Senate minority leader at that time (Tom Daschle of South Dakota) from one of the States which benefit the most from the current Electoral College. A State like Alabama (23rd largest State last I checked) wouldn't see a huge gain/loss relative to other States, but would benefit from a more representative HoR in general.

Trump's past and Clinton's now shriller cry for ending the Electoral College is ill-founded to anyone familiar with the structure of the Constitution. The genesis of the inconsistency between the Electoral College result and the popular vote lies not in any fundamental problem with the Electoral College, but specifically the corrupt actions of Congress. A brief overview (Art. 2, Sect. 1) of the makeup of the Electoral College sheds some light on the ever increasing likelihood of more Bush v. Gore outcomes - esp. when the margin of victory is close in some key "battleground" States and "blowouts" in other States. Electors for each State equals the number of U.S. Senators (two) plus the number of individuals serving in the HoR which varies by State population. Since each State is guaranteed a minimum of one representative, the lowest possible number of electors from each State (now including the District of Columbia) in the electoral college is three. The result from the electoral college almost always mirrors the popular vote - esp. if Art. 1, Sect. 2 (30,000 rule) is also followed. Of course if the Electoral College were eliminated (dissolving one of the last vestiges of State sovereignty in our now forced coalition of states) campaigns would be ran/targeted differently. Once it is clear a State (e.g., Alabama or Wyoming for Trump; California or New York for Clinton) will go to one of the duopoly candidates, there's no incentive to campaign and many voters simply do not show or do not vote in the presidential race. While it is interesting to speculate, we do not know how the popular vote would change and campaigns/voters respond to the structural change. How many more Trump voters would've shown in CA - how many more Clinton voters in Wyoming -- who knows?

IF the House of Representatives lives up to its name (i.e., being truly representative) inconsistencies between popular and electoral results are less likely. However, this is not the case. On June 18, 1929, Congress capped the size of the House of Representatives to 435 - - in violation of Art. 1, Sect. 2. As population grows, real representation decreases - or as my friend James Hines explains, "produces a fuzzier picture with fewer pixels." The Constitution specifies, "**The number of Representatives shall not exceed one per thirty thousand, but each State shall have at Least one Representative; ...**" In any given State, there must be one representative for the first 59,999 people. At 60,000 people, the State is apportioned a second representative (two representatives for 59,999 would violate the constitutional provision cited above), and so forth. However, this illegal action only formalized the Congress' de facto violation of the Constitution, as the 30,000 ratio has been exceeded throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. At the time of the tight Bush v. Gore Electoral College result we were at about 600,000 to 1. It may be hard for some readers to believe that our esteemed, ethical members of Congress would do anything unconstitutional, but, in fact, it happens on a regular basis.

Federalist (Numbers 55-58) explains the founding fathers were concerned with having too many/too few representatives. Since our United States were intended to be a representative republic, NOT a democracy, the act of capping the size of the HoR reduces the relative political influence of States which are gaining population faster than others. The reason? Even though seats are reapportioned after every Census, 'small' States always have a minimum of three electors. Some States (like Wyoming) had not yet reached the 600,000 threshold in the 2000 election, but still get an elector for their one representative, while the most populous State, California, had 54 electors. In effect, California had 18 times as much weight in the Electoral College as Wyoming, which has three votes. This is NOT constitutionally correct representation and gives Wyoming and other 'small' States relatively more weight in the Electoral College than they'd have under the constitutional constraint. In 1999, the population of California was 33,145,121, while the population of Wyoming was 479,602. In terms of population California was 69 times larger than Wyoming. Under the 30,000 rule for determining the HoR California would've had 1,120 members in its delegation; Wyoming only 15. In the Electoral College California is 1,122 electors; Wyoming would have 17... don't forget the two senators which our framers understood would become insignificant in generating elector totals as population increased. In this case, California's relative influence in the Electoral College would much more closely match relative differences in State population (66 to 1) in close elections.

To demonstrate this abridgement of representation creates the inconsistency between the popular vote and the electoral college (not any fundamental problem with the electoral college itself) Professor David Laband calculated the composition of the electoral college as if representation adhered to the 30,000 to 1 stricture spelled out in Art. 1, Sect. 2. When doing so, Mr. Gore also wins the 'Constitutionally correct' electoral vote 4,632 to 4,615. Going back into history and recalculating electoral college results for the 1876 election, Laband found Sam Tilden would have won the electoral college vote by 686-646, leaving the 1888 election as the only anomaly of the first three -- Grover Cleveland wins the popular vote but still falls short in the electoral college by 1,001-702. In all of the other close races in terms of either the electoral college or the popular vote (Carter/Ford, 1976; Nixon/Humphrey, 1968; Kennedy/Nixon, 1960; Truman/Dewey, 1948; Wilson/Hughes, 1916;

McKinley/Bryan, 1896; Cleveland/Harrison, 1892; Cleveland/Blaine, 1884; Garfield/Hancock, 1880) the more representative, constitutionally correct electoral college mirrors the popular vote for president.

Its simple arithmetic - occasional inconsistencies between the popular vote and the Electoral College vote in presidential elections is not caused by any deep flaw in the Electoral College. It is driven more by congressional circumvention of our Constitution along with campaigns and voters responding to our current unrepresentative duopoly result. Irate politicians like Mrs. Clinton over the Bush v. Gore result who are eager to fix perceived wrongs associated with our presidential elections would advance their cause more effectively by filing suit to force Congress to live by the law of the land rather than once again trying to amend it. Don't hold your breath expecting one of our modern extremist (Republicrat) candidates to bring a case of this sort. Mr. Gore had a documentable violation of the Constitution which caused him demonstrable harm - he lost a job. The Bush, Clinton, Dole, Gore, et al types want the status quo result even when it means they must take the back seat for an election cycle or two - representative government is their worst nightmare.

This would move our nation forward to what we were envisioned to become - a more perfect voluntary union to promote the GENERAL welfare over specific interests. To be painfully clear, Congress pulled off a "union" of another sort in 1929, agreeing to cap the number members to 435 so they could raise the price of political favours. Think of then [2000] Congressman Riley taking money from pharmaceutical giant Pfizer to extend patents which apply specifically to them; or more locally, felon Hubbard taking campaign contributions from Farmers to make auto insurance mandatory in our State. I did NOT and still don't care which extremist won. I don't think our nation would be in any better shape if Gore had been president rather than W nor better with Trump instead of Clinton - will some parasites fare better under Trump's corporate welfare and debt increase than Clinton's social welfare parasites? Yes, but the ever shrinking number of middle class producers will find little difference in being sucked dry these next several years by red tics as we've been drained by the blue tics in DC these past years.

I've long advocated moving forward to a part-time, constitutionally correct Congress whose members each represent just over 30,000 people with no more staff than a general secretary who serves several members at the same time. No big paychecks (say median income so they may know/care what it is?) nor separate retirements to avoid the SSA Ponzi scheme they've created, no skirting the government health insurance they mandate, etc. I'm certain a ten thousand member HoR will have extremists babbling. Feel free to join them as long as you don't mind an increasingly 'fuzzier picture' as James Hines would say. More importantly, this will make campaign money much less of an issue as individuals and specific groups will not be willing to pay much to HoR candidates for wealth transfers in their favour as each member will have such a small net impact (as originally designed) when voting on legislation. Furthermore, it would get a more diverse group into national politics which may provide better candidates than the Bush, Clinton, Dole, Kerry, McCain, Obama, Romney, et al types most voters feel compelled to vote for.

Would a HoR which adjusts to population in this fashion mean little would 'get done' in DC? YOU BET! What few bills which would make it through this body for the Executive to consider would indeed be representative of the people - again this is the worst nightmare of the extremists who've so long benefitted from the unrepresentative results. The median, productive citizen would be amazed at how much their lives (i.e., general welfare) would improve if the federal government moved forward to only do those few things enumerated really well and left the rest to more competitive State and local governments to accomplish. Hard to imagine a worse group in our nation than the current, unrepresentative body put in power via gerrymandering absurdly large Congressional Districts, with restrictive ballot access laws, and campaign finance laws designed to protect incumbents deciding our future, which is likely to make this era another great contraction in our nation's economic history if they do not change course. More of the same is not the answer. My point back in 2011 at the ten year anniversary of an electoral college win over the popular vote we observed upheld by the SCotUS was a sound milestone/reminder to consider making our HoR representative once again - likely to offer better choices than the two politicians of such poor character and integrity offered in 2000. I don't think any rational person sincerely believes the swamp rats returning to DC will really drain the swamp, but we can dilute the power of the most deleterious rats plaguing us.

Onto the recent Trump 306-232 Electoral College (57%/43%) result over Clinton's 62,972,226 to 62,277,750 popular vote win. It is only the SECOND time a Constitutionally correct HoR does not mirror the popular vote as in 1888 when Harrison won the Electoral College (58%/42%) over Cleveland by a 233-168 margin but lost the popular vote 5,537,857 - 5,447,129. Clinton sycophants, hypocritically silent (as is Trump this time about the Electoral College) on 'Super-delegates' boxing out Bernie for the Democratic Party nomination, are again crying foul and havoc with a result they don't like. With what appears to be the worst turnout in 20 years by most accounts, I get a tickle out of those who assert Trump somehow has a mandate with such low approval ratings riding the wave of 'flyover country' backlash to win without the popular vote under the current distorted result. Let's be honest, Clinton lost because the union/blue collar vote didn't show - some say because the pollsters all said she'd win and they didn't want to show support for one who'd clearly forgotten and didn't represent them... remember the Howard Dean scream media trashing, now a cautionary tale for the Dems? Most illustrative, Hillary's pop vote result couldn't even beat Romney. The number of voters who cast a vote in Senate races and didn't vote in the presidential election was in the hundreds of thousands. Millennials didn't show as expected for Clinton - esp. those slighted by how Mr. Sanders was treated by the 'rigged system' and many voted for someone other than these two deeply flawed duopoly candidates. So what happened?

Clinton was 38 Electoral votes short. The four States which made the difference are as follows:

FLORIDA's 29 electors were lost by 119,770 votes, the only **non**-duopoly candidate on all 50 State ballots (Gov. Johnson) earned 206,007 votes. Most polling found the Johnson ticket (the most qualified in terms of actual executive experience) was taking votes from Hillary 2 to 1, prompting the national press to finally cover the only other viable candidate - a.k.a. they "Aleppoed" him. Those who assert Johnson voters would still show to vote duopoly party and more would've gone Clinton, most of her 38 elector deficit is covered and only one of the three remaining battleground States listed below changes the result. Nothing new for "Florida, Florida, Florida," - on average recent presidential results have been determined by just over 10,000 votes in this large Electoral College State on par with New York, only exceeded by California and Texas.

MICHIGAN's 16 electors were lost by only 11,837 votes, the **non**-duopoly party candidate earned 173,021 votes. Again, if the Johnson voters still showed and disproportionately voted Clinton, these two small margin of victory States change the result.

PENNSYLVANIA 20 electors were lost by 68,236 votes, the **non**-duopoly candidate earned 143,653; another marginal State where Johnson voters can change the result if they still showed and disproportionately vote Clinton. I want to be very

continued on page 5A

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may not express the views of
The Alabama Gazette.

ROBSERVATIONS ■ ■ ■ by Robert Tate

No Schadenfreude Here – Well, Maybe a Little

Election night 2016 was a beautiful thing to watch. Tears flowing, heads exploding, pundits demonstrating that they know absolutely nothing about anything, you name it. Obviously, I am happy that “she” did not win,

but watching all of the crazed people crying and being on the verge of suicide was a thing to behold. Reports that Hillary had a profanity laden meltdown while overturning tables and launching objects around the room easily explains exactly why she did not come out to greet her supporters after her humiliating yet justified loss. Instead she cowardly sent out her campaign manager, John Podesta, to do the dirty work for her. Yes the same guy whose many emails were hacked and then leaked. A couple of days before the election, this beauty of an email was dropped like “Little Boy” over Hiroshima. *“People tell me that Hillary is acting ‘like a retard’ since her head injury. Frankly, considering her normal behavior, I’m surprised anyone noticed! (this is a joke!) Have someone talk to her doctor and see if there’s anything he can give her. Also, I’ve noticed she’s had an ‘odor’ lately. It reminds me of a combination of boiled cabbage, urine and farts. I’m guessing it’s either connected to her fall or simply that she rarely bathes. Outside of encouraging her to shower once in a while, I don’t know what to do about this. – Any suggestions would be appreciated.”* Yeah, a real charmer, you cannot make this stuff up.

I will not characterize election night or the weeklong implosion of the DNC akin to rats leaving a sinking ship for fear of offending poor innocent rats, but the week or so following the election has been eye opening to say the least. To observe their faults in the open for everyone to see has been vindication for those of us on the other side of the proverbial fence. Protesting, violence, crying, rioting, you name it. The so-called tolerant among us have proven yet again they are anything but. But here are just a couple of my Robservations following the election.

1. Hillary. Bless her heart. After her epic beat down, she and her minions sought who to pin the blame on. In true progressive fashion, blame was immediately pinned on FBI Director James Comey. Heck, after all, had he not reopened the case two weeks before the election, she would have won. Right! That is like blaming Frank Hamer for starting Bonnie and Clyde’s reign of terror. Okay, here is a reality check. She could not even consider the fact that her being a wretched person may have been the primary reason she lost. It was Hillary’s many crimes that cost her the election and her planned coronation. From Benghazi, to gun running in Libya, to the Clinton Foundation’s unabashed welcoming of money from foreign governments and their failure to claim millions of dollars in taxes, to her unauthorized private server, sharing classified information with those who had no clearance to see this data, allowing her maid to print dozens of classified documents on her home computer and of course lying under oath many times back in October 2015, all of these played a crucial part in her political demise. It was her criminal conduct and behavior that sealed her fate and she has nobody to blame but herself. Heck, if Comey had done the right thing back in July, I wouldn’t be writing this today.

Here’s one for you. One of my very sage friends and might I add, fellow deplorable, wrote this the other day. If you don’t want to lose an election:

1. Don’t attack the Second Amendment.
2. Don’t ignore the unborn.
3. Don’t call a group of hard working Americans deplorable and unredeemable. (Especially if many are smarter and well versed in reality than you ever will be.)
4. Don’t hate Christians.
5. Don’t say the Supreme Court can write laws.
6. Don’t betray Israel.

Hillary railed again and again that Trump was unfit, unqualified, undeserving and ill-tempered to be the President of the United States. Reality is she was espousing those characteristics that stared back in her face every time she looked in the mirror. Nobody who has such a lack of respect for the Constitution and State secrets has any reason to be within 1,000 miles of classified data. Truth is the DNC and their peeps backed a broken and faulty candidate more suitably clothed in prison orange than the bevy Chairman Mao outfits she was going to bring to the White House. And to all the idiot celebs who posted pics and videos on the internet or filled the television screen with crocodile tears, I am one of millions of deplorables waiting for you to leave this county and make your home wherever you said you were going to go. “Bye, Felicia!”

Here’s another thing. The investigations into Hillary are still out there. Yes Comey said although he found that she was “extremely careless” in handling classified data, he was not going to move forward. Note he did not say she did nothing wrong, in fact he laid out the case that she did break laws but decided, for whatever reason, that he was going to let her slide. Facts remain, she committed felonies by lying under oath, mishandled classified data, lied about it, set up an illegal server, lied about it, and if yours truly had done the same things, I

would be in jail today. Rightfully so. But now we have many on the Left crying for a Hillary pardon. Just the other day, Jesse Jackson called for Obama to pardon Hillary. I heard one journalist say that Hillary has suffered enough by not winning. What?? So that is where we are in this country now? People commit crimes and we let them off because we feel sorry for them? Really. “Your honor, I am really sorry I went into that home, killed the father, raped the wife and their 15 year-old daughter and then killed them. You see these tears? I really am sorry. Sniff, sniff.” “Okay, you can go.” Sort of like that rich kid in California, Ethan Couch, suffering from “Affluenza” who got drunk and while on a suspended license killed four people in an accident. Sorry, but she should be held accountable. If not, the precedent has been set that anyone in prison today or who will be charged in the future for similar crimes should be able to beat their rap. Oy, my head hurts.

2. Protesters. I don’t even know where to start here. During the lead up to the election, I watched several news shows and they kept talking about how Hillary had the votes of “college educated” men and women. College this, college that. Hey, I am college educated with a Master’s Degree but after watching many of these college educated kids protesting, I am not sure that is necessarily a standard to be proud of. I have watched dozens of interviews with many of these people and I am here to tell you that a lot of them are dumber than a box of rocks. Almost none have the ability to put forth any kind of cogent argument not centered around their foo foo feelings. Their arguments, devoid of both fact and reality leaves them only with their stupidity to guide them. Sad. And at the end of the day, guess what crybabies? The Don is still going to be your President whether you like it or not; deal with it. So, crawl into your safe space, curl into that fetal position and shut the heck up. This is what happens when kids are always told they are the best, never told when they are wrong, are never allowed to fail and are given trophies for participation. Protesting for not getting your way is nothing but crying. And here is another reality check. Coming out of a store through the window you just broke while carrying a television on your back is not a First Amendment Right. Five or six black guys beating the snot out of a white guy for having a Trump sticker on his car nor is setting cars on fire covered under the First Amendment. Note to readers, this behavior is one of the reasons we have a Second Amendment. Capiisce?! Imagine if the roles were reversed and it was Trump people committing the violence.

In true liberal fashion the blame is still directed at Trump. “He’s a racist. He caused this.” (BTW – My challenge has still been unmet. When someone tells me that Donald Trump is a racist I ask them to tell me, specifically, one racist thing he has said. They cannot. They just parrot what their idiot teachers, professors and news media tell them to believe.) Several journalist hacks even said it was up to Trump to calm down the rioters. Say what? Don’t you think President Obama and Hillary should be out there since the rioters are their peeps? Well, in a speech with the traitorous German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Obama did say he wouldn’t recommend for the rioters to be silent and thereby gave them tacit approval to continue on their way. Instead of saying, “Look idiots, grow up, put on some man pans and deal with it. No more safe spaces, no more days out of school, no more puppies and clothes pins on your shirts. You are an embarrassment to yourselves and your parents. Quit burning and breaking things and be the adults you are supposed to be.”

I saw on the news this morning where vice-president elect Pence was at the Broadway play, Hamilton last night and the cast came out and lectured him on their fears. I saw a couple of interviews afterwards and people asked if they thought that was rude and most said “no” and several said that they thought the audience members who booed the cast for their pathetic, misguided protest were the rude ones. What? Say it isn’t so. In their fantasy world of purple skies and rainbow, unicorn kittens, to chastise the elected vice-president when he only wants to watch a play and say that is acceptable but you had better not question the actors shows the level to where they have crawled. Sad, very sad.

3. Immigrants. Unfortunately, I am going to have to save this for another day. I was going to talk about sanctuary cities, Trumps promise to require further investigation of people coming from certain countries (note: **NOT** Muslims but people from certain countries: Region vs. Religion), amnesty and other issues but I clearly ran out of room. So for another day.

But as we move closer to inauguration day, I am sure there will be more hostility directed toward Trump. We are already seeing it. Every person he has mentioned for a potential Cabinet position has been met with negativity and derision. The media hacks are constantly saying his transition team is in chaos although he is further ahead in his process than any president elect before him. But I guess after getting their butts severely kicked and losing control of all three branches of government, that is all they have. Bless their hearts. More to follow I am sure. Get me outta here, Percy.

John Sophocleus

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clear I’m not asserting Johnson got Trump elected - if forced to vote duopoly (as some totalitarians advocate with so many eligible voters refusing to participate in this corrupt process) I would’ve voted Clinton. Under the current circumstances if Clinton and Trump were the only choices forced upon Alabama, I wouldn’t have participated. I don’t see how anyone could be an accomplice to supporting either of these flawed candidates and hold onto their souls.

WISCONSIN’s 10 electors were lost by 27,257 votes and the **non**-duopoly party candidate on all 50 State ballots earned 106, 442. Another small margin of victory State that along with Florida changes the result.

So what’s the bottom line with the difference? Just like the unconstitutional 435 limit on the HoR [1929] impacts the observed electoral v. popular vote results, the 23rd Amendment [1961] giving DC electors distorts the outcome from the structure our framers designed. The ten mile square to make DC is federal installation, it wasn’t supposed to have residents just as many folks who work and live on other federal installations have voting residencies in their respective/declared States. The biggest margin of victory for a candidate this Nov. was Clinton’s 93% in DC running up the popular vote difference 248, 670 for that separate block (tied to the smallest State since DC also has no reason for Senators) of 3 electors on Clinton’s side. Sadly, most ‘feel gooders’ about changing the Constitution for the moment fail to understand political change is a fact of life just the ups and downs of climate changes. Little surprise given the current politburo members in DC it would easily go Clinton and less will bother to show to vote Trump. It seems difficult to get ‘Electoral College deniers’ to understand those quarter of a million Clinton votes would otherwise be apportioned to their States of residency which may have made a difference in razor thin margin States like Florida and Michigan. Of course, the other big player in spiking up the popular vote difference was California’s “younge” 2,746,562 pop vote difference where Ms. Clinton won 62% of the vote for those 55 electors, followed by New York’s 1,503,304 difference (Clinton 59%) for their 29 electors. Many argue without the ‘winner takes all electors’ structure more would’ve voted against Hillary... Trump won the 38 Texas electors with a much smaller (53%) margin of victory to offset the 4.25 million difference generated by these two (CA & NY) States. Wyoming’s 70% for Mr. Trump’s 3 electors is a good showing for ‘showman Don’ in the Equality State, but it is only 118, 299 popular vote difference which doesn’t even put a dent in that 4.25 million from Hillary’s two big win elector States.

The failure to get blue collar folks to turn out in general (and more specifically for Democrats who’ve taken them for granted these past decades) is what will really have Hillary keeping Bill up with nightmare screams for years to come - can you hear the Howard Dean echo? - or perhaps feel the Bern NOW? I doubt the Democratic Party will return to their roots and champion low taxes and smaller government to embrace Johnson voters help on the margin in the future. Once Dems got tired of losing to Republicans (who set us on our path of class warfare, corporate welfare, high taxes, etc. imposed by hegemony) their ‘out republicanizing’ the Republicans quickly accelerated US in the mess we’ve ‘progressed’ into. The saddest outcome of the 2016 election is an opportunity to dissolve or at least dilute the Republican Party and try to move forward toward liberty is over. Democrats have at least shown ability to change when they tire of losing, maybe more big govt. Trumpster Democrats will also ‘go Elephant’ still leaving enough of the Party to return to her roots. I’m not holding my breath and will continue to make what little difference I can supporting a small block of well defined voters (Constitution Party, Libertarian Party, TEA Party) who beat the margin of victory. It was good to see the Becky Gerritson write-in campaign’s 29,548 votes soundly beat the margin of victory and verify them as a force against Roby (and the Dubina, et al ‘public servant’ types) in our politburo impeding our State.

Months before the Nov. election, the Pew Research Center ranked US 31st out of 35 countries for voter turnout based on the voting age populace, among the mostly democratic nations in the Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development. The study found 53 percent of eligible voters in the US cast ballots in 2012, the last time a presidential election was held, with about 129 million people out of a potential 241 million citizens taking part in the election. Increasingly less competitive ballots and decreasing real representation as participation continues to drop shepherds us to even more extreme results as outcomes are determined by smaller and smaller numbers of voters. Our Sect. of State just installed a member to our State House by eliminating an election. The taxpayer subsidized primary Party result was forced upon us where only 4.2% of eligible voters voted for felon Hubbard’s anointed candidate. The federal courts recently ruled the anti-competitive ballot access laws used to block candidate Fenwick off the ballot are unconstitutional, but Sect. Merrill refuses to reverse his wrongful elimination (hiding behind past Secretaries’ violations) instead of having the election to allow candidates’ and voters’ civil rights. I do not advocate some sort of JIC removal or impeachment, but I did expect more from this Secretary. Keep John and our State in prayer to learn from past mistakes and stop violating our civil rights. It is clear our duopoly result has provided no improvement for the general welfare of Alabama.

Woods & Waters with Steve



Steve Long

DEER 101-QDMA

This week, I want to talk about how to anticipate tracking a deer after it's been stuck with an arrow. There are some tell-tale signs to keep an eye out for when the arrow hits that can give you a good idea of where you hit it and how long you need to wait before tracking it. Of course, I can't right out tell you that shots to the head and neck aren't really what you want. Sure, they're pretty vital, but with all the bone, skin, muscle, and fur in the way, you're more likely than not just going to give that buck the shave of a lifetime and not a spot on the wall. Your main target is just behind the shoulder, where the heart is. A true shot through the heart will typically have that deer give a mule-kick, followed by a rather short meeting with the ground. In the rare case that the deer scampers off, and you're not sure where you tagged it, if the blood is a bright, almost pinkish color with some slight bubbling, you can bet that whitetail isn't too far off. The bubbling, for the curious, is from the arrow clipping the lungs, as it's pretty hard to shoot the heart without getting a bit of a lung shot.

Now, if you've ever been out there hunting deer, you know as well as I do that those animals rarely ever give you a good, clean, broadsided shot. Typically, you'll make do with the best shot you can get, so it pays to note what the deer does when it's hit, as well as what kind of blood trail you're looking at. Let's say you tag that buck in the spine. Odds are, with the thick bones and everything else, your arrow is going to break. However, a spine shot means that buck isn't going anywhere, but you'll need another shot to deliver that buck from its misery. Don't wait.

If you tag it in the gut, you're in for a long night. That sucker will take a few short steps, arch its back, tuck its tail right in tight, and slowly walk or trot out of the field before bedding down somewhere nearby. You want to take your time before trailing this deer, as a gut shot will normally be fatal but not quick. If you push after that deer too quick and too soon, it'll get up and run off before bedding down again, making locating it far, far more difficult. Your arrow will have flecks of brown and green on it as well as blood, and you'll definitely know if it's a gut shot from the smell. Try to avoid this one as much as possible!

If you tag it in the liver, that deer is done for. However, like a gut shot, it will take some time before you'll safely be able to approach; 3-5 hours is probably a good rule to follow. Your arrow will be covered in a very, very dark red blood, with a good start to the trail as it slowly fades out. Liver shot deer can go anywhere from 200 yards to a quarter mile before bedding down. As for the initial hit, just like a lung shot, the deer will more than likely trot off a little bit, or maybe just walk. Unlike the lung hit, where the deer will shortly fall over, a liver shot deer will take time to find a good place to rest. Just be patient and be ready.

Of course, while aiming for the heart is optimal in all situations, if you pull too far over, you'll smack that arrow against the foreleg of the deer, right into the scapula, which, unfortunately for you, is designed to protect the deer's vitals. If you pull back towards the heart and vitals, you'll have meat in the freezer for sure, so hope, pray, and aim well that your shot goes away from the bone. If you think the shot was high, up into the shoulder and bone, don't wait. Get down there and get ready to finish the job. If you're sure you nailed the vitals, then the wait is just a few minutes; a wounded animal is always dangerous to approach, so please be careful when approaching.

All that being said, we're gearing up for some gun hunting, so let's talk about deer roaming habits. As most of you know, the big old bucks don't get that way by being dumb, and every researcher worth his or her salt knows it too. Naturally,



Rob Newman with a Good Iowa buck he took with his bow on a recent trip

they're working hard to get to the bottom of those big bad bucks' mysteries, and our wildlife biologists and researchers have turned to the latest in gadgets and tech to help reveal just where that trophy's been hiding. Of course, I'm talking about GPS collars.

After tagging a buck with a collar, biologists can check up on their subjects through the Eye in the Sky, letting us know just what a buck does with his day. As it turns out, from multiple studies performed across the United States, they do a whole lot of waiting. Most bucks seem to stay right smack in whatever area they can find that's chock full of cover and food. Clearcuts with plenty of browse are a favorite, and they will stay in them all day, every day. Most studies have shown bucks will only leave well after hunting hours are over; we're talking 3 in the morning! Now, as the weather cools off, browse gets sparse, and the rut starts cranking up, those big boys will start to wander out of their comfort zone a bit more often. If you're a bowhunter, early season, you'll want to find a good thick-growth area with lots of protection, and try your darnedest to sneak up alongside it without getting caught. You might find yourself with a good story and a better trophy.

As gun season rolls around, stay patient; the big boys don't head out of their homes without good reason, so finding a buck in broad daylight is more or less like hitting the lottery. Be patient and resist the urge to leave the stand early. After the rut kicks in, all bets are off, as those lover boys aren't as concerned about safety as they are about those does.

Another thing to remember is that pressure will push deer off of their daily routine faster than anything else. GPS collars have shown that deer will adjust the same day they sense a hunter moving into an area, in as little as 12 hours. The average time for them to head back to an area with pressure is about 3 days, it seems. Keep your presence minimal and your impact light, or you might not get what you came for!

All in all, there's a whole lot more to go over, but we're already here at the start of the season. I hope all of you have prepared well and scouted out ahead of time, and I also hope all of you bow hunters managed to get a good story, if not a great trophy. So get out there, grab your camo and your ammo, get your Game Check ready, and go get 'em!

Kritter Korner

Disabled Wildlife



Disabled animals don't realize that they are handicapped: "I want to tell you a little bit about special needs raccoons (wildlife) and our disabilities. I have several handicapped raccoons, some are blind, and some are amputees, deaf and six with neurological (brain damage) from mild to severe.

While working with these animals all these years I have come to the conclusion that we are a lot like them except it's harder for a human to accept disabilities and overcome them. The

difference I see is their uncanny ability to adapt to their disabilities so fast and not sit in a tree or den feeling sorry for them self's or holding a grudge against people places or things that caused their pain.

Over the years I have seen a raccoons in the wild living with eye's ripped out and legs missing or completely broken, but yet they adapted and continue their life. There are two kinds of pain we suffer, mental pain that no one can see and physical pain when we loose a limb, or go blind or deaf.

Does an animal have the same pains, do they have PTSDs when a coon hunter chases them through the woods at night to try and kill them for sport. Do they have PTSDs when they almost get hit by a car or hit and survive? These are my

questions because I suffer from wounds and PTSDs, and I finally found the secret that makes living with this not a burden.

I spent 27 years as a military man and not once in those years was I able to

sleep a complete night, I never got more than a hours worth of sleep, my wife used to wake up finding me in a corner or under the bed, I found gun shots, cars back firing and popping balloons would make me drop grabbing my air weapon. But now its better I can sleep at least three hours and my pain doesn't hurt as bad now. These raccoons with special needs help me as much as I do them, or maybe just me, they have taught me to adapt to my disabilities. So to watch them as happy



Ron VanHerwyn

as they are even though they are missing something shows me I can do the same. There is a high rate of military suicides, watch for new behaviors that are not normal for your loved one such as; Psychiatric problems 1. depression 2. dissociation 3. panic disorder. Self-destructive behavior. Clusters: avoiding reminders, reliving events, being on guard and Physical complaints. To me the key is animal therapy. I have worked with animals on and off for the last 38 years, I have learned a lot, for instance raccoons are like mini humans. Their socialize and behavior is extremely close to our own. As parents they are extremely maternal they teach their kits at a young age the same as we do, protect and survive these creatures have a lot of human tendencies. So the next time something happens to you check out the animals around you and see how they deal with life, it's a lot tougher than ours."



Ron's Kritter Kids (wildlife education)

Wildlife education & wildlife rescue

Wildlife education & wildlife rescue. To educate as many people as possible about wildlife indigenous to Alabama and the repercussions that occur when we build and take away their homes.

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AUBURN TREADING WATER BUT NOT SINKING

12 - 30

WHILE TIDE ROLLS TO SEC CHAMPIONSHIP

Sports Editor, Ed Jones

Most of the pundits had Alabama as a prohibitive favorite in the first bowl game of the year, the Iron Bowl. The Vegas line was 17 - 18 points. Many Auburn and Alabama friends of mine wanted to know what I thought would happen Saturday, November 26. My reaction never



Coach Nick Saban and Coach Gus Malzahn chat before the Iron Bowl

Photo by Julie Bennett-al.com

waivered. I believed that Auburn could make it close if Alabama had at least two turnovers in the game. If not, then I saw Alabama winning by 14 points. They had two turnovers in the first half and Auburn only trailed by four points, 13 - 9. I was only half right. The first half was close but Auburn only produced three field goals by **Daniel Carlson**, Auburn's only offensive weapon as it turned out. But the second half was a statistical rout. Alabama scored 17 points to Auburn's 3, but it was really worse than that. The hapless Auburn offense would have done better by quick kicking on second down or punting on third down. Then the Auburn defense would have had a better opportunity to win the game with eight second half field goals by Carlson. Or, maybe **John Franklin** could have completed a few more long passes in order to get Auburn in the end zone. It was obvious that no matter how many offensive plays Auburn had, first downs were just not available. The Tigers did scratch out one first down in the first half. Well, that is better than no first downs in the second half of the Georgia game.

It is no disgrace to lose to Alabama this year, they are by far the best in the nation at the end of November. **Nick Saban's** Alabama team will walk Florida because they are better and the coaching is better. Beware; **Coach Jim McElwain** at Florida has nine lives. He used up six prior to the SEC Championship Game. He will probably have to wait until 2017 to use up his other three.



Jalen Hurts, true freshman quarterback

In the Iron Bowl, Auburn's defense kept the Tigers in the game in the first half. They caused four fumbles, all covered by Alabama. True freshman defensive back from Robert E. Lee High School in Montgomery, **Daniel Thomas**, intercepted two of **Jalen Hurts'** passes which turned into six points. Hurts also fumbled three times but all were recovered by Alabama. All of his freshman miss-steps occurred in the first half. In the second half Jalen Hurts looked like the Heisman candidate that he is. For the game he completed 28 passes for 298 yards as Alabama pulled away for the big win. Alabama now plays Florida for the SEC Championship and for an almost certain play-off spot.

Early in the game, junior defensive back **Stephen Roberts** returned a punt 58 yards to set up Daniel Carlson's first field goal. With Auburn's three and out offense, the Auburn defense was on the field most of the second half but still only gave up a field goal and two touchdowns to the best team in America. **Coach Kevin Steele** has done a magnificent job in his first year as the defensive coordinator at Auburn.

It is yet to be determined how to judge the offensive staff. It appears that the offensive staff cannot come up with any kind of plan to beat a team that is better than Auburn. Obviously, the roulette wheel is not the answer. Every team in America has a first string quarterback and a back-up quarterback that is capable of running the team's offense. Not Auburn. They are afraid of the second team quarterback, **Jeremy Johnson**, so they limit his use of the total offense. They are even more afraid of John Franklin, the third team quarterback. He has basically been told not to throw the football. He has shown in limited appearances that he throws very well. He is not as accurate as **Sean White**, the number one guy, but he threw a 55 yard pass completion to wide receiver **Eli Stove** against the best secondary in the country in the second half, which accounted for Auburn's only score of the half, a field goal of course. Maybe he is just lucky. Well, Auburn needs a lucky quarterback. Why was he signed if he was not going to play? That is an interesting question!



Daniel Thomas, true freshman defensive back

Well, lets be realistic. Regardless of the pre-season discussion as to how good

this Auburn team was going to be, there were some misconceptions. Coach Kevin Steele came over from LSU to run the defense. He has exceeded all expectations. The offense was still being run by the coach that I labeled "Malzahn the Magician" after the 2013 season. At every stop on **Gus Malzahn's** college journey he has had great success with his quarterbacks and with his offenses; Arkansas, Tulsa, Auburn, Arkansas State and the first year at Auburn as head coach. I admit that he had a bit of luck in 2013 when he took Auburn to the National Championship Game. But, since that time he has had relatively bad luck. **Coach Paul "Bear" Bryant** had a saying that I like; "The harder you work, the luckier you get". I can not comment on how hard the offensive staff works because I have no way of knowing. I would think that they work very hard and long hours. However, there is something missing in the decision making in that hard work. Someone can not evaluate the talent on hand and the talent to be recruited. No team in the country was as confused as to what to do with their quarterbacks and their running backs as was Auburn in 2016. There has to be a reason and there has to be a solution. We wait, some not too patiently.

Auburn has been overrated all season by the Associated Press, which is made up of people like Paul Finebaum, sports editors of newspapers, radio and TV personalities, most of which have never played or coached football. Surprisingly they come very close to the right rankings. The College Football Committee is made up mostly of Athletic Directors, former players, former coaches, football experts from other areas, and one former Secretary of State. This august group had Auburn in the top 15 going into the Alabama game and had talked about Auburn being a long shot to make the playoffs, that is until they lost to Georgia. Playing a quarterback with a severely injured throwing shoulder in Athens was the low point of Auburn's season. That is how afraid the offensive staff was to play one of the back-up quarterbacks.

Now, an 8 - 4 season is no disgrace. In fact the Tigers could be in the Sugar Bowl on January 2nd. We will know on December 4th when the CFP Committee releases its top 4 teams. I reluctantly picked Auburn to go 9 - 3 in my pre-season poll in August. Here is a breakdown of the Auburn 2016 football season. Auburn won three games over teams that had a winning season; Arkansas State who is in the Sun Belt Conference with Troy and South Alabama. They have at this writing a 6 - 5 record. LSU could not beat Florida, who has as bad an offense as Auburn's. They wound up with a fired coach and a hired coach and a 7 - 4 record. Arkansas is the pretender in the conference. They create all kinds of noise every year only to fold somewhere in the season and become ordinary. Arkansas finished 7 - 5. Those three teams compiled a record of 20 - 14.

Auburn won five games over teams without winning records; Louisiana Monroe, Mississippi State, Ole Miss, Vanderbilt, and Alabama A&M. That looked good at the time, but it really was not much of an accomplishment as the season played out. These five teams compiled a record of 23 - 35.

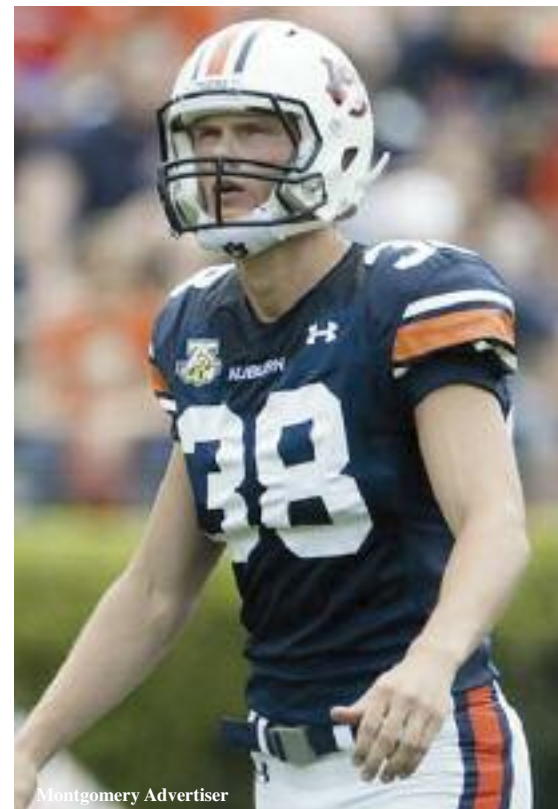
Auburn lost four games to teams with winning records; Clemson (11 - 1), Texas A&M (8 - 4), Georgia (7 - 5), and Alabama (12 - 0). These four teams compiled a record of 38 - 10 and were great teams except for Texas A&M and Georgia.

These are just facts and statistics but they do need to be looked at by Gus Malzahn and Athletic Director **Jay Jacobs**. Changes must be made within the staff or look for another offensive staff. Gus Malzahn has probably bought one more year at Auburn with this not so impressive 8 - 4 season. His record at Auburn is 12 - 2, 8 - 5, 7 - 6, and not counting a bowl game this year, 8 - 4. He has a losing record in the SEC which is his biggest problem. I hope he stays at Auburn, cleans up whatever mess the staff is in, recruits well enough to compete in the SEC and makes Auburn relevant again. He is a good man with a good family. Besides, what would the Waffle House in Auburn do if Malzahn left?

Nick Saban is now 3-1 over Gus Malzahn. At the left are the Auburn - Alabama statistics. If you are for Auburn they will make you throw up. If you are for Alabama, you will probably say... **Why didn't we do better!**



John Franklin, junior quarterback



Daniel Carlson, junior place kicker

Alabama 30 Auburn 12

	AUBURN	ALABAMA
First downs	7	26
Rushes-yards	26-66	44-203
Passing	116	298
Comp-Att-Int	7-19-1	28-37-2
Return Yards	92	62
Punts-Avg.	4-39.25	2-40.5
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	4-0
Penalties - Yards	4-19	4-28
Time of Possession	19:31	40:29

Gazette Seniors...

Dr. John Bitter, Editor
Senior Section

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

You may be over
the hill if...
you still remember
the scent of a real
Christmas tree.

The Christmas Spirit

It's that time of the year when the thoughts of most of us turn to the celebration of Christmas.

It's also the time of the year when the squirrels come out of the woodwork and we're inundated with more nonsense than we want to endure as it relates to the holiday: its principal characters, and its celebration.

From this person's viewpoint there are two tales that best represent Christmas and all it stands for; these being: O. Henry's The gift of the Magi, and Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol.

In the Gift we have a tale of love and sacrifice which emphasizes the spirit of Christmas, as we do in the Christmas Carol, and which is the dominant theme of Christmas as we know it in the western world.

Likewise, we have the relatively modern Christmas spirit as the Senior

generation came to know it.

We all know Dickens' famous yuletide epic which exemplifies the true spirit we want to believe is supposed to be inherent in Christmas.

Passionate love dominates O. Henry's epic as Jim and Della sacrifice their most cherished possession in order to be able to provide a most special gift for each other.

As do virtually all of O. Henry's stories, irony plays a dominant role, which makes the Gift of the magi all that more an example of the true Christmas spirit.

As we view the carnage that has resulted in our most recent presidential gathering, we must wonder what has happened to this spirit.

It looks as if the folks we elect to represent us are a bit off message during this yuletide season.

Whatever happened to "Good will to all men?"

Merry Christmas.

Three Nationalities

Here we are, "One nation, indivisible," with vested interest groups working vigorously to divide it into at least three groups, if not more. And most of the problem can be laid at the feet of poorly educated special interest people who have no idea what they're talking about.

When the United States of America was aborning, its citizens were trying to create their own nation, and get out from under the heel of King George.

Our ancestors made it, with a terrible loss of blood, and no sooner was the ink dry on the Constitution, than the citizens started separating.

Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton took the first step when they and their followers divided the nation in half, politically.

Jefferson's followers eventually became the Republicans, and Hamilton's group now call themselves Democrats.

The ink was hardly dry than the East Coast aristocracy took umbrage at the way the Southern states were handling their visitors from Africa. In the end the matter resulted in a war, and loss of blood on both sides. The end result was hardly satisfactory, causing the nation to be even more strenuously divided, into the Yankees

and the Rebels, but at least the two sides are no longer at war; Not officially.

Efforts were made to still the troubled waters, but it only got worse.

Midway through the last century blind arrogance, coupled with monumental stupidity brought about another divide; and again, disaster.

Will America ever become "one nation indivisible?" Can arrogance, blind stupidity, and special interest group arrogance ever bring about "One Nation Indivisible?"

One would like to say: Yes, but this is not likely to happen. We must never overlook "the human factor." We're divided again racially, with more bloodshed and hard feelings now than there was in the 1860's, and ignorance related to the separation is just as bad now as it was then; perhaps even worse.

And we have now gender separations, and gender co-mingling, and the level of misunderstanding and even ignorance as it pertains to these issues is staggering. And to make matters worse, various factions are using these forms of ignorance to further their own political and financial goals.

If Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Hamilton could only have seen ahead they may have spared future generations the agonies associated with all this.

But, now we're getting into fiction.



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By Kyle' D. McKinney

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(334) 479-1242--Cell
(334) 272-7630--Fax



THE TWELVE SITES OF SOCIAL SECURITY

Gathering with family and friends during the holiday season reminds us we're part of a strong community. And sometimes, in the spirit of the season, we break into song. Our take on "The Twelve Days of Christmas" — a holiday favorite since 1780 — highlights the national community we care for all year long. We call it "*The Twelve Sites of Social Security.*"

For the first site of Social Security, we give to you: our home page, www.socialsecurity.gov. It's the place to go for all things Social Security. Everything you could want — from online services and benefit screening tools to publications and frequently asked questions — you can find all these and more on this site.

For the second site of Social Security, we give to you: our hub for Social Security news and updates at our blog, Social Security Matters at blog.socialsecurity.gov.

For the third site of Social Security, we give to you: an easy way to learn how to replace your Social Security card at www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber. And in some states, you can replace it online at www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount!

For the fourth site of Social Security, we give to you: an online application for retirement benefits that you can complete and submit in as little as 15 minutes at www.socialsecurity.gov/applytoretire.

For the fifth site of Social Security, we give to you: five estimates of your future Social Security benefits! Or as many estimates as you would like using different scenarios. Get instant, personalized estimates of your future benefits at www.socialsecurity.gov/estimator.

For the sixth site of Social Security, we give to you: a convenient way to apply for disability benefits at www.socialsecurity.gov/applyfordisability.

For the seventh site of Social Security, we give to you: fun and informative videos on our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/user/socialsecurity-online.

For the eighth site of Social Security, we give to you: Extra Help with Medicare prescription drug plan costs. You can learn more and apply for a subsidy online at www.socialsecurity.gov/prescriptionhelp.

For the ninth site of Social Security, we give to you: our convenient publication library with online booklets and pamphlets on numerous subjects, at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs.

For the tenth site of Social Security, we give to you: one of our most popular social media outlets, our Facebook page. This is where we engage thousands of customers and you can join the conversation at www.facebook.com/socialsecurity.

For the eleventh site of Social Security, we give to you: answers to your Social Security related questions at our Frequently Asked Questions page at www.socialsecurity.gov/faq.

On the twelfth site of Social Security (and we saved the best for last): open your own personal my Social Security account, which will enable you to verify your earnings, get future benefit estimates, obtain benefit verification letters, update your Social Security information, and more at www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount.

And a partridge in a pear tree! Find all of this and more (except the partridge and pear tree) at www.socialsecurity.gov.

Merry Christmas everyone!!

Create your own my Social Security account at www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount.

THE MARSHALL MOMENT

Soul Searching

DR. RICK MARSHALL
Pastor, Eastern Hills
Baptist Church
Montgomery, Alabama

Pushing Back The Darkness

As we make our journey through the Advent Season, one symbol is pre-eminent—LIGHT! Tree lights, candle lights, houses, buildings, and malls are all decorated with lights. Perhaps it's a parable of our times that we are rarely without some form of light. I suppose we ought to thank Edison for that. It is said that after thousands of experiments, when he finally achieved this monumental breakthrough that would affect all of human history, Edison heard the shrill voice of his wife cry out, "For goodness sake, Tom, would you turn off that light and come to bed!"

We rarely experience total darkness because we have so much artificial light. Perhaps this is a parable of the inner darkness and emptiness of modern humanity. The writers of the Bible understood the significance of darkness and light.

In one of the prophecies about Christ, Isaiah beckoned his hearers to walk in the light of the Lord. *"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned."* (Isaiah 9:2) When Paul challenges us to cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light, the imagery is sharp and vivid. Without God there is nothing but confusion, dread, darkness and death. In Him is light and life.

The first recorded word that God spoke was, *"Let there be light!"* John, in his first epistle says, *"Walk in the light as he is in the light."* That's the basic message of the entire Bible. God can light up the entire universe with galaxies of indescribable dimensions, but there is one little corner of creation that with all His power and might He cannot reach without our help—the darkness within the human heart.

Many of you who are parents can appreciate God's dilemma. The world's greatest scientist or philosopher with an I.Q. at the top of the scale—with money and power may not be able to get through to a wayward son or daughter. Even the most devout Christian parent may watch helplessly as his offspring chooses the low road.

Imagine the agony of God as He surveys the darkness of life on our planet: hatred, murder, rape, and war. Imagine His despair as He beholds how we are bent on self-destruction. He offers us a better way, a way of abundant living and yet we waste our lives in the frivolous pursuit of status, pleasure, wealth, and power.

Let me offer three observations which help us draw a sharp contrast between the world of darkness and the full light of God's love we celebrate in this Christmas season.

First, God's light shines on us in the midst of our darkness. In the Bible, the coming of the light into the world is seen as an act of judgment. When we come into the light we are seen with all of our flaws, all of our misdeeds, and all of our weaknesses.

Of course, the irony is that we delude ourselves when we think that we can hide anything from God. You may be familiar with the story of a man who discovered his little daughter praying for him out loud. When she was finished, he said to her, "Honey, I appreciate you praying for me, but did you have to tell God that I have a hangover?"

Then there is the little girl who cut off a large section of her hair. When her mother realized it, she was very upset. The girl asked, "But how did you know, Mommy? I hid the hair very carefully. How did you know?"

We must look just as foolish as that little girl standing before God trying to hide our flaws from the One who knows us better than we know ourselves. He knows us and loves us and accepts us just as we are. That is the Gospel!

I think we often misunderstand the function of God's judgment. His judgment comes not as retribution but as redemption. He wants to save us from ourselves. As a physician seeks to remove a deadly spot from the body, so God wants to remove the dark spot from our soul, not for His sake but for ours.

Some of the same characteristics of darkness are still with us today as much as in those days gone by. Among these are idolatry, bondage, foolishness, confusion, superstition and spiritual blindness. Only the light of the Gospel reveals the true emptiness of such living.

Second, God's light shines into us. I like the story of the grandfather who

took his little grandson for a walk in the woods. As they were walking along they stopped for a moment the grandfather asked, "Do you know where we are?" The little boy said, "No." The grandfather asked, "Do you know where we're going?" And the little boy again said, "No." The grandfather chuckled and said, "Well, I guess you're lost then." The boy looked up at his grandfather and said, "No, I'm not lost. I'm with you."

No matter what may happen to us in the world or where we find ourselves, the Lord is with us. And when Jesus is with us we are never lost. The Bible says, *"He is our light and our salvation, of whom should we be afraid?"*

If you want GOD'S light to shine in you, there are places and attitudes where changes have to be made. Some of us are so caught up in habits, practices and our possessions that there is not room for the Lord in our lives. We are more controlled by what we have and possess. The light also reveals "the pointed finger." It is so much easier to justify ourselves while judging others. Having just gone through a difficult political season in our country, how much more urgent it is that we pay attention to our attitudes in light of the Christmas message.

Third, the point of the Christmas message is not simply that light came into the world or that it has shone into our lives, but rather, that God wants His light to shine through us. One day in a sermon the Pastor asked, "what is a saint?" A little boy looked up at the stained glass windows of the apostles and blurted out, "People who let the light shine through!"

John the apostle said, *"In Him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it."*

(John 1:4) Just as in that day, not everyone today will recognize Christ as Savior. Our job is not to force the Gospel on anyone, but to give witness of the light in our lives. What people do with Christ is up to them. One of the certain characteristics of all who have the light of Christ in their heart is to wish it for others.

In this season we should be especially prayerful for people of the world who have never heard of Christ or of the God who loved them so much He sent His only Son to die on the cross for their sins. They do live in a world of darkness without eternal hope. My prayer is that the light of Christ might be reflected from us into our culture and to the extremes of the earth so that no one will ever miss the opportunity to know the One who is the Light of the World.

One day Jesus Christ will pull back the curtain of time and space, then the light of His presence, the glow of His glory and the brilliance of His splendor will radiate forth as He breaks the fabric of the eastern sky to reveal His eternal victory and claim His reward, His Church. Then we too will shine forth in the beauty of His holiness. I hope this coming transformation of His true church will include you also.



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Reflections

By Michael J. Brooks

I WAS IN PRISON

I traveled to a Tennessee prison last weekend to visit a cousin. My sister engineered our trip, and we picked up our cousin's brother en route and had a nice day, despite the major purpose of our excursion. I

learned that other family members had been reluctant to go through the process of approval and to visit.

I remembered once hearing a radio host fielding a call from a lady who'd distanced herself from relatives who had a family member in jail.

"I don't want to be around them and I don't want my children around them," she said.

Surprisingly the host agreed.

"This inmate made a bad choice and you have to shield yourself from the family," she said. "I agree with you."

I was flabbergasted at this exchange, and honestly felt the host was out-of-line.

I was a regular Bible teacher at Bibb County Correctional Facility in Brent for a number of years when a long-time friend was named chaplain. I met Bob Hall in Brent; he was director of the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary's Birmingham extension. Bob recommended me to the North Georgia extension that sponsors a program in the Phillips Prison in Buford, Georgia, and I've taught two classes there in recent years.

All of that to say that most of the men I meet in prison are remorseful. They've missed so much in life that can never be replaced. One inmate told me he was incarcerated when his son was 10, and his son had recently come to visit him on the boy's 18th birthday. Stanley was in tears when he said his foolishness made his son grow up without a father.

We mustn't forget that Jesus said, *"I was in prison and you came to visit me"* (Matthew 25:36). It's striking that for believers, serving those in prison is serving Christ.

One mark of Christian grace is not only showing kindness to people in prison, but also showing kindness to former inmates. Jesus taught us to welcome those who messed up. In the story of the Prodigal Son the father received the disobedient son with joy, while the elder brother received him with disdain. I think we'd want to be more like the father than the brother.

Some inmates will live with state-imposed restrictions the rest of their lives. Churches must respect these restrictions and sometimes put safeguards in place depending on the offense, but other than this, every church ought to be a place where prodigals can come and worship and feel safe.

Reflections is a weekly devotional column written by Michael J. Brooks, pastor of the Siluria Baptist Church in Alabaster, Ala., and adjunct instructor of speech at Jefferson State Community College, Hoover. Permission is granted to use this material with attribution.

Dr. Ralph W. Adams

Dr. Ralph W. Adams, has been memorialized in front of the Administrative Building that bears his name on the campus of Troy University, in Alabama. He served a Chancellor for the Troy University System for 25 years. Dr. Adams retired as a Major General in the Air Force Reserve, served as Chairman of the Oil and Gas Board

of Alabama and CEO of Adams Life Insurance Company. He taught and practiced law and was an avid sports fan leading Troy to ten national championships. Dr. and Mrs. Adams are interred on the campus of Troy University at the Sorrell Chapel.

The bronze statue was unveiled Friday as part of the larger dedication of the Janice Hawkins Cultural Park. The statue was designed and bronzed by famed Chinese artist Ma Hui. Check out www.troy.edu for more information.



"Jesus is the Reason for the Season" God bless each and everyone!!

May the Joy of this Holiday Season be with you now and all throughout the coming year!

Please think of the less fortunate and give as much you can now and throughout the new year!



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Community Lifestyles

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Sheriff's Office APP

The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office has a new phone app called "Montgomery County AL Sheriff" that can be accessed through your phone's app store. Once you have added this app to your phone, you can easily set your phone up to receive important push notifications. Push notifications are quick, important messages that can notify you of road closure(s), blocked road(s), anything pertinent to your travel, escapee, etc. While our app can help you with many things including checking to see if someone is in the county jail, it is most helpful to receive push notifications. After you have downloaded the app, go through the follow steps to make sure your phone is set up to receive the push notifications:



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

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

Mental Illness

Mental Illness is becoming an epic program nationwide and the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office along with NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) have partnered to provide an informational brochure with helpful information and phone numbers to assist those in need.

<p>Mental Health & Counseling EMERGENCY DIAL 911</p> <p>NAMI - ALABAMA : 334-336-4797 AL Dept. of Mental Health : 334-242-3454 Veterans Crisis Line : 800-273-8255 Council on Subst. Abuse : 334-262-1629</p> <p>Montgomery County Mental Health Services : 334-279-7830 Intellectual Disability : 334-288-1151 Substance Use Disorders : 334-269-2150</p> <p>Autauga County Mental Health Services : 334-365-2207 Intellectual Disability : 334-285-2608 Substance Use Disorders : 334-365-2207</p> <p>Elmore County Mental Health Services : 334-567-8408 Intellectual Disability : 334-285-2608 Substance Use Disorders : 334-759-7465</p> <p>Lowndes County Mental Health Services : 334-548-2578 Intellectual Disability : 334-548-2578 Substance Use Disorders : 334-548-2578</p>	<p>CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS</p> <p>When trying to communicate with persons who have severe mental illnesses and are in crisis, certain tactics and attitudes seem to work best:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak calmly and quietly • Keep reasonable safe distance • Remember your personal safety • Get beyond strong language hurled at you • Respond to rage with quiet reassurance • Slow down the pace • Be willing to repeat yourself • Ask "Are you taking medication?" • Listen carefully and don't interrupt • Be respectful • Do not challenge his or her delusions • Make no sudden moves • Do not try to hurry a resolution • Be patient and take your time 	<p>Recognizing and Caring for Mental Illness</p> <p>This pamphlet is provided by the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office</p> <p>Supported by:</p>
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<p>Resources</p> <p>Baptist South ER : 334-286-2841 Crossbridge : 334-286-3114 Jackson Hospital ER : 334-285-8032 Jackson Assoc. Center : 334-229-9105 Baptist East ER : 334-294-8448 Catholic Social Services : 334-288-8890 Family Guidance Center : 334-270-4100 Family Sunshine Center : 334-238-2100 Abused Victims : 334-263-0218 24 Hour Crisis Line : 334-263-0218 Lighthouse Counseling : 334-286-0980 Airman/Family Ready Ctr : 334-553-3353</p> <p>Probate Courts</p> <p>Montgomery County : 334-832-7779 Autauga County : 334-365-2728 Elmore County : 334-567-1140 Lowndes County : 334-548-2385</p>	<p>Principles of Support</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We will see the individual first, not the illness. 2. We recognize that mental illnesses are medical illnesses that may have environmental triggers. 3. We understand that mental illnesses are traumatic events. 4. We aim for better coping skills. 5. We find strength in sharing experiences. 6. We reject stigma and do not tolerate discrimination. 7. We won't judge anyone's pain as less than our own. 8. We forgive ourselves and reject guilt. 9. We embrace humor as healthy. 10. We accept we cannot solve all problems. 11. We expect a better future in a realistic way. 12. We will never give up hope. 	<p>NAMI Alabama provides support, education, and advocacy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family & Peer Support Groups • Family-to-Family Classes • In Our Own Voice Presentations • Peer to Peer Classes • Basic Classes (for primary caregivers of children ages 13-18) • Ending the Silence • Parents & Teachers as Allies • Outreach Programs (for Hispanics, African Americans, & Veterans) • Crisis Intervention Team Training (Partnership with AUM) • Resource Access • Advocacy • Annual NAMI Walk <p>How You Can Help:</p> <p>Become a member. Take a class. Attend a presentation. Volunteer. Make a donation. Join us in advocacy! www.namialabama.org</p>
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Angel Christmas Tree for Homeless Families

The Sheriff's Office will have a Christmas tree with angel ornaments for anyone to come by or call to pick an ornament for homeless children and adults. These



ornaments will list wanted, needy items. We encourage anyone wanting to donate new, unwrapped items for women, men and children to do so. You can call Lisa at 832.1339 or Christie at 832.7106 to receive a printed ornament via email or fax or you can come by our Administrative Office located at 100 South

Lawrence Street to pick out an ornament. Sheriff Cunningham and staff will deliver any donated items to homeless families in our area close to Christmas day. Last year, we had an overwhelming outpour of gratitude from the community; this year we are looking for even more generosity!

Request for Christmas Assistance

If you are a Montgomery County family in need of assistance this Christmas, please contact Corporal Isaac Forbes at IsaacForbes@mc-ala.org or call Lisa at 334.832.1339 or Christie at 832.7106 to request to be on our assistance list.

Building Renovations

We are in the process of renovating the 1st floor of our Annex I building at 100 South Lawrence. If you need to access this area, please check with our building security personnel at the public entrance door at 100 South Lawrence. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

THANK YOU...

Christmas Toy Drive

Thank you to everyone that came out to our annual Christmas Toy Drive at the Ann Street Wal-Mart on Saturday, December 3rd. Each year we collect new, unwrapped toys for kids of all ages to deliver to those in need so that no one goes without a gift this Christmas. Thank you again for helping those less fortunate.



Employee Recognition

Each month, we recognize one of our own at the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office! This month, we recognize Ms. Annice Hancock, in our Investigations Division. Ms. Hancock has been employed with Montgomery County since 2007 and she joined the Sheriff's Office in 2010. She handles clerical assignments for Investigations and Special Operations Division. She is married to Stanley Hancock and they have four children. Ms. Hancock enjoys going to movies, games as well as listening to music.



Mrs. Hancock with her husband and one of her children

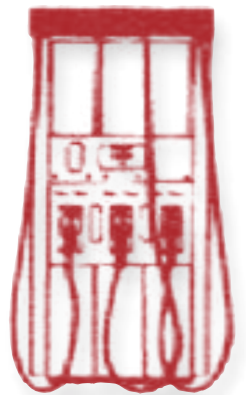
Great Job, Ms. Hancock!
Thank you!

Thank you for your continued support of the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office!
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The views of this editorial may not express the views of The Alabama Gazette.

Restoring Civil Debate

to who yells the loudest or who has the best narrative or best meme or some other nonsense.”

I'll add that there is nothing in our current manner of electing representation that even closely resembles debate. Whether presidential or congressional, our “debates” are increasingly only sound-bite forums in which candidates take more personal shots at each other than having significant discussion on the issues. But how responsible is the electorate for these “debates?” We are willing to spend more time, effort, and money on our various forms of entertainment than we are on studying the serious issues we face as a nation, and as long as the sound-bite campaigns satisfy the masses, it's what we will continue to receive.

Our political divisions are hardly new as they have existed since the founding of this nation, only seemingly more intense and destructive with the introduction of social media, and I find myself wondering if our culture has reached a point where civil debate is beyond restoration. If so, the continuing escalation of the anger, name-calling, and division from both sides of the political aisle without civil discourse will likely destroy us from within.

The next four years with total Republican control of Congress and the office of President will be challenging at best given the level of anger from the left, and though tempting as it may be for those on the right frustrated by the past eight years of the Obama administration, it is crucial that we not return fire with fire. The next four years can offer conservatives an amazing opportunity, one truly of divine intervention proportions if we embrace it, to engage those who disagree with our conservative principles in respectful debate and persuasion regarding the policies that will be enacted. In leading by example, which will be a difficult task as the personal attacks will undoubtedly continue, we can hopefully begin to return to a more civil discussion of our differences.

As we celebrate the birth of our Savior, the Truth of God's Word revealed in human form, and praise Him for providing His divine mercy on our nation, let's take time to reflect on just what we can do individually and within our various associations with others to repair our institutions that have long survived in this great experiment known as America, as our freedom deserves nothing less than our absolute best effort of preservation for the generations to come.

*Justice Clarence Thomas' interview can be viewed in its entirety at <http://www.heritage.org/events/2016/10/story-lecture>

Marcia Chambliss serves on the leadership team of Smart Girl Politics, www.smart-girlpolitics.com, an online community for conservative women. She can be reached at: montgomerysmartgirls@gmail.com. Her views do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Smart Girl Politics.

Senator Clyde Chambliss speaks to Republican Club of Central Alabama

Senator Clyde Chambliss spoke at the November meeting of the Republican Club of Central Alabama about the budget problem that faces the Alabama Legislature each year.

“Every year we return to Montgomery and the shortfall in the budget is a problem in Alabama. I welcome the challenge of serving as Co-Chair of the Budget Reform Task Force to help solve this issue. I am a problem solver by nature, so what better place for me to be than where there are a lot of problems?”

After graduating from the University of Alabama in Civil Engineering, Chambliss started his own company, Chambliss Engineering. “As a civil engineer, my job is solving problems.”, Chambliss continued.

“Can we solve this budget problem? I believe we can. As we all know, revenue is not likely to change. So, we must figure out a way to work around or adjust the 93% that is currently earmarked in Alabama. The national average is 24%.”

“Each year, the State's budget problem provides plenty of not so flattering headlines. Good government is boring; and my goal is to resolve the problem so it becomes a boring topic.”

Public input is welcomed by the Joint Task Force on Budget Reform. A public hearing has been held and anyone can email their ideas to the Task Force at ALbudgetreform@alsenate.gov

RCCA President Charlotte Meadows defines the club as men and women of Central Alabama who meet each month to promote and encourage the broadest possible participation in the Republican Party. The club welcomes new members to political and social activities.

Usually the monthly RCCA meetings are held at Faulkner University; however, on December 5, the club will be celebrating Christmas at the Capitol City Club. Contact Charlotte Meadows at 324-8431 for tickets to the event.



Republican Club of Central Alabama President Charlotte Meadows with Senator Clyde Chambliss

The Good Old Days

The term “good old days” has been around for many years. Older people have and still do like to sometimes reflect on how much better their lives were at various times in the past than they are now.

The subjects are varied. They range from how much less things cost back then to how much less crime we had. For the most part, these things are true, but most of these people have not been able to comprehend the fundamental reason why few things have turned to the better and most have gone the other way.

One of the best decades of the 20th century began about 1952 (when the Korean War ended) and lasted until 1964 (when LBJ initiated devastating social programs and escalated the Vietnam War). Times were very good. America was the manufacturing giant of the world. Nearly everything in the stores was made in the USA and was of excellent quality and reasonably priced. Most people held well-paying jobs. People had ample time for vacations and recreation. Crime was low. Welfare programs were minimal, so few people became addicted to them and decayed into deadbeats. Teenage and out of wedlock births were few, even among blacks, and when they did happen, they were severely frowned upon. The vast majority of children had both a mother and a father. Public education was of a much higher caliber than it is today, but its cost was much, much less.

Taxes back then were far lower than they are today. In Montgomery, the sales tax totaled only 3%—2% state and 1% city. Today we shell out 10%. State income taxes were much lower because the tax brackets were about the same as they are today, but a dollar then was worth about ten of today's dollars. A man who lived near Prattville had a 110 acre farm with a fine house, a barn, and other buildings—a property now worth over a million dollars. In the mid 1950's, he said to his wife, “It's time to pay our property taxes. Let's pick up some of our pecans and sell them.” In about 30 minutes or less, they finished, took them to town, and sold them for enough money to pay the taxes—about \$10 or so. And yet, the quality of public services back then was superior to what we have now—in other words, keeping the roads in good shape, protecting us from criminals, and otherwise leaving us alone to pursue our happiness, unmolested.

Traffic fines were also much less: Running a stop sign was \$2, a red light \$5, speeding \$10, and reckless driving \$25. The top fine was \$100 for “drunk driving” (what we now call DUI). Multiply these figures by 10 to allow for inflation and compare them to today's fines.

There are a few things in life today that have greatly improved. Almost all of them are the result of developments in technology—communication and weather satellites, high definition television, digital photography, LED lighting, advances in medicine and health care, and perhaps the foremost modern asset of them all, the internet—the greatest educational tool that has ever been devised.

But with the exception of technology, however, life in America and most other parts of the world has gone downhill. The claimed reasons are many—war, hunger, overcrowding, depletion of resources, crime, terrorism, etc.

So what were the factors that caused this severe decline in the quality of life? People blame all kinds of things, but there is one root cause—government. Government is the villain that has spawned the aforementioned war, hunger, overcrowding, depletion of resources, crime, terrorism, etc.

In these earlier days, government at all levels made a much smaller impact onto our lives. The multitudes of oppressive, unconstitutional agencies and programs did not exist in anywhere near the quantities we have today. Health care was 100% private, but it was far more affordable than it is now. Public education was limited to the local communities and therefore far easier for parents to monitor. Draconian regulatory agencies did not exist. Businesses could hire the people they chose without being subjected to mandates to hire certain percentages of “minorities” or meet ridiculous safety regulations. People could live on and use their private property with no fears of goons stepping in and declaring that it was “unsafe” or a “nuisance.”

Most of the government we had then was service oriented. Today it is mostly enforcement oriented, and more and more of that enforcement is for matters that should be left strictly alone. In earlier times, law enforcement targeted criminals—people who actually violated other people. Today it largely targets consensual “crimes” that have no victims and sometimes turns real criminals loose because the jails are full. And finally, American government meddling has spread to other parts of the world and has stirred up a hornets' nest of unspeakable horror.

Leaving things alone is a thing that all levels of government must learn. Meddling with a “problem”—real or imagined—almost always results in either making the problem worse or making a problem out of something that never was one.

And of course, we see one more reason we must never consent to more taxes. Instead, priority one should be cutting out the parts of government we are better off without.

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



John Martin

AUTAUGA COUNTY



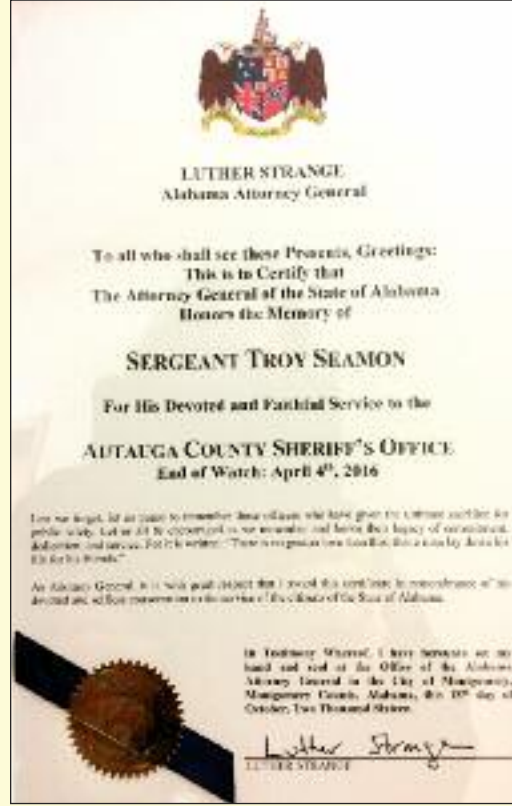
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Sheriff Joe Sedinger



On October 18, 2016 Attorney General Luther Strange presented the Sheriff's Office with a flag and certificate in of Deputy Sheriff, **Sergeant Troy Seamon; End of Watch: April 4, 2016.** Lt. Steve Adams accepted the items during a presentation during the 17th Annual Alabama Attorney General's Law Enforcement Summit that was held in Montgomery.



On November 1, 2016, Sgt. Steve Campbell was designated Law Enforcement Officer of the Year by the Prattville Exchange Club. The plaque was presented during the Prattville City Council Meeting. Congratulations to Sgt. Campbell for achieving this honor.



On November 3, 2016, State Representative Paul Beckman presented Deputies Lt. Steve Adams and Sgt. Jeff Bert with a resolution commending each for being nominees for the 2016 Alabama Law Enforcement Medal of Honor for Law Enforcement.



On November 5, 2016, New Vision Baptist Church held a family fun day, and during the event they honored First Responders. Sheriff Sedinger was on hand to accept a plaque that was presented to the Sheriff's Office. We would like to thank New Vision Baptist Church for supporting the Autauga County Sheriff's Office.

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Merry Christmas to all my past and future clients!

Merry Christmas!!



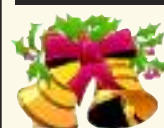
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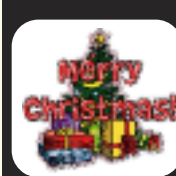
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Southern Cuisine

If you mark out every passing day on your calendar, you will notice there is not much left to mark out. The year 2016 is coming to a close and what a year this has been. In the culinary world, Sous Vide cooking is becoming mainstream and affordable for home preparation. Southern Cuisine is still popular and has the attention of the up and coming chefs trying to put their mark in the restaurant world. Putting attention on making dishes healthier and using locally source products. This is my third December to write the article Southern Cuisine for the Alabama Gazette. Hopefully, I have had a positive influence in your cooking, menu choices and shopping habits. Oh, there was an election! Comments about the outcome and influence this election will have on the country have been about everything except how it is going to change the eating habits of Americans!

Chef David Spooner Retired Chef

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Senior Warden,
St. Paul's Episcopal
Church, Lowndesboro

Chairman,
Board of Registrars,
Lowndes County

Since this is not a political op-ed article, I'll stick with the culinary topics. Even though I majored in Political Science, I get more satisfaction using my skills from my Chef's training and working for hotels with large banquet kitchens then I do watching a bunch of talking heads on TV talking over each other. I look forward to the food commercials!

It seems the topics of the commercials, cooking magazines, TV cooking channels and specialty cooking programs now showing are what to do with the leftovers from Thanksgiving, what to prepare for Christmas dinner and how to feed all the friends and relatives that are in your home between those two meals. My first reaction is to feed everyone the leftovers from Thanksgiving, but that won't make it all the way to Christmas. If it does, you made too much food in the first place also the leftovers would not be fit to eat if they were in the refrigerator for that long.

There is some enjoyment waiting for the leftover meals, for most people! I know friends and relatives that refuse to eat leftovers. My first reaction is "Alright, more for everyone else" But then, I think they are already bored eating the same food again. So maybe if we could "re-purpose" the food. I'm not sure if this is using the word correctly, but if the food was originally made for dinner, re-purpose it for breakfast. Not just cutting up and adding turkey to your eggs in the morning or making tacos, my favorite, out of all the leftovers. An example I have made and received good reviews is turning dressing into waffles. Waffles can be breakfast, brunch or even dinner and if you still get resistance about serving "dressing" again, freeze the waffles for another day.

The waffles won't be the "Belgium" waffle type with lots of syrup and whipped cream and fruit. These will be savory and the waffles could replace the English muffins in Eggs Benedict and replace the toast in a Texas Breakfast Sandwich or replace the biscuits for a Sausage Gravy Waffle. If you froze the waffles for later use, they would be perfect for Chicken and Waffles.

The original recipe I used came from justataste.com. The waffle is crispy and moist and tender. The original recipe is named Leftover Stuffing Waffles, but we don't serve stuffing below the Mason-Dixon Line.

LEFTOVER DRESSING EGG BENEDICT WAFFLES

INGREDIENTS

4+ cups crumbled leftover dressing

Notes: works best with a basic dressing, with no large chunks of vegetables or sausage, remove large pieces before cooking. And it will take longer to cook than

regular waffles

2 large eggs for mix

Chicken stock as needed

4 poached eggs

4 slices of leftover ham, heated

Hollandaise Sauce as needed

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cook time: about 5 minutes

Yield: 4 waffles (I used a square 4 waffle iron)

METHOD

1. Preheat waffle iron and coat with cooking spray.
2. In a large bowl mix room temperature dressing, eggs and 1/3 cup stock.
3. Keep mixing and adding stock until you end up with well-moistened mix that you should be able to spread over waffle iron in an even and thin layer.
The mixture will not spread out like a batter.
4. Close lid and bake until golden brown and crispy.
5. Break waffle into four pieces and place on 4 plates.
6. Top the waffle with warmed ham, then a poached egg and top with Hollandaise.

I have a recipe for Hollandaise Sauce in the December 2015 issue of the Alabama Gazette, from [The Pioneer Woman](#).



When I was growing up, the family would sit down for dinner and we ate what our mother fixed. Even if the meal was "must go", everything in the refrigerator must go! There was no, "I don't like this, will you fix me something else?" There was no option that I could eat mac and cheese every meal.

My extent of complaining about meals was limited to things like; there wasn't any meat in my mac and cheese, or "Vanilla ice cream again, if Baskin Robbins can have 37 flavors why can't I?" I do eat vanilla ice cream but only after I add chocolate syrup, nuts, jam, powdered coffee, molasses, peanut butter or anything else I could find in the refrigerator or cupboard and then mix it all up until the ice cream has melted. And why can't I put those same ingredients



in my bowl of oatmeal. And why ruin a bowl of cut up fresh fruit by putting whipped cream on it. Why can't I have a peanut butter, mayonnaise, cheese, lettuce, dill pickle, tomato, and mustard and jalapeno sandwich? I guess that is why I can mix foods that normally would not be served together.

And why can't I have leftover Thanksgiving Sweet Potatoes for breakfast?

SWEET POTATO BREAKFAST BOWL

INGREDIENTS

As much leftover Thanksgiving sweet potatoes you want.

1/2 banana

1/4 cup milk

Dash cinnamon

Toppings of your choice

Preparation: 5 minutes

Cook time: 1-2 minutes

Serving: 1

METHOD

1. Take leftover sweet potato and mash it up in a microwavable bowl. If you have mashed sweet potato leftovers skip the mashing.
2. Heat for 1 to 2 minutes depending on amount and power of your microwave oven.
3. In your serving bowl, mash up banana and add enough milk to make it extra mushy.
4. Add heated sweet potato and mix.
5. Top with nuts, peanut butter, berries, coconut flakes, granola, syrup or any combination and amount you want.



Other ways to use up sweet potatoes is to whip them up into a pancake batter. Of course there is the sandwich. A way to eat pretty much anything you want all at once. In a sandwich I can eat my least favorite part of the turkey, the breast. The breast to me needs lots of help to eat as a leftover. You really have to think outside the box.

There is no wrong way to make a sandwich, so you can take these ingredients and put them between two slices of sourdough bread anyway you want to. I do it this way:

Spread a thin coat of Italian salad dressing on a slice of bread. Add slices of turkey breast. Make a mixture of half grape jelly and half steak sauce and spread on top of turkey. Add slices of Swiss cheese and then a layer of potato chips. Then top with the other slice of bread.

One thing that is leftover and usually thrown away but can be utilized for future meals is the turkey carcass itself. Put the carcass, some thyme and a little garlic, and half an onion in a big pot add some water and bring to a boil and then turn to a simmer for as long as you want to reduce the liquid and concentrate the flavor. Let cool and put in zip lock bags and lay flat in freezer to use next time you need a stock for a soup or sauce.

To show you are not trying to pass off nothing but leftovers and you want to introduce something new, try our favorite, Lemon Pie in a Jar! Besides the friends and family that love this, my colleagues at work are hooked! Simple to make, no baking, just the right size and easily transported.

There are many recipes for pie in a jar, some you bake, some you pre-cook the ingredients. This recipe is mix, make and chill.

ANNE'S MASON JAR LEMON PIE

INGREDIENTS

8 ounce package cream cheese

Can sweetened condensed milk

3 egg yolks

Teaspoon vanilla

1/3 to 1/2 cup lemon juice (how

much lemon flavor do you want)

Box Graham Cracker Crumbs

Brown sugar

One stick melted butter

Cool-Whip

METHOD

1. Clean seven 1/2 pint mason jars and lids.
 2. In a mixing bowl combine two tablespoons brown sugar to 2 cups Graham Cracker Crumbs.
 3. Add melted butter (one stick) and mix well.
 4. Place 1/4 cup of the mixed crumbs at bottom of each jar and tamp down to make smooth bottom crust.
 5. In a separate mixing bowl, place cream cheese and beat until smooth.
 6. Add condensed milk and continue until well mixed.
 7. Add egg yolks and continue mixing.
 8. Add vanilla and lemon juice and mix until smooth.
 9. Then add about 1/2 cup of lemon mix over the crumb bottom of each jar.
 10. Fill about to the bottom rind at neck.
 11. Top the jars with Cool-Whip and place lid and ring on jars
 12. Refrigerate at least 5 hours to set lemon filling.
- Serve cold

This is an easy dessert to make and can be altered many ways. Instead of the lemon filling, try pre-made canned cherry pie filling with the Cool-Whip topped with granola.

Have a Merry Christmas!

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Home Town Community News



Patricia Killough

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

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

December Birthdays



- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Chris Hudson
Emma Louise Wingard | 19 Brad Echols
Ruth Cordle |
| 2 Faye Ann Mount
Mike Northcutt
Skeeter Rhodes | 20 Maggie Mills
Susan Yost |
| 3 Alison Lee Riley
Cam Stanton | 21 Paula Marie Harsey
Katherine(Kaki) Hines |
| 4 Gail Cotney | 22 Austin Champion
Paul Harper |
| 5 Don Byrd | Robert Harrington |
| 6 Dean Tyner (82nd) | Dennis Woodall |
| 7 Jeannie Leigh Boyles
Tobias Grant
Belle Sansom
Carol Woodall | 23 Kodee Harrison
Carla Johnson |
| 8 Meredith Sellars | 24 Joyce Turnipseed
Kaitlin Rowe |
| 11 Lauren Lane
Chad Roberson
Justin Sessions | 25 JESUS CHRIST
Nancy Setzer |
| 12 Mollie Higgins | 27 Sandy Brown
Austin Yost |
| 13 Anita Tylicki
Jeanette Kinman
Landon Meadows | 28 Andy Meadows
William Webb |
| 14 Fred Crowe
Ken Stringer | 29 Amy Boyd
Mallory McGough
Mary Pat Sikes |
| 15 Michelle Brezinski | 30 Tiffany Hammock
Scott Takacs |
| 17 Betty Armistead
Travers Grant
Dorothy Kiser
Deborah Kirk
Martha French | 31 Bethany Black Neubauer
Addison Wise
Tex Woodall (49th) |

Annabelle turns 6



Annabelle O'Neal turned 6 years old on November 27, 2016.

She celebrated in Pratt Park with her parents, Barbie and Brett O'Neal, her brother, Hunter O'Neal, her grandparents Marie Hudson and Lynn and Bill Moore.

The park outing was also shared with aunt and uncle, Bridget and Chris Moore and Annabelle's cousin, Dalton.

It was a beautiful day where they played with balloons and fed the geese.

Marine buddies hold reunion



Standing L-R; Ed Jones, Ray Parker, Wendel "Wink" Conner. Seated L-R; Spencer Bach, host Judson Huett on his patio on November 23rd.

Five Marine veterans gathered to talk about their experiences. All five enlisted in the summer of 1956 after graduating from high school. "Wink" Connor was a fullback at Lanier. Ray Parker and Judson Huett were guards and Ed Jones was a quarterback-halfback on Lee's first football team in 1955. All five attended Capitol Heights Junior High School together.

Birth Announcement

Brent and Jane Clair Carter of Wetumpka announce the birth of their son
Hamilton Brent Carter
born on July 25th, 2016.

He is also welcomed by his big sister, Evelyn Clair Carter, grandparents Jerry Carter and Lynn Carter also of Wetumpka and Jeffrey and Kathy Horton of Montgomery.

Send us your birthdays and anniversaries. We will be happy to include them in the Alabama Gazette.

If you see a birthday person or anniversary that needs to come off these list, please contact us at 334-356-6700 or email us at alabamagazette@gmail.com

Happy Anniversary

- | | |
|---|---|
| Dec. 1 Troy & Kim Worrell | Dec. 14 Ronnie & Michelle Blount
Scott & Debbie Mills |
| Dec. 4 Rich & Jacque Takacs | Dec. 16 Robert & Georgia Armstrong
Bill & Barbara Berg |
| Dec. 7 Del & Prasertsi Atkinson | Dec. 18 William (Windy) &
Linda Wingard (46th) |
| Dec. 8 Buddy & Rhonda Black | Dec. 20 Wayne & Sarah Watkins |
| Dec. 9 Perry & Nancy Butler
Danny & Kristie Richardson | Dec. 30 George & Jeannie Handey |
| Dec. 10 Heath & Dana Crowe | |
| Dec. 12 Tom & Caroline Vocino | |

Sympathy to the families of...

- Thompson, E'Wanna (82)died October 22, 2016
 Martin, Makenzie Rae (22)died October 23, 2016
 Weil, Robert Schoenhof (96)died October 25, 2016
 Kelly, Jack (91)died October 28, 2016
 Harris, Ann Emory (21)died October 30, 2016
 Davis, James "Jimmy" Clayton, Jr. (82).....died November 2, 2016
 Kratzer, Robert Allen (89)died November 4, 2016
 Rosier, Robert Kenneth (64)died November 4, 2016
 Barrett, Issac C. "Nealy" (85)died November 10, 2016
 Arthur, Leroy (76)died November 11, 2016
 Young, Marcile E. "Liz" (91)died November 12, 2016
 Goodwin, Deborah Lynne Guthrie (57)died November 16, 2016
 Davis, Lois M. (69).....died November 18, 2016
 Davis, Doris "Doe" Payne (95)died November 21, 2016
 Weldon, Anne (81)died November 21, 2016
 Rohan, Mary Sims (72).....died November 22, 2016
 Spear, James R. "Jim" (77)died November 22, 2016
 Stringer, Comer Wilson (85).....died November 23, 2016
 Russell, Hannah Mae Bozeman (99)died November 24, 2016
 Temple, Dana Allen (58).....died November 24, 2016
 Castro, Fidel (90)died November 25, 2016
 Conway, Larry D. (68)died November 26, 2016
 Kendrick, Mildred Paulk (92).....died November 26, 2016



Pictured left to right: Susan Crawford, Marie Hudson, Hazel Harsey, Kay Dobbs, Janice Dillard, Ed Jones, Patricia Killough, Loretta Grant and Sam Adams. Not pictured are Eric Barnes and Matt Gilmore.

The Alabama Gazette enjoyed a Thanksgiving lunch with their staff. It was a time to stop working, laugh and savor the great lunch. A few of our staff were missing, but we are always reminded that respect and Christian love produces a wonderful working environment.

This time of year we are reminded of all the blessing we all receive everyday. The Alabama Gazette is blessed to have the quality staff who represent the standards of this newspaper.

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TODAY'S WOMAN

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

Trisston's Tidbits...

By: Trisston Wright Burrows
www.trisstonwrightburrows.com

““The Gift of God's Love”

Well folks...Christmas is upon us. Can you believe it? Is it just me or does it feel like each passing year goes by more quickly!?

Stores line their aisles with Christmas goodies and décor right after Labor Day! Now that we are getting closer to Christmas, TV shows have switched to the theme of giving and love, and Santas are starting to float about.

Yet, the very first Christmas seemed to do without any of these things. The very first Christmas somehow started a frenzy without the power of TV, without Candy Canes, without Santa, and without Christmas sales. Even more amazingly, the very first Christmas involved a poor couple, nobodies, who would lay the most precious child of all in a manger.



Trisston and Brian Burrows

“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.*” Luke 2:13-14

Looking back, I am reminded how far we have come from the true meaning of Christmas. Christmas wasn't just about giving or feeling loved, but it was about true love. Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Christ, the Savior who came into this world to die... for everyone, even those who killed him. Jesus was God's gift not to the deserving, not to the Jews, but to everyone.

Today, let us remember the true meaning of Christmas...Peace on Earth, Good will toward Men, for the Savior has come to show us how to love, and to give us the greatest gift of love. Instead of buying fancy toys, think of how you can give to those who would normally go without. Ask yourself how you can help others who are not as fortunate as you. Show them the true meaning of Christmas, the gift of God's love, and love others as God first loved you.

Merry Christmas & Many Blessings!

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SCAN FOR APPT.



Southern Gardening Potpourri for December

by Peggy Givhan

The magazines shout that Christmas is near with colorful photos of tables groaning with turkeys, hams, casseroles, and fabulous desserts. Holidays in America and in the South do revolve around food and drink. And speaking of food, these make great gifts to neighbors, friends, and family. One such food gift would be Pesto which can be put in jars and the

tops wrapped in gold foil with ribbons to match. The recipe is simple, adding about 2 cups of fresh basil and blended in the blender with a good extra virgin olive oil. There are many recipes on the Internet which include different salts, peppers, even butter.

There is no one that I know of who does not absolutely love the Christmas season. With a nip in the air, and maybe a slight freeze, we can bring a garden of blooms indoors.



Narcissus bulbs forced into blooming

We can force narcissus bulbs into bloom by putting them in bowls or vases with a layer of small stones of all descriptions placed in the bottom and covered with water. Also Amaryllis bulbs, which are on the market everywhere, is another bulb which is easy to force into bloom. If one desires tulips for the garden, they must be refrigerated for 6-8 weeks in the crisper of the refrigerator prior to planting. If planted without refrigeration, the blooms come right out of the ground with little or no stem. Weird looking. So if you want tulips, get the bulbs immediately, and plant them mid to late January. Inspect the bulbs before making the purchase as they are not cheap, many times about \$1.00 per

bulb. Mildew, mealy bugs, or rust spots on the bulbs could prove disastrous for the plant. And we would not want to introduce soil born organisms which play havoc with other flowers planted in the same area.

December temperatures are not usually much below freezing, but when the gauge indicates below 20 degrees, that is when we could have problems with cold damage to the roots of Azaleas. Not only Azaleas, but the cold problem can be the same with other southern zone 8 flowering trees and shrubs. To be prepared, December is a great time to mulch with about 2 -3 inches of: Pine straw, pine bark mulch, and even leaves, piled up around the feet of these plants. So when we blow or rake up the fall leaves, spread them around under trees and shrubs and you will be ahead of the game.

For those of you who have talents that include flower arranging, here is an idea that I spotted in a fall magazine that really is stunningly beautiful and easy to produce. The asymmetrical flower arrangement included pine cones, Asian lilies, Cyclamen, Eucalyptus, and variegated ivy. Secure a footed dish about 10 inches high with floral clay and cover it will different size pine cones. Then place the lilies, ivy, Eucalyptus and Cyclamen amongst the cones. Dried Poppy Seed heads, or other seed pods also add to the diverse, yet very pleasing design.



Amaryllis bulbs forced into blooming

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND GOOD GARDENING.



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