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Inside the Statehouse

with Steve Flowers

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How Has CORONAVIRUS AFFECTED ALABAMA POLITICS?

As we end the first half of 2020, there is no doubt that the Coronavirus is the story of the year. The Coronavirus saga of 2020 and its devastation of the nation's and state's economic well-being may be the story of the decade.

How has the Coronavirus affected Alabama politics? The answer is negligibly, if at all. The Republican Primary runoff to hold the Junior U.S. Senate seat was postponed by the virus epidemic. It is set for July 14, which is right around the corner. The race between Tommy Tuberville and Jeff Sessions should be close and interesting.

The virus delay did affect this race in one regard; if the vote had been held on March 31, as planned, Coach Tuberville had the advantage and the momentum. The almost four-month delay might have stymied that train. To what degree we will not know until the votes are counted in three weeks. Tuberville's campaign has been totally based on his being loyal to Donald Trump.

Both Sessions and Tuberville were given a golden opportunity to use the four-month hiatus to do some good old-fashioned one-on-one campaigning, if only by phone. If one of them did, it could make the difference. We will soon see. People still like to be asked personally for their vote.

The next elections will not be until 2022. It will be a big year. It is a gubernatorial year, and there might very well be an open U.S. Senate Seat. Senator Richard Shelby will be 88. It would be a blessing beyond measure if he ran again. However, at that age he might choose to retire. Governor Kay Ivey will be 78 in 2022. She will more than likely not run for a second term.

One development that has occurred during the virus saga is that Lt. Governor Will Ainsworth has made it clear that he will be running for governor in 2022. If it were not apparent before, it is obvious now. He inserted himself into the Coronavirus episode. In many instances he appeared to usurp the center stage from Governor Ivey.

The young Lt. Governor first urged aggressive public health response, differing from Governor Ivey's. She made a comment about his out of nowhere position. She then forgave him and gave him a position on one of her many meaningless task force bodies.

Ainsworth then changed courses and tweeted that the state's businesses should reopen prior to the Governor's recommended date. She seemed neither undeterred nor miffed by his second assertion of his policy position. Having been around Alabama politics a lot longer than Ainsworth, she may be savvy enough to know that she is giving him just enough rope to hang himself.

Kay cut her political teeth campaigning for Lurleen Wallace for Governor in 1966. That was 15 years before Ainsworth was born in 1981. I doubt he knows of a similar scenario that played out 50 years ago where a Lt. Governor got too big for his britches and overtly tried to play Governor.

George Wallace had won his second term as Governor in 1970. If you count Lurleen's 1966 victory, it would be his third straight gubernatorial victory. He was running for President in 1972 and was gunned down by a crazed assassin in a Maryland parking lot. He was near death from the multiple wounds and had to be hospitalized in Maryland for three to four months. It was a miracle he survived.

Another young Lt. Governor Jere Beasley had been elected to the post in 1970, primarily because the Wallace people had supported him. Beasley seemed to insert himself overtly as governor during Wallace's bedridden absence. The Governor's people actually had to fly him back home from his recovery for a day so that he could remain governor.

Folks never seemed to forgive Beasley for this ambitious assertion of power. In his next race for reelection as lieutenant governor, Beasley trailed Charles Woods in the first primary and barely won the runoff. Four years later, in the monumental 1978 Governor's race – which Fob James ultimately won – Lt. Governor Jere Beasley finished in fifth place, even though he spent the most money.

Speaking of money, losing the 1978 Governor's race was the best thing that ever happened to Jere Beasley. He began practicing law in Montgomery and became one of the most prominent plaintiff lawyers in America. He and his wife, Sarah, have had a much happier and more prosperous life out of politics.

IT WILL BE TRUMP VS BIDEN IN NOVEMBER. CONVENTIONS WILL BE ANTICLIMACTIC.

The presidential race is onward. It will be incumbent Republican Donald Trump vs. former Vice President and 36-year veteran Democrat, Delaware U.S. Senator Joe Biden in the November 3rd General Election.

Both men have clinched their parties' nomination. Therefore, the Democratic convention, July 31-August 2, and the Republican convention set for August 25-28 will be anticlimactic. It is doubtful that either convention will break any television rating records.

However, there will be one record shattered in this year's presidential contest. Trump and Biden will be the two oldest presidential contenders in history. Biden is 78 and Trump is 74. Actually, Trump was the oldest person to ever be sworn in as president four-years ago. So, if Biden wins, he will really break the record at 78.6 years. By the way, the youngest president was John F. Kennedy, who was 43 when he was sworn in as president in January of 1961.

This has already been one of the most unusual presidential election years in American history. The COVID-19 pandemic has turned the world upside down, especially the American economy. The economy is the pivotal issue that decides presidential elections. Prior to the pandemic, the economy was Trump's trump card. The economic collapse caused by the pandemic was not Trump's fault, but it happened on his watch. There is an old political maxim that says, "If you claim credit for the rain, then you gotta take blame for the drought."

Trump was not in the lead prior to the pandemic disaster. He is certainly behind the eight ball today. The country is divided like never before in our history. You either live in a red Republican state like Alabama or a blue Democratic state like California. Under the electoral college system of selecting our president, the election is won or lost in the swing states like Florida, Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Minnesota.

Current polling has Biden ahead in all of these pivotal states. He has double-digit leads in Michigan and his birth home of Pennsylvania. It looks like Joe Biden is favored to be the next president at almost 80 years old. Therefore, it is extremely important who he chooses as his running mate to be vice president.

Biden has unequivocally stated that his vice-president will be a female. His

choice probably will boil down to California Senator Kamala Harris. Originally, it was between Minnesota Senator, Amy Klobuchar and Senator Kamala Harris.

Senator Klobuchar would have been an excellent choice. She was well qualified and thoroughly vetted. She is Minnesota's senior senator having represented her native state since 2006. She is very popular in her home state and would probably have brought the swing state of Minnesota into the Democratic column.

However, she withdrew her name for consideration after it became apparent that the Democratic Party base demanded Biden choose a female candidate of color.

Senator Kamala Harris, 55, has had a stellar career. She is very well-qualified to be president. She ran an excellent campaign for the Democratic nomination earlier this year and is a U.S. Senator from the largest state in the Union.

She was Attorney General of California prior to being elected to the U.S. Senate from the Golden State. She classifies herself as African American. Her mother was an Indian/American/Canadian cancer researcher. Her father was a Jamaican born businessman.

By selecting Senator Kamala Harris, Biden chooses a person of non-white ethnicity. African American women are the heart and soul of the Democratic Party and the most reliable Democratic voters. Senator Harris would energize the base. Turnout is the key to any election.

Odds are that if Joe Biden is elected president in November, he will probably be a one-term president. At almost 80, it is doubtful that he would run again in 2024. Therefore, his choice for his running mate and vice president would be favored to be elected president in four years and could become president before then.

There is a tried and true maxim in politics; more people vote against someone than for someone. The Democrats' plan of attack is for Biden to do nothing, say nothing and let Trump beat himself.

It will be an interesting and important choice for Biden as he or his advisors select his vice-presidential running mate. Again, turnout is the key.

Voter Registration Deadline

Last day to register to vote for the November 3rd General Election:
October 19, 2020 at 12:00 AM

Click here to register: <https://www.sos.alabama.gov/alabama-votes/voter/register-to-vote>



Absentee Ballot Deadline

Last day to apply for an absentee ballot for the November 3rd General Election:
October 29, 2020 at 12:00 AM

Visit this link for absentee information: <https://www.sos.alabama.gov/alabama-votes/voter/absentee-voting>



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ROBSEVATIONS...

by Robert Tate

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NOTHING SURPRISES ME

A couple of Robseervations ago, I wrote how aggressive I have noticed drivers becoming in Montgomery. Nothing has changed since then. Every single day, I see idiot drivers on the road doing the most idiotic things. The other day, I was talking to my sister up in New Jersey and made the comment that within Montgomery, about 75% of the time, someone is going to run the red light. I picked this number out of thin air, but it's based on what I believed I have witnessed. So that day as I drove around town, 5 out of 6 red lights where I stopped, at least one, and at times two or three people, ran the red light.

I know there are cameras up and running, but I am not sure how often they actually tag people. I remember the hubbub and complaints that people made about the lights and their so-called "invasion of privacy." Ridiculous. There really is no, or should be no expectation of privacy when driving on a public road. None. The reality is that people complain about the red-light cameras because they want to break the law. Here is a news flash for some people out there. Nobody has a "right" to drive a car in this country. Nobody! It is a privilege. This leads to the second point here.

Back on 17 June, exactly 13 years to the day of my retirement from the Air Force, I was in my car, minding my own business, stopped at a red-light when I got hit from behind. Although the force was not in the least life-threatening or enough to cause serious physical injury, you still sometimes get beat up a little bit in even a minor collision. I suffered no whiplash but the worst was a lot of pain in my left ear and knee. What? As for the ear, I have prosthetics in my ears from surgeries related to some poorly functioning Eustachian tubes. Yes, a pilot with bad Eustachian tubes. Go figure. But I figured the hit had possibly knocked it loose. Luckily, I saw my surgeon and all is okay. As for the knee, that is TBD.

What had happened was that as I was stopped, a young lady behind me likewise stopped when some %^!\$%\$\$@#, not paying attention but very likely texting, sexting or just picking his nose, plowed into the girl whose car smashed into mine. I got out of the car and checked on the girl and she, unlike her car, was okay. Her car was totaled. I went back and looked at the idiot driver, he was still alive so I went back to my car to start gathering my info and call the police. Next thing I knew, the driver was in his car and driving away.

Now, I am pretty much a novice in the world of auto accidents but I fault myself for not snapping some pictures of his stupid looking mug and his car. Luckily, the young lady had her phone out and snapped a picture of his car as he zoomed off. That is the picture you see here. As he turned down a side street blissful in the knowledge that he will forever be a lowlife, I asked the young lady if he said anything. She said that he looked at her car and said something along the lines of, "I ain't got no insurance. I ain't stayin' here fo' this." Now to the point.

I really do not care if you cannot afford insurance or just refuse to buy it. The price of admission for driving on our streets is a valid driver's license, a registered car and yes, at least the minimal level of required insurance. If you cannot provide these, you shouldn't be on the road. Questions? After this incident and looking at the car that hit us, I noticed that he had a Larry Puckett Chevrolet tag on his car. When the police officer came and we showed him the photo, he stated that it is not uncommon for people to put these on their car in lieu of actual tags. Why? They're free, that's why. The officer also told us that it is not uncommon for there to be 2-4 hit and run accidents per day in this city. Yeah, that really burned about 3 feet off my tail surface. Likewise, the officer gave us little hope of ever finding this model citizen. I'll comb the prisons in a couple of years and probably locate him there.

Immediately after this, I just started looking around, and there has not been a day gone by that I have not seen at least one "Tag Applied For" or some auto dealer tag on a car. I went online and did some research and found that the "Tag Applied For" plate is good for either 10 or 20 days (I found two different references). In Georgia, they did away with them because of all the chicanery. You simply cannot trust people to do the right thing.

I believe if I were a traffic cop, every time I saw a faded-out paper tag

(emphasis on "faded-out"), I would pull the car over. What about probable cause? If you have 20 days to get a license plate for your car and you are driving around with a completely faded paper tag, I would think I have probable that you have taken more than 20 days to get your tag. Police have the right to see a proof of purchase of the automobile and that it indeed has been less than 20 days since purchased.

Here is the reality here. I know a lot of people think that requiring insurance is not right and no matter how much they are entitled to their opinion, they are still wrong. What would have happened if the either the girl or I had been seriously injured, both cars destroyed and our cretin superhero drove away? He would be, as he is now, absolved of any of his responsibilities as member of our society. He recklessly drove his car, caused both physical and mechanical damage and is now not responsible for any of it. All the costs incurred are placed upon the two innocent people here. Her car totaled, and my car, although externally repaired still has those obnoxious squeaks and rattles cars often get after an accident. Yes, it is just a car, but I didn't spend money on a car so that some kid can ruin it and drive away without a care in the world other than wondering what his life is going to look like with probably only an 8th grade education. Frustrating? I don't know for sure but I bet more than one of you out there reading this has been in exactly the same situation.

I even reached out to Larry Puckett Chevrolet and asked them if they had sold this car (in the picture that I sent to them) and not that I wanted the information but if they had the car in their database, could they send that information to the Montgomery Police Department? I understand all the legal issues, and I had no desire to place them in an odd position. The man I talked to said



Have you seen this car? The driver caused an accident and then fled the scene after allegedly stating he didn't have insurance.

that he went on the lot and saw a similar car that had no damage on it. SMH ... One benefit of being "smarter than the average bear" is that I know when minimum effort has been expended. As if the car involved in the accident would actually be the one on the lot at that moment. Really? Really? Oy! How about a run through your used car sales database? Crickets. But that is okay. I understand self-preservation and the spongy ground my request rested upon. No harm, no foul. Just know that I am not stupid.

As for our Montgomery citizen of the year, I have hopes that he wises up and gets insurance. One day, he is going to hit someone else, and possibly both he and the other party are going to be seriously injured, and neither is going to have insurance. Then what? I would ask him, "Who is going to pay to replace your car or pay for your medical care?" From the porch pirates I wrote about several months ago to the super aggressive, uninsured, unregistered, unlicensed, red-light running drivers, too many of us in Montgomery have clearly lost any empathy for our fellow citizens. Too many people simply seem not to care at all about others. I have lived here since 1995 and continue to see a clear downward spiral in our city. I, for one, hope to see a reverse in this trend.

Dear Gazette,
We really enjoy your paper & would like to subscribe to it for a year. Please keep up the good work. Rob Tate's articles are one of the few views that help keep me sane these days! Thank you ~ K.E., Prattville



Ronald A. Holtsford

friends running up and down a mostly-dry culvert that extends between El Paso, Texas and Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. The culvert center is the border between Mexico and the United States. The family stated the boys were running back and forth between borders, touching the U.S. fence, but U.S. Customs Border Patrol Agent Mesa said that the boy was a part of an illegal border crossing and that the boys had pelted him with rocks. Mesa had arrived on a bike and managed to capture one of the boys on U.S. soil. Then, he fired his weapon at Güereca at least twice, hitting him in the face and killing him. Güereca was standing on the Mexico side, and Mesa was firing from the United States side. The Department of Justice declined to press charges against Mesa, saying it did not violate either policy or training. Some Supreme Court justices described Mesa as a rogue agent.

Thinking this was highly unusual in that area, I also read about a Federal case, *Rodriguez v. Swartz*, 899 F. 3d. 719 (2018) that was an ongoing case at the same time as *Hernandez*. *Rodriguez* also involving a United States Customs Agents shooting across United States and Mexico borders, resulting in the death of a male minor, J.A. *Rodriguez* facts disclosed that J.A. was said to have been walking down a street in Nogales, Mexico just after midnight and without provocation was shot at multiple times by Schwartz until he was hit and killed. Both cases sought to use *Bivens v. Six Unknown Fed. Narcotics Agents* from 1971. *Bivens* had to do with the ability of one to sue a Federal law enforcement employee personally under the guise of acting in their official capacity. It hinged on the Fourth Amendment and unreasonable search and seizure; seizure expanded to a shooting death that forever unreasonably "seizes" a person.

ARE THERE ANY RECENT INTERESTING U.S. SUPREME COURT CASES?



It was the majority 5-4 holding that *Bivens* does not extend to a cross-border shooting. Though the Court suggested a Fourth Amendment remedy, the majority opinion said there is no Federal Statute that extends to cross border shooting. In addition to *Bivens*, the Courts have been reluctant to provide damages against U.S. law enforcement when outside U.S. borders, and there is also a desire not to undermine the security of the borders. One must consider that border agents are a line of defense in the security of the United States. Considering everything, the Court has to decide whether Congress or the Courts should make rules for damages outside U.S. borders, and I think the Court saw it as a no-brainer that is the job of Congress. While Justice Alito wrote the majority opinion, Justice Thomas also wrote a concurring opinion in which he said, "The Court correctly applies our precedents to conclude that the implied cause of action created in *Bivens v. Six Un-known Fed. Narcotics Agents*, 403 U. S. 388 (1971), should not be extended to cross-border shootings. I therefore join its opinion. I write separately because, in my view, the time has come to consider discarding the *Bivens* doctrine altogether. The foundation for *Bivens*—the practice of creating implied causes of action in the statutory context—has already been abandoned. And the Court has consistently refused to extend the *Bivens* doctrine for nearly 40 years, even going so far as to suggest that *Bivens* and its progeny were wrongly decided."

Justice Ginsburg wrote the dissenting opinion saying that *Bivens* did apply in this case and that neither national security nor United States foreign policy.

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

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WEAR YOUR MASK



SAFER AT HOME ORDER EXTENDED THROUGH AUGUST 31ST

On Wednesday, July 29, 2020, Governor Ivey extended the Safer at Home Order until August 31st, which is a statewide mandate that members of the public must wear a mask. While the previous mandates remain in place, the order adds the following: mandatory mask wearing in schools and colleges when possible for employees and students in second grade and above



John W. Giles

the color of his skin. Right here my friends, is the embedded secret code, the Holy Grail, if you will that has been overlooked by Sharpton, Jackson, Cummings and Waters who have dedicated their career to skin color. The, yet to be identified MLK 2.0, will be all about the content of character, drinking from the chalice of MLK as the denominator and the numerator is the color of his skin. It has been 51 years since the assassination of Martin Luther King and in all of these years, not one person has even come close to filling his lonely shoes of leadership, let’s take a closer look.

We moved to Montgomery in 1959, when I was 5-years old. I was 11-years old in 1965 during the infamous Civil Rights March from Selma to Montgomery. I want to be brutally honest with you, as an 11-year old boy, I was terrified about the marches, curfews and MLK, just to see his face on TV. I did not understand at the time what all was going on except I saw police in riot gear, dogs, tear gas, Billy clubs, beating and the fire hosing of innocent people in a “peaceful non-violent” demonstration (Free Speech) trying to right some wrongs in America. MLK in his own way was like a modern-day Moses, leading his people off the plantation from the once bondages of slavery, wanting them to have equal access to education and preparing them to make a positive impact on the world. I still get chill bumps listening carefully to his anointed speeches. “I have a dream,” Washington DC, “Our God is marching on,” Selma, Alabama, “Beyond VietNam: Time to break the silence,” New York City, “The Other America,” Stanford University and “I have been to the mountaintop,” Memphis Tennessee.

Protégé’s of MLK did not get it. They have wasted 51 precious years, making loud noises, discharging threats, encouraging riots, looking for a bogyman under every rock, staging boycotts, blackmailing corporations through extortion, and calling everyone racist at every intersection. The rank and file members of the black community have been used for block voting; while the black leadership gets wealthy selling endorsements and pretending to have a magic switch, they can turn on to activate a black swarm of bees. Black leadership generally quickly forget where they came from, driving new shiny black Cadillac Escalades, wearing fancy jewelry, custom tailored suits and expensive shoes and getting on the A-Invitation list of high society gatherings; all about optics. MLK 2.0 will not be like this at all.

I believe MLK 2.0 is already born, on the scene, but has not yet matured in

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MLK 2.0 – CONTENT OF CHARACTER

the full anointing of his predecessor. Like MLK, he will be well educated, well spoken, a gifted speaker, the embodiment of character, humble, honest, not flashy, fact driven, common sensed, focused, goal oriented and principled to the bone marrow. More than likely, he (not a she) will be a minster of the gospel that lives out the Word of God in their lives with prudence. They will lead by example, teaching personal responsibility, work ethic and in my view, they will break rank from the Democrat Party. MLK 2.0 will be fact driven, not trying to re-write history, issues - driven and will showcase economic, moral, social and constitutional conservative ideas in the public square. I believe that MLK 2.0 will most likely be a Republican, because his issues will mirror that of the 2020 Republican Party National Committee Platform.

Independent thinking Blacks of all ages, at great personal cost, are now exiting the Democrat Party (Blexit). Older blacks like Dr. Ben Carson (Neurosurgeon – Trump Cabinet), Black Entertainment TV (BET) Founder Robert Johnson, join younger blacks like Candace Owens (BLEXIT), Diamond & Silk Joel Patrick, Peggi Hubbard (US Senate Candidate), Joy Villa, Star Parker, Thaddeus Alexander and Davis Harris, just to name a few. They understand principles like tax reform allowing all Americans to keep more of their hard-earned money, balancing our national budget and trade deficits, reducing the government regulatory burdens on free enterprise, strong national defense, and a strong economy helps all Americans, regardless of race. These positive environments drive down black unemployment to historic lows, drive up unprecedented black entrepreneurial business startups and home ownership. These statistics cannot be out maneuvered or normalized with the shucking and jiving of Maxine who is still promoting civil unrest.

When the Children of Israel were freed from the Egyptian bondage of slavery, they wandered in the desert for forty years; Moses did not enter the promise land, Israel. MLK was assassinated before leading the black people into the promise land; it has now been 51 years of wandering in the impoverished wildernesses and the black on black crime infested ghettos led by liberal black leaders. It is now time to enter the promise land America offers all. It is way over due to reach the mountaintop available to all Americans.

In my view, MLK 2.0 is in the dugout as we speak and ready to get on deck. He is having sleepless nights because he knows what is right and what is wrong. God is speaking to him in the wee early morning hours before sunrise. He knows the path will be lonely, he knows one will have to be a majority, worried about being called a “Tom” or worse and being chided by the jealousy of Al Sharpton, Jesse Jackson, Elijah Cummings and Maxine Waters. But like Moses, he will lead with authority and his enemies will tremble.

We will be looking for the “Content of his character.” Free at last, free at last, Thank God Almighty, they will be free at last!

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ELECTION REFORMS

This year, like many times in the past, large numbers of people have come up with suggestions on how we can elect better people to public office:

TERM LIMITS



John Martin

One of the most popular ideas is term limits. I have heard quite a few people propose a limit of twelve years for anybody in our congress—two terms for senators and six terms for representatives. In many respects, it sounds

like a good idea when we see examples of career politicians like Ted Kennedy (even with Chappaquiddick), Nancy Pelosi, Charles Schumer, Dianne Feinstein, and many others who don’t seem to ever go away.

The problem with term limits is they also weed out the good people. Heroic statesmen like Ron Paul, the most honest and ethical public servant we have had in recent history and who has established a perfect voting record since the 1970’s would have been thrown out after serving twelve years. Another example is Dr. Jimmy Blake, who was an outstanding Birmingham city councilman for two terms (eight years) in the early 2000’s. Since he was a supporter of term limits, he ethically had to bow out and not run for a third term. Sadly, Birmingham suffered in his absence, since good, honest candidates were and still are tough to find in “The Magic City.”

Instead of mandated term limits, a much more effective solution is to have *more frequent elections*. For years, I have observed serious problems with the shenanigans of our governors, legislators, county commissioners and city councilmen during lengthy four year periods. That is too long to wait for the next election after many of them pull dirty tricks, and often in their first years right after being elected—forcing the voters to wait three and a half years to throw them out. By then, memories tend to fade, and they often end up getting re-elected for another four years, and then another....

We have two year terms for our federal representatives, but some states, like Arkansas, have two year terms for their governors, state representatives and other public officials. If anybody screws up over there, the voters only have to wait a year and a half to throw him out. Thus, they can quickly purge their rotten career politicians. That provides practical term limits for the scumbags while it maintains the retention of honest and ethical office holders.

Therefore, a top priority election reform for Alabama, *instead of term limits*, would be *shortening the terms of all state and local officials to two years*.

And since we already have elections every two years for our U.S. representatives and some others, the only extra cost would be adding some more names to the ballots.

RUNOFFS

Another big stinker in our election process is being able to win a race with only a plurality instead of a majority. The way to settle this is to mandate a runoff in every election in the state.

We already have runoffs in the primaries and in at least some city elections. But in others—where independent or third party candidates are present, runoffs are absent. In a three-man race, a candidate can win with as little as 34% of the vote; in a four-man race, as little as 26%. Thus many voters cast aside really great third party candidates to vote for the lesser evil in the two major parties.

If we had runoffs in all general elections, the voters could safely vote for their third party candidates, and if they didn’t win, they could still vote against the greater evils afterwards.

BALLOT ACCESS

In addition to the “lesser evil” dilemma, third party and independent candidates have ballot access woes. Here in Alabama a few decades ago, any citizen could run for just about any office with a minimum of hassle. Ballots in the 1960’s through the early 1980’s usually contained several parties and often some independent candidates. Then in 1983, the state started imposing restrictions on every candidate who was outside of the Republican and Democratic Parties. These “outsiders” had to collect valid signatures of one percent of all of the people who voted in the previous general election. Getting qualified became a big and expensive task. Later, in 2000, the one percent was bumped up to three percent, which made third party ballot access nearly impossible.

To have fair elections here in Alabama, we *must* restore ballot access to third parties and independents to what it was before 1983.

PAPERWORK

Another obstacle to candidates today is the onerous amount of detailed paperwork they must fill out before an election. This was imposed under the claims of ethics and required the detailed recording of every little campaign contribution and expenditure among other things. Failure to fill out the forms completely or omitting a small detail or two can be met with severe criminal penalties.

Again, get rid of this crazy policy and roll back the paperwork to what it was before 1983.

“GET OUT THE VOTE”

Here is where I have a beef with our Secretary of State, John Merrill. He has been bending over backwards to register every citizen in the state who is over the age of 18, and I have noticed that our current registered voters comprise an abnormally large percentage of our total population. Getting pushy with voter registration can have serious consequences, especially with people who are barely old enough to qualify. Our Constitution originally specified a minimum age of 21, when voters would be expected to be mature enough to make wise decisions. Dropping the minimum age down to 18 was a very stupid decision, and I seriously wish we could repeal that fatal amendment.

But we can go easy on voter registration. Although we can’t stop them from registering and voting, we can go easy on drives to push it. That will give the young people some time to think about the consequences before they jump up and start casting misinformed votes.

What we should be doing instead is making sure unqualified people don’t get registered and vote en masse to throw elections. (I have a gut feeling that Doug Jones won his senate seat that way). There are numerous cases where children, dead people, and even pets have cast votes. These scams have become so bad, Singer Ray Stevens wrote and sang a song titled, *“Grandpa Voted Democrat.”*

On his radio program, Greg Budell mentioned a family in Atlanta that received an absentee ballot intended for the previous family that lived in the apartment. The ballot was for a cat it had registered to vote. And the cat had died twelve years earlier. That is one more reason why mail-in ballots should never be allowed in Alabama.



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START MONTH



John Sophocleus

THINK
GazetteSophocleus@gmail.com

Author John Taylor [fellow *Alabama Gazette* columnist introduced last edition] provided some quotes from his Union at All Costs book to help illustrate ‘Judas rhetoric’ to cloak avarice for revenue:

Lincoln delivered his First Inaugural Address on March 4, 1861. He made several interesting comments regarding slavery: *“I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so.”* His main concern was tariff revenue to finance traditional big govt. Republican programs and protectionist wealth transfers to those Lincoln represented as an attorney and ‘lobbied’ for. Lobbying would be a term made more noteworthy under Lincoln’s general ‘who could do the math’ - i.e., Ulysses Grant in White House a few years later.

A few more quotes to reveal Lincoln’s greater concern over power to collect the tariff: *“And open Charleston, etc., as ports of entry, with their ten per cent tariff. What, then, would become of my tariff?”* [from Dabney, 8. Lincoln’s comments to Colonel John B. Baldwin]

“I remember,” says Mr. Stuart, “that he used this homely expression: ‘If I do that, what will become of my revenue? I might as well shut up housekeeping at once.’” [from Dabney, 11. Lincoln’s comment to A.H.H. Stuart during his April 12-13, 1861 visit]

After Fuller’s plea for peace and recognition of the sovereignty of Southern States, Lincoln responded, *“But what am I to do? ...what shall become of the revenue? I shall have no government? No resources?”* [also Dabney 11. Lincoln’s response to Rev. Richard Fuller of Baltimore, MD, a key figure in Southern Baptist history who baptized Annie Armstrong, pivotal in creating the Women’s Missionary Union]

“...the deciding factor with him (Lincoln) was the tariff question. In three separate interviews, he asked what would become of his revenue if he allowed the government at Montgomery to go on with their ten percent tariff... Final action was taken when nine governors of high tariff states waited upon Lincoln and offered him men and supplies.” [from Lyon Gardiner Tyler, originally printed in Tyler’s Quarterly in Volume 33, October and January issues, 1935.]

Just as Judas Iscariot’s concern for revenue was cloaked in concern for the poor, Lincoln’s concern for revenue is cloaked in abolitionism. I still consider Lincoln the greatest politician this nation of once independent States ever produced...if Lincoln had not come along, there would’ve been another, perhaps shorter, less folksy version to get the job done. And a final quote from Taylor’s work: *“Many patriotic men of the South who cared little or nothing about slavery were stirred with the deepest indignation at the suggestion of the National government subduing a sovereign State by force of arms, and said that a Union that could only be held together by bayonets had better be dissolved; and for the principle of State rights and State sovereignty the Southern men fought with a holy ardor and self-denying patriotism that have covered even defeat with imperishable glory.”* [from Charles Beecher Stowe, “Honest Confession Good for the Country,” <http://www.usgennet.org/usa/ga/county/macon/newspapers/CV/cv1911pg12.htm>]

So how does one reconcile all this in conclusion? It is time for freedom, liberty and independence advocates to realize they’re a conquered minority. Progressives who put US on our soviet path have won. Using abolitionism, reconstruction terrorism/voter suppression (disenfranchising those who fought for their State’s independence to sow hatred) white supremacy, sterilization, discriminator federal gun laws, Jim Crow laws, red lining, racism, segregation, federal wage laws, regressive SSA tax, etc. has carried the day. Machiavellian genius putting in stone undefined ‘lost cause’ prose to use the zeitgeist at any given time to promote more govt. control and desired wealth transfers. The cause of States who fought against Lincoln’s treason/acts of war (from states who wanted a forced coalition) was to repel invaders and hold onto their independence won in 1783 and reaffirmed in 1816.

The cause of freedom and independence is indeed lost. Khrushchev’s 1959 forecast has come to fruition. America embraced the soviet path Lincoln and the Republicans started a century prior, seemingly ignorant of the end they’ve chosen. There’s a reason Lenin and Marx held Lincoln in such high regard. Slavery and Confederate monuments are not driving the current shameful results. There are no Confederate monuments in racist Boston, PC Portland, lynching Minneapolis or bullying Buffalo – places which championed Lincoln’s abolitionist rhetoric to cloak desired wealth transfers. All who held dear what traditional Yankees accomplished in the American Revolution, what our soldiers and sailors did keeping our independence 1812-6 and Confederates (black and white, Greek and Jew, Hispanic and Nordic) who fought modern Yankees to **retain** their independence may consider the wisdom of letting go and wait for the implosion observed in the early 1990s Soviet bloc. Remarkable how many remained productive to delay collapse this long.

As an avowed God Supremacist (see my Sept. 2019 column), I wholeheartedly embrace the Holy Spirit and ask Jesus’s forgiveness – esp. in the South where we know better – to accept and act on progressive lies/hate, white supremacy, murder and sterilization of those they found undesirable is shameful. Collapse is unstoppable as modern, hegemonic Yankees (Blue & Red soviets)

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

PART TWO: FOR THIS REASON I TAKE A KNEE...



continue ‘progressing’ their national socialist programs which inevitably make things worse instead of enjoying the blessings of life, liberty, property and competition which kills discrimination.

No one worked harder than the UDC and SCV to keep their flag and soldiers’ memory out of the hands of the progressives/ national socialists. When progressives started to warp the hearts and minds in the South to believe the war between the States was fought over slavery and to blame/use blacks (to advance their ends) is our greatest shame. Progressives used Confederate monuments to dupe (esp. poor) whites to believe their cause was not for independence/defense, and they’ll use monuments of this sort again and again to assert even more federal hegemony and hatred. When Black and Jewish Confederates began disappearing from SCV roles/meetings it was over – about the same time we observe the word ‘racism’ enter our lexicon [circa 1936] to show a new high watermark of this flawed thinking was also permeating and polluting the South.

In the Spirit of King/Lee (still recall chastisement by AU administrators for using this correct nomenclature on my **MWF** syllabi) I was compelled to stand against tyranny in my country. At age 25, I felt informed enough and in a position as a faculty advisor of a student group to protest Clinton’s 1997 Tuskegee Experiment apology visit. Student Libertarians bravely asserted apology, poor compensation, etc. was not enough; Pres. Clinton must prosecute all who engaged in this despicable, unlawful activity. Little wonder I winced whenever hearing Bill Clinton: ‘first Black President’ rhetoric - the student Christians, Democrats, et al were noticeably absent as student Libertarians were called anarchists and fools. These students understood the objective of ending qualified immunity for bureaucrats taking and destroying lives. It is pleasing to see the **NAACP** (more specifically the **LDF**) strongly taking up this issue these past months. As for Clintons – still waiting to lock her up – not that I think ‘pardoning amongst thieves’ on Trump overdrive these past months means DJ will **ever** be prosecuted. Good luck seeing this sort of raw, honest perspective out of the Colbert or Limbaugh clown shows.

Later, this libertarian student group (reviled by public servants like Felon Hubbard, Lowder, et al) and the Alabama State Libertarian Party pressed the issue of wrongfully taking land from mostly poor, rural Black landowners. It got enough traction to press Gov. Siegelman to return land (w/o compensation for loss of use) to one family and promised to set up a ‘blue ribbon’ panel to address others who’ve suffered this abuse. Of course nothing was done – add another stomach churner to hear Siegelman called ‘Atticus Finch.’ Hard to take today’s highly vocal ‘anti-maskers’ seriously about unconstitutional mandates after so much silence on feds taking life and health in Tuskegee and Alabama State Lands Division’s wrongful takings in black belt counties. This may seem like picking on white politicians/governors like Clinton and Siegelman, but black politicians like Terri Sewell and Myron Thompson have been just as deleterious advancing tyrannical government with immunity thrust upon those least able to endure the burden.

Uninvited federal thugs in Oregon (sound familiar?) **now** have the attention of ‘leviathanists’ – esp. the so-called “Trump-troops’ unmarked uniforms and vehicles. A little too late to realize one is on the wrong side of history and would’ve been wiser to fight qualified immunity and federal hegemony these past decades instead of flags and monuments...

This topic of bending a knee for God or placing it on a neck for tyranny will require a rare three-part installment. In this part two, I hope I’ve convinced readers to look upon both parties with caution. None illustrates this better for the 2020 election cycle than Michael Bloomberg – now a modern Democrat after being a traditional Republican, worth approx. \$60 billion. Mike could’ve started a new organization or given to the LDF, Institute for Justice, etc. to defend victims of govt. tyranny instead of spending about \$1 billion running for President – again, hard to take seriously he was running because he cared for the common man. Republocrats’ worst nightmare is constraining govt. power and effective discipline when abused.

The last two anthems/songs I’ve publicly sung: “Lift ev’ry heart and sing” at Church and “Dixie” at a SCV meeting may make me the strangest citizen in all Alabama during these Covid days. Flabbergasted how many recently admitted ignorance of the black national anthem in a State with 24% Black populace, guess my knowing is more about being raised by my Carolina Momma. My writing in such a hate filled environment troubles some. I opened this discussion in part one with Apostle Paul’s instruction not to fear. It doesn’t matter if I’m again harmed by a blue demon or red demon; what does matter in death is that I did well in my Lord’s judgment combating all demons put in my path to Jesus.

Cling to the Holy Spirit in the tribulations unfolding; this is why I take a knee for the ‘Black Lives Matter’ movement. I’ll support any other movement which fights tyranny disproportionately burdened by a group enduring wrongful discrimination/harm. Do this for their lives as I pray they’ll stand for my life and others when the tyrant’s knee is less deadly upon their neck. Part three next month will offer thoughts on removing the wrongful burden Judas rhetoric has compounded these past several score.

Psalms 95:6 “O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.”



“The Informed Southerner”

By John M. Taylor

As a youth in the 1960s, I remember listening to WBAM (The Big Bam 740 in Montgomery) and WVOK (The Mighty 690 in Birmingham). Living in Alexander City, I could pick up both stations clearly. The stations would sign on with The Star Spangled Banner and sign off with Dixie. Another good memory of that era was when the band struck up Dixie at football games—everyone would jump to their feet with excitement. This was just part of who we were and where we were from.

Another song tied directly to Southerners is Are You From Dixie? It has been performed by a vast array of entertainers: Grandpa Jones, Roy Clark, Chet Atkins, and even Lawrence Welk’s Orchestra. There is an old YouTube video featuring Tom Jones, Jerry Reed, Glenn Campbell, and Big Jim Sullivan performing the song. If facial expressions can be properly judged, I would say Jones, a native of Wales, enjoyed it as much as the rest of them.

With the kudzu-like expansion of political correctness came what Orwell described as “The Thought Police.” The Thought Police have never liked the South, especially the traditional Christian South, so there have been incessant efforts to undermine it. The demonization of the term “Dixie” is just one of those authoritarian efforts.

There are various theories as to the word’s origin, such as “Dixon” from the Mason-Dixon Line that separates Maryland from Pennsylvania. However, the most common belief is that it originated with the “dix”, which was a French ten-dollar note, common in Louisiana. It simply evolved into the “land of dixies.” How could such an innocuous term be a problem? As if anyone cares, a recent PC move was when The Dixie Chicks dropped Dixie from their name. Some might argue their use of the name actually degraded the word Dixie. Similarly, Lady Antebellum dropped the word “antebellum” from their name;

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ARE YOU FROM DIXIE?

this illustrates how the Orwellian control of thought and language has taken root. How something that simply means before the war is supposedly offensive boggles the mind, but these are times of weak people looking to be offended and even weaker people succumbing to that agenda.

The song Dixie is generally attributed to Daniel Decatur Emmett of Ohio. However, others contend Ben and Lew Snowden, former black slaves from Maryland who moved close to Emmett’s home in Mount Vernon, Ohio, wrote it. Emmett and the Snowdens were said to have known each other, not only through their geographic proximity but likely through minstrel show connections. The book, Way Up North in Dixie: A Black Family’s Claim to the Confederate Anthem, written by Howard and Judith Sacks, makes the argument that the Snowdens wrote, co-wrote, or provided influence for writing the song. Once they settled in Ohio, they looked fondly on the area from whence they came. The song is written in Old South dialect—English Cavalier, Scots-Irish Backcountry, and black slang. The origins of Old South language are meticulously explained in David Hackett Fischer’s Albion’s Seed where he traces various “Southern” words and phrases back to the British Isles. [As a side note, as much as Lincoln opposed the South’s right to self-government, Dixie was one of his favorite songs.]

There is also a South vs. North cultural argument that goes back to Great Britain. The settlers who arrived in Jamestown, Virginia in 1607 were the first “English people” to establish themselves in America. The “New Englanders” arrived about thirteen years later; however, we hear a lot more about Plymouth Rock than Jamestown. The often-fanatical independent Puritans were driven out of England, and most settled in New England, where they became dominant.

H.L. Mencken described Puritanism as: “The haunting fear that someone, somewhere, may be happy.” Admiral Raphael Semmes noted the “Puritan” Yankee’s goal is to remake the world in his own image. We now witness that hideous image being played out. As time goes on, the demonization of the South is unlikely to abate.

The Thought Police can go pound sand—I am proud to say I am from Dixie!



By Daniel Sutter

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

SHOULD WE TRUST EXPERTS?

Experts in public health and epidemiology have driven policy making during the COVID-19 pandemic. How much should we trust experts? Critics dismiss Republicans who voice distrust of experts as anti-science. Yet even experts know very little about complex economies and societies.

Frustration with experts does cross party lines. New York’s Democratic Governor Andrew Cuomo recently remarked of experts’ forecasts of hospital usage, “They were all wrong.”

The “Wisdom of Crowds” argument, wonderfully explained by James Surowiecki, provides a first reason for doubt. Numerous seemingly poorly informed opinions can be remarkably wise. Mr. Surowiecki relates a story from British scientist Francis Galton about a contest at a country fair in 1906. Nearly 800 people paid sixpence to guess the weight of an ox (after being slaughtered and dressed); the average was only one pound off.

The theory of efficient financial markets illustrates another reason for skepticism. An old joke was that darts thrown at the stock page were as reliable as a broker’s recommendations. Why? Stock prices quickly incorporate all available information. With all information priced, a stock price is as likely to go up as down. The market can be consistently beaten only with inside information.

The central planning of socialism represents the most thorough application of expertise to an economy. Proponents thought that “scientific” socialism would replace the chaos and waste of the market with rationally ordered economic activity. Only a handful of economists in the 1930s and 1940s, notably Ludwig von Mises and Friedrich Hayek, argued coherently that socialism would fail.

Socialism failed in part due to the different nature of truths in the physical and social sciences. Truth in the physical sciences in general and timeless: water freezes at 32 degrees Fahrenheit and boils at 212 degrees. Truth in economics depends on time and place. Are trains the best way to travel between American cities? True in the latter half of the 1800s, but now flying and driving dominate.

Another factor is the subjective value of goods and services, meaning based on the wants, needs, and desires of consumers. Goods are valuable because people will pay money for them. People differ greatly in their wants and needs, making it nearly impossible to predict what will be valuable, as pet rocks from the 1970s and the variety of videos on YouTube with millions of views illustrate.

Experts are disadvantaged on economic questions. Truths cannot be learned from a textbook, may not hold everywhere (or anywhere tomorrow), and depend on idiosyncratic consumer preferences.

The other part of the argument against socialism is the miraculous degree of coordination in markets. Thousands of products from around the world are available in a grocery store without preordering a week in advance. The times we can’t get what we want, like the recent toilet paper shortage, stand out.

By contrast, central planning in the former Soviet Union produced empty shelves. People would wait in line for hours to buy goods. Russians would join lines without even asking what people were waiting for.

No one would hold a high school dance without a committee to plan the event. Yet the market economy has no one in charge, no one with the power to command others. Coordination occurs voluntarily and is called spontaneous order. And the market does not merely repeat what was done yesterday, it offers improvements too. No one ordered Mark Zuckerberg to start Facebook, he just decided to try.

Politicians rely on experts to devise policies because America has, in Abraham Lincoln’s words, a government “for the people.” In America, restrictions on our freedom can be justified only if they make us – as opposed to the rulers – better off.

Politicians consequently seek out the experts willing to justify policies. Economists who do not understand economic knowledge, subjective value, and spontaneous order will offer unrealistic claims about how government will improve our lives. Such experts exhibit what Professor Hayek called, “The Fatal Conceit.” We should not trust experts who are unaware of the limits of their expertise.



Republican State Executive Committee
Former State Representative

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WE MUST DEFEND THE POLICE

By Perry O. Hooper, Jr.

A police officer has the often-thankless job of seeing to it that we all abide by the law. From armed robbery to running a stop sign, it’s all against the law. This job is not high paying, requires long hours, is personally challenging, and very frustrating. However, unlike most jobs, it is a calling. Most police officers love their job and bend over backwards to do it right, even under the

worst circumstances. Chief Finley and Sheriff Cunningham and their officers do an outstanding job here in Montgomery county, and we cannot thank them enough.

It is unfortunate that some in law enforcement take their authority too far. Also unfortunate is the fact that these few incidents receive 95% of the publicity, while extreme acts of heroism by the police go unnoticed.

A recent Poll by the respected Pew Research Center showed that 73 percent of the American people opposed cutting spending on the police. 32 Percent actually favored spending more on policing. Democrat or Republican, Black or White, we support the Police. It is a small number of radicals, the squeaky wheels, who shout defund the police and who get all the attention.

It is just plain wrong to define the thousands of police officers in this country by one or two bad actors. The policeman that killed George Flynn must be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. We cannot, however, paint all our brave men and women in law enforcement as thugs and criminals, the vast majority are out there every day protecting our property and saving thousands of lives.

The new narrative is to believe the accused against the police. In New York

City, a man who viciously assaulted 3 police officers in uniform with a mop handle was released without bail. Also in New York City, the city council has voted to cut \$1 billion from the NYPD’s budget, despite the fact that weekly shooting incidents in mid-June increased by 358 percent over the same period in 2019. Stripping police of operating money will create larger and more dangerous problems. We must support the rule of law, or our country will disintegrate into chaos.

I salute the Mayor of San Diego, Kevin Faulconer, and the San Diego City Council. In June, they increased the funding for their police department by 27 million dollars "Now more than ever, we need well-trained officers who understand our communities, so we will continue to invest in hiring and training officers who come from our neighborhoods and look like our diverse city," Mayor Faulconer said.

The Silent Majority must remain silent no more. They must speak up for the police. They must tell their elected officials that defunding the police is complete lunacy. They must tell the media and every elected official in the country that sane Americans support the police and the rule of law. They must also let the police know “We’ve got your back”.

To quote Ronald Regan “We must reject the idea that every time a law's broken, society is guilty rather than the lawbreaker. It is time to restore the American precept that each individual is accountable for his actions.”

When you get a chance and see a police officer, please do as I do and give them a thumbs up and a big “Thank You”. The local police are our country’s backbone and guarantor of our civil society. Police lives matter.

PERRY O. HOOPER, JR.

ROWBOAT COMES FOR YOU

The Column below was sent to me by a friend. It was written by a gentleman by the name of Rip McIntosh whom I never met, but I would really like to sit down over a cup of coffee and discuss the column with him. It is spot on about the President and the future of our country if President Trump is not re-elected in November. Please take a few minutes and read the entire column. If you agree with it as I do share it with your friends and families, co-workers and members of your Civic Club and Sunday school classes. It's great to be a Trump American!

Rowboat Comes for You...

This may be the best and most honest political promotion statement you will ever read. It decidedly does not brush objections aside. ***You hate Biden? READ it. You hate Trump? READ it. You think there's no choice?***

READ it. And, read it with your grown-up hat on. We’ve all been dealt huge responsibility with this election. The first step toward accepting responsibility is accepting it, and the first step toward accepting it is recognizing it.

READ THIS. Read every single word. It’ll take you about three minutes. Be sure to read to the end (take a few minutes and read all of it!)

Are you sickened and despondent with the current campaign and upcoming presidential election? I consider myself a conservative and do truly believe our country is at a political/economic/moral/social crossroads. I need to let you know I could/would never vote for Joe Biden to lead this country. To me, he represents everything that is wrong with our current political structure. On the flip side, I look [at] and listen to Donald Trump and I cringe at every rude, insulting comment he makes.

If you find yourself in a similar state of mind, please read the following article: ***A Message For Christians About Donald Trump.***

Here’s a famous joke about God and how [H]e talks to us. “A deeply faithful Christian man is stuck on roof at home with massive flooding up to the [seco]nd floor. Rowboat comes. He says “No, I’m waiting for God. I prayed and I know he’s coming.” [Seco]nd Rowboat. “No, I’m waiting for God.” [Thi]rd Rowboat. “No, I’m waiting for God.” Water rises. The man drowns. Now he’s meeting God in heaven. The religious man says, “Where were you God? I prayed. I was faithful. I asked you to save me. Why would you abandon me?” God says, “Hey, I sent you 3 rowboats.”

Did you ever consider Trump is our rowboat? Maybe God is trying to tell us something important – that now is not the time for a “nice Christian guy” or a “gentleman” or a typical Republican powder puff. Maybe now is the time for a natural born killer, a ruthless fighter, a warrior. Because right about now we need a miracle, or America is finished. Maybe the rules of gentlemen don’t apply here. Maybe a gentleman and “all-around nice Christian” would lead us to slaughter.

Or do you want another Mitt Romney, Bob Dole, John McCain, Gerald Ford or Paul Ryan? Did any of them win? Did they lead the GOP to “the promised land?” Did they change the direction of America? No, because if you don’t win, you have no say. Paul Ryan couldn’t even deliver his own state, Wisconsin! Nice, but obedient. I mean Paul Ryan...not my dog. My dog is actually a pretty good defender and loyal.

Maybe God is knocking on your door loudly, but you’re not listening. Maybe God understands we need a “war leader” at this moment in time. Maybe

God understands if we don’t win this election, America is dead. It’s over. The greatest nation in world history will be gone. Finished. Kaput. Adios. And with one last breath, maybe what we need to save us at the last second, is someone different. Someone you haven’t ever experienced before – because you weren’t raised in rough and tumble New York where nothing good gets accomplished unless you’re combative, aggressive, outrageous, on offense at all times, and maybe just a tad arrogant, too. Someone with a personality you’ve never seen on stage at your church. Maybe, just maybe, being a nice gentlemanly Christian would not beat Biden and his billion dollars, and his best friends in the media who will unleash the dogs of hell upon the GOP nominee.

I guess you think God is only nice and gentlemanly. Really? Then you’ve missed the whole point of the Bible. When necessary, God is pretty tough. When necessary, God strikes with pain, death and destruction. When necessary, God inflicts vengeance. Maybe you think God couldn’t possibly be associated with someone like Trump. Trump is too vicious, rude and crude.

When we won WWII, was God “nice?” Were we gentlemanly when defeating Hitler? Were we gentlemanly when firebombing Germany? Were we gentlemanly when dropping atomic bombs on Japan? Is God ever “nice” on the battlefield? Or does he send us vicious SOBs like General George S. Patton so the good guys can defeat evil? It’s pretty clear to me God sends unique people to be “war leaders.” That’s a different role than a pastor or church leader. God understands that.

And maybe it’s time to re-define “nice.” Maybe Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan aren’t nice at all – because they led us to defeat. And losing again would mean the end of America. And God can’t allow that. Maybe Romney and Ryan mean well, but the road to hell is paved with good intentions. Or maybe they’re just jealous they had their chance and blew it. Maybe they’d rather help elect Biden than allow a Trump victory that would make them look weak, feckless and incompetent. ***“Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, but those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.”*** (Isiah 40:30-31) God is about miracles. We don’t need a “nice guy” or a “gentleman” right now. It’s the 4th quarter and we’re losing 14-0. We need a miracle.

So let me repeat my message to Christians: “YOU’RE MISSING THE BOAT.” I believe Trump is our miracle. I believe Trump is our rowboat. Except he’s more like a battleship! No one is saying Trump is perfect. No one is saying Trump is a perfect conservative. But he is a patriot. He is a warrior. He is a capitalist. He is the right man, at the right time. Yes, he’s a bit rude and crude and offensive. But that may make him the perfect warrior to save America, American exceptionalism, capitalism and Judeo-Christian values. The choice should be easy for Christians. ***It’s Trump...or it’s the end of the American dream.***



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A REDESIGNED RETIREMENT BENEFITS PORTAL THAT WORKS FOR YOU



Photos provided by SSA.

We are excited to tell you about our redesigned retirement benefits portal at www.ssa.gov/benefits/retirement. Keeping you informed about our products and services, and helping you prepare for making decisions that will affect your benefits is very important to us. Preparing for retirement is one of the most important decisions you can make.

Our website has helped millions of people get ready for and apply for retirement. But we heard your feedback that you also want to:

- Find the information you need without reading through too many pages.
- Learn about the benefits in a clear and concise way.
- Be better prepared to apply for retirement online.
- Learn how to manage your personal my Social Security account online.



We made our redesigned retirement benefits portal more user-friendly and easier to navigate, whether you are ready to learn about, apply for, or manage your retirement benefits. You’ll find the new portal eye pleasing, informative, and optimized for mobile devices. We also improved how we list our information on search engines to make it easier for you to find outside our website.

The new Retirement Benefits portal is just the first of several steps we are taking to improve your experience on our website. Visit our new retirement benefits portal today at www.ssa.gov/benefits/retirement to Learn, Apply, and Manage your retirement benefits and subscribe to receive retirement information and updates. Stay tuned for more exciting improvements and services.

Social Security in Plain Language



Some of the terms and acronyms people use when they talk about Social Security can be a little confusing. We’re here to help you understand all you need to know.

We strive to explain your benefits using easy-to-understand, plain language. The Plain Writing Act of 2010 requires federal agencies to communicate clearly in a way”the public can understand and use.” This can be particularly challenging when talking about complicated programs like Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, and Medicare. If there’s a technical term or acronym that you don’t know, you can easily find the meaning in our online glossary at www.ssa.gov/agency/glossary.

Everyone uses shorter versions of words nowadays. We do too. Social Security’s acronyms function as shorthand in conversations about our programs and services. If you’re nearing retirement, you may want to know what PIA (primary insurance amount), FRA (full retirement age), and DRCs (delayed retirement credits) mean. These terms describe your benefit amount — based on when you decide to take it. If you take your retirement benefit at FRA, you’ll receive the full PIA (amount payable for a retired worker who starts benefits at full retirement age). So, FRA is an age and PIA is an amount.

Once you receive benefits, you get a COLA most years. A COLA is a Cost-of-Living Adjustment, and that will usually mean a little extra money in your monthly benefit.

What about DRCs? Delayed retirement credits are the incremental increases added to the PIA if you delay taking retirement benefits beyond your full retirement age. If you wait to begin benefits beyond FRA — say, at age 68 or even 70 — your benefit increases.

If those terms or acronyms comes up in conversation, you can be the one to supply the definition using our online glossary. Sometimes learning terminology can deepen your understanding of how Social Security works for you.

85 Years of Serving People Like You



We take pride in having provided vital benefits and services to this great nation for 85 years. America has a diverse population with a variety of needs. With our diverse population in mind, we’ve created webpages that speak directly to groups of people who may need information about our programs and services. These pages are easy to share with friends and family or on social media. Here are just a few that might speak to you or someone you love.

We proudly serve wounded warriors and veterans. They made sacrifices to preserve the freedoms Americans treasure. Many of them do not know they might be entitled to disability benefits from Social Security. Share our resources with them to make sure they get the benefits they deserve. www.ssa.gov/people/veterans.

Social Security plays an important role in providing economic security for women. Nearly 55 percent of the people receiving Social Security benefits are women. With longer life expectancies than men, women tend to live more years in retirement and have a greater chance of exhausting other sources of income. A woman who is 65 years old today can expect to live, on average, until about 87, while a 65-year-old man can expect to live, on average, until about 84. Also, women often have lower lifetime earnings than men, which usually means lower benefits. Women need to plan early and wisely for retirement and we’re here to provide valuable information to help. Share this page with someone who needs this information and may need help planning for their golden years. www.ssa.gov/people/women.

Do you know someone who is just starting their career? Now is the best time for them to start preparing for retirement. The sooner they begin to save, the more they’ll have at retirement. Share this page with a young worker you know. www.ssa.gov/people/earlycareer.

These are just a few webpages that are tailored to a specific group’s needs. If you didn’t see your own, check out our *People Like Me* home page at www.ssa.gov/people.

Five Reasons to Use *My Social Security*

There are countless reasons why you can benefit from using your personal my Social Security account. Here are five that highlight why opening an account today can help you and the people you love.



Saving you time: There’s no need to leave your home when using the features of my Social Security. You may think you need to speak with a Social Security representative to check your application status, set up or change direct deposit, or request a replacement Social Security card. All you have to do is log in or create an account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount.

Security: When you open an account, it prevents someone else from possibly creating an account in your name. And, we use the two-step authentication to verify you are the one logging in to your account. Your personal information is very important to us. You can access your personal information safely and securely using my Social Security.

Reassurance: Did you know you can see your entire work history with your personal my Social Security account? This allows you to verify if your employers reported your earnings to us correctly. This is very important. Accurate wage reporting will ensure you get the benefits you earned when you begin receiving benefits.

Planning for your Future: Retirement planning is essential for a secure future. The Retirement Calculator lets you enter the age or date when you expect to begin receiving benefits to generate an estimated benefit amount. If you enter your estimated future salary amount, that will be included when calculating the estimated benefit amount. You can also view your estimated disability benefit on the Estimate Benefits page.

Control: A personal my Social Security account gives you the control to conduct your Social Security business wherever and whenever you want without needing to speak with a representative. You can check the status of your claim, get an instant proof of benefits letter or copy of your SSA-1099, and more. And people in most states can request a replacement Social Security card. Check out www.ssa.gov/myaccount and put yourself in control.

Changing Direct Deposit Information with Social Security

Change happens. We get it. The most convenient way to change your direct deposit information with us is by creating a my Social Security account online at www.ssa.gov/myaccount. Once you create your account, you can update your bank information without leaving the comfort of your home.



Because we are committed to protecting your personal information, we need some form of identification to verify who you are. If you already have an account, we verified your identity when you initially created your personal my Social Security account. All you need to do is log in at www.ssa.gov/myaccount to access or change your information. We highly recommend that you do not close your old bank account until you have seen your Social Security deposit show up in the new bank account.

We always strive to put you in control by providing the best experience and service no matter where or how you decide to do business with us. Remember, you can do much of your business with us online at www.ssa.gov/online services.

Remembering Olivia de Havilland

Remembering Olivia de Havilland Melanie Hamilton Wilkes of “Gone with the Wind.” A grand star for over 50 years, with more than 50 feature movies to her credit, she was the last surviving member of the cast of “Gone with the Wind.” She lived in Paris for the last 60 years and was instrumental in taking down the Hollywood studio establishment resulting in better contracts for actors. At the time of her death at age 104, she was the oldest living actor to have won an Academy Award.



Dr. Adams greets Olivia de Havilland during her visit to the Troy University campus in the late 70s.

Ralph and Dorothy Adams enjoyed hosting Ms. de Havilland in Troy at the Dorothy Kelly Adams University Center on “Troy State University’s” campus. Ms. de Havilland was on campus as part of the Great Speaker Series conducted at the University.



After Ms. de Havilland’s comments about her incredible movie career, with a special emphasis on “Gone with the Wind,” Montgomery friends Jack and Mots Rainer along with Troy’s Donal and Sara Lee Dunbar and their daughter Dorothy, enjoyed a private dinner at the President’s home located on campus.

At the Adams’ behest, she spent the night on McKinley Drive and the next morning had a thoroughly Southern breakfast with bacon, biscuits, grits and fresh peaches before departing en route to her home in France.

Sam Adams fondly recalls, “The breakfast was not so much my memory as it was my mother’s protocol. When dignitaries stayed at the house, there was a specific meal to be served to let them experience Southern cooking. A lot of them were from overseas or up north and had never had the likes of grits, pecans or Lane cake.”

contributed by Sam Adams

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Chief Deputy Kevin J. Murphy

Our office is open Monday-Friday from 8am-5pm. Our website www.MontgomerySheriff.com is a great source of information, as well as our app! If you haven't downloaded our app, please search your app store for "Montgomery County AL Sheriff" and download it today. Our app is user-friendly and an easy way to inquire about current inmates in the Detention Facility, find out if someone has an active warrant, as well as learn about various programs we offer at our agency.

If you have Pistol Permit or civil-related questions (evictions, subpoenas, etc.), please dial **334.832.1335** or **334.832.1337**.

If you have warrant-related questions, please dial **334.832.2579** or **334.832.2516**.

Our Investigations Unit will still be actively working, and if you need to speak with someone in that Division, please dial **334.832.2532**.

Social Media Search

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Detention Facility Visitation: Currently, our Detention Facility is closed for person-to-person visitation; however, video visitation is allowed. Additionally, inmates will still have access to the phone system to call their loved ones. As you know, we are doing everything possible to make sure that our inmate population as well as our employees are safe and to minimize exposure to as least as possible.

Community Relations Events: Sheriff Cunningham has decided to postpone the following Community Relations events this year due to Coronavirus:

- Citizens Academy (*postponed until later in 2020*)
- Youth Fishing Rodeo
- Show and Tell Camp (*postponed until 2021*)
- Firearms Familiarization Course (*postponed until later in the year*)

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Town of Mosses Holds Drive Thru Community Fest



The Town of Mosses hosted a Drive Thru Community Fest Saturday, July 25, 2020, at Mt. Moriah Baptist Church #2. Over 50 families came out to drive thru the church parking lot to get free masks, free resources, free hot dogs and hamburgers, and other giveaways.

The community also got to meet new Police Chief Demarcus Weems.

"I am excited about this event and excited about serving the citizens of Mosses," Weems said. "This is the first of many events to come."

The food was prepared and served by Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. cooked and served the food. Music was provided by DJ Grandmaster 365 Jamz.

Sponsors for the event include The Serious Injury Law Group, LLC, Workable Solutions, Council on Substance Abuse-NCADD, T.E.E.N. Direct, First Place Financial Group, Sheyann Webb Christburg, Keeping it Real with Ro Tyus, and Gumptown Magazine.

Partners for the event were Mayor Willie. B. Hill, Rep. Kelvin J Lawrence, Coroner Terrell Means, Lowndes County Counts, Lowndes County Sheriff's Office, Judge Adrian Johnson, Pastor Tarrance L. Scott, and Prattville Police Department.

Other participants were Jackson Professional Funeral Services, and Lowndes County Board of Education Head Start Program.



Left: Prattville Assistant Police Chief Thomas and Judge Gaines came through and showed love to Chief Weems.



Left: Chief Weems pictured with Jamal Thomas Mba, Mac Eugene and Jeff Jones. Weems fondly states, "My brothers thank you so much. It's always a blessing to have loyal, faithful, and leadership brothers."



Right: The Chief's father, Leon Weems, and other family members came through to show their support.



Left: Weems appreciated Gumptown Magazine and Hope At COSA, NCADD for their hard work and dedication to the community.



Right: The day's entertainment was provided by 365 JAMZ Entertainment.

Source of Pictures: <https://www.facebook.com/Chief-Demarcus-Weems-104077604707432>

Contact: Jamal Thomas Mba, Gumptown Magazine, 334-347-7706, www.gumptownmag.com or visit: <https://gumptownmag.com/small-town-serving-families-at-drive-thru-community-fest/>



Herman Cain Passes away at 74

Former Republican presidential candidate, Herman Cain died July 30, 2020 due to complications from COVID-19, he was 74.

Cain, born in Memphis, Tenn., came from humble beginnings. However, his mother taught him that "success was not a function of what you start out with materially, but what you start out with spiritually."

He graduated from Moorehouse College in Atlanta with a B.S. degree in Mathematics. He got a master's degree from Perdue in computer Science while working full time for the Navy. He was

staunchly conservative, pro-life, and pro-business.

Cain was a successful businessman, with a syndicated column and being a frequent television commentator for many years. He began his career with Coca Cola and Pillsbury soon becoming the director of business analysis. He served as the Chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank in Kansas City and steered once struggling companies like Godfather's Pizza and Burger King into profitability. Cain also served as the President of the National Restaurant Association in the 1990s.

He first ventured into the political arena by serving as Senator Bob Dole's senior advisor for Dole's 1996 presidential campaign. Cain may be best remembered as a Republican presidential candidate in 2012 where he garnered the support of the Tea Party Express.

Cain served as an associate minister in Antioch Baptist Church North, Atlanta, which he joined at age 10.

He wrote several books including "Speak as a Leader," "CEO of Self" and his memoir "This is Herman Cain," which espoused his business and political beliefs.

contributed by Sam Adams

First printed in *The Montgomery Advertiser*, June 3, 1989

By Debra Davis, Advertiser Staff Writer ... (Excerpt)

Honorary law degree attracts media notice

Troy—a claim by U.S. Rep. John R. Lewis, D-Ga., that he was denied entrance to Troy State Teachers College (now Troy State University) 31 years ago was the focus of media attention as he received an honorary doctorate from TSU Friday.

But, TSU officials said there are no records of a denial and, when questioned about it, Rep. Lewis did not talk about a specific rejection.

I submitted my application (in 1958) here with my transcript from Pike County Training School, and all-black high school in Brundidge, and I never heard anything," he said.

Bill Buchannon, director of university relations at TSU, said the university has no record of Rep. Lewis' application.

"We are honoring him because he is a Pike County person who has performed service to his adopted state and to his country," Mr. Buchannon said, "For that reason the Board of Trustees thought he was deserving. There is no one here now that was involved with the university then (in 1958). Until he told us, we weren't even aware he had ever made application to attend school here."

Rep. Lewis said the honor from TSU dramatizes the distance the civil rights movement has come.

Rep. Lewis received one of two honorary doctorate-of-law degrees given by the university at its spring commencement ceremonies in Troy Friday...

...the media spotlight was on Rep. Lewis. According to TSU officials, several national and state TV stations and major newspapers contacted the school asking about the congressman's claim of denied entrance to the school and the irony of his being given an honorary doctorate 31 years later.

Rep. Lewis said when he did not hear from the Troy school in 1958, "I wrote a letter to Dr. Martin Luther King, who invited me to come to Montgomery and meet with him at the First Baptist Church on Ripley Street."

Rep. Lewis said that meeting and the fear of repercussions for his parents if he filed a lawsuit against the school, made him decide to attend Fisk University and the American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville, Tenn., instead of pursuing admittance to Troy State Teachers College.

Source: <https://www.newspapers.com/image/258128775>

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Community Lifestyles





Dr. Lester Spencer

Lead Pastor

St. James United Methodist Church
9045 Vaughn Road, Montgomery, AL

Soul Searching

THREE WISE WAYS TO MASTER OUR MOUTHS

Mastering our mouths, taming our tongues, watching our words is one of the toughest things to do! We use words all the time, not only in our conversations but also in our emails, texts, social media, blogs, posts and tweets. We are a nation of talkers!

“Self-control means controlling the tongue!” – Proverbs 13:3

Another way to put it: He who guards his mouth controls himself.

The Book of James has this to say about the tongue: “...but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.” – James 3:8

Wow. These are harsh words, but, if we want to grow in wisdom, we must learn to master our mouths, tame our tongues, watch our words!

Three Wise Ways To Master Your Mouth:

1. Think Before You Speak

“Intelligent people think before they speak; what they say is then more persuasive.” – Proverbs 16:23

When I was a young pastor, my friend, Dr. George Mathison, taught me an important lesson about watching my words. He told me to always ask myself three questions before I said something:

Is it true?

Is it kind?

Is it necessary?

Those three questions have helped me to keep my mouth shut many times and have saved me from a lot of trouble. No doubt these three questions have kept me from hurting other people and myself on many occasions.

Is it true? Or is it a rumor, an exaggeration or just gossip? Do I know for sure personally that it is true? If not, don’t say it!

Is it kind? Is it meant to encourage and build up? Or is it meant to do harm and tear down? It may be true but is it kind? If not, don’t say it!

Is it necessary? Negative comments, complaints, insults are not necessary! Does it really need to be said even if it is true and kind? Is it necessary for you to say it?

2. Always Speak The Truth

“Someone who holds back the truth causes trouble.” – Proverbs 10:10

Truth is we don’t trust people who don’t speak the truth, right?

We don’t trust people who lie, deceive, exaggerate, manipulate or speak in half-truths.

Have you ever known someone who just as soon lies as tell the truth? Or have you had dealings with someone who practices the art of deception? We don’t tend to enjoy being around them or want to have anything to do with them.

I love the story of the little boy who was always lying. His Mother was so worried about him and his lying that she called her pastor and asked him to meet with the boy to try to help him with his constant lying. The next day, the pastor met with the six-year old boy and told him a story. He said, “Son, yesterday morning I went out to the mailbox to get my mail. As I walked down my driveway, a huge grizzly bear came out of nowhere and was running right towards me. I just knew he would kill me and eat me on the spot. But then, a little

Chihuahua dog came running to my rescue and grabbed that bear by the neck and shook it till it died. Then, that little dog dug a whole in my front yard, buried that bear and walked away. Now, son, do you believe that story?”

The little boy said, “Yes sir, I sure do. That was my dog!”

Friends, if we want to be wise, we must always speak the truth!

3. Speak The Truth In Love

“Gentle words cause life and health.” – Proverbs 15:4

“Thoughtless words can wound as deeply as any sword, but wisely spoken words can heal.” – Proverbs 12:18

There are perhaps two ways we can speak the truth in love into other people’s lives, the hard way and the gentle way.

The hard way is when we need to speak a hard truth into someone’s life. Perhaps, you know someone who is struggling with alcohol or drug addiction or some other habit, hang up or hurt. Sometimes it is necessary to intervene in a person’s life in order to speak the truth in love in order to protect, guard, guide, or save them.

The gentle way involves speaking positive words of encouragement, hope, health, peace and life into the lives of others. It may be a family member, a friend, a co-worker or a total stranger. Speaking the truth of who we are as human beings made in the image of God.

People are hurting, depressed, discouraged, lonely, and feeling distant from others. We can speak the truth in love into their lives! It’s easy to do and a great encouragement to others who need it, and it builds people up by undergirding them with God’s truth.

To review:

Think before you speak.


Always speak the truth.

Speak the truth in love

If we do these three things, we will have come a long way toward mastering our mouths, taming our tongues and watching our words!

Lester Spencer
Lead Pastor
Saint James Church

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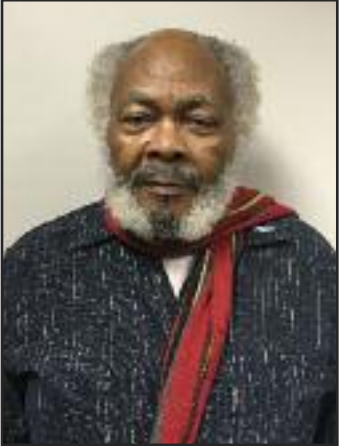
Honoring Our Heroes

By Dr. Martha Poole Simmons

Major LeonArd Norman: Age 71

Major LeonArd Norman not only valiantly served for four years in the U. S. Army, he also served 25.5 years as a policeman in Montgomery, AL, where he earned the rank of Major. His military medals and awards include two Purple Hearts, the Army Commendation Medal, the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with “V” Device and Oak Leaf Clusters, the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, the Bronze Star with “V” Device, the Bronze Star, the Combat Infantry Badge, and the Service Combat Veteran Medal.

Norman was born December 1, 1948, in Fulton County, GA, to his parents George and Annie Ruth Norman. He graduated from Washington Center High School in Atlanta, GA, and worked as a radio announcer until he was drafted in February, 1967, into the U. S. Army. Norman entered military service at Ft. Benning, GA, and completed Basic Training with the Infantry at Ft. Dix, NJ. He had a brief tour at the Panama Canal, completed paratrooper training at Ft. Benning and was then deployed to Vietnam. He served at Bein Hoa Air Base, received further training and worked with the 25th Division at Cu



Chi where he served with the long range reconnaissance team in sensitive activities. Norman served one year plus some days in Vietnam where he was twice wounded resulting in his being discharged in 1971.

After discharge, Norman was hospitalized in a VA Hospital in San Francisco for a while before returning to Montgomery, AL, to work as a policeman in Montgomery, AL, until 2002. Norman has continued to work as a radio announcer and talk show host since 1971. He has a fine baritone singing voice and possesses gifts in speaking and writing poems and short stories. He attended college at Auburn University studying communications and mass media and at Troy State University at Montgomery majoring in secondary education and also studying law enforcement and criminal justice. Norman is a motivational speaker on a variety of 30 subjects, a gospel preacher, a very active leader in community organizations and a strong, personal advocate for veterans assisting them in obtaining benefits that they deserve. He is an active member of Chapter 607 Vietnam Veterans of America. Norman’s personal life includes three children, five grandchildren and one great-grandchild

Norman has strong feelings about his service in the U.S. Military saying, “Being in the military meant that it established a position of honor, integrity and love of country. It took on the responsibility of being one of the great defenders of Old Glory, our flag. It established commitment to discipline that allowed one to flex wings, to see the world and to allow one to expand one’s psychic and not just to live in a little planet of Montgomery, AL, but to the planet called the world. It allowed you to expand one’s horizon.”

Joseph Simon: Age 95

Joseph Simon is a WWII U. S. Army veteran who served as a combat engineer in New Guinea and the Philippine Islands. His medals and awards include: Asia Theatre of Operations, Asia Pacific Theatre of Operations, Philippine Liberation Ribbon with one Bronze Star, Good Conduct Medal and World War II Victory Medal.



Simon was born May 29, 1925, at Demopolis, AL, to his parents, Harry and Ruth Simon. At age five, he moved to Montgomery, AL, where he graduated from Sidney Lanier High School in 1943. One week after graduation, he was drafted into the U. S. Army reporting for duty at Fort McClellan, AL. He was sent to Fort McPherson at Atlanta, GA, for evaluation to determine his assignment in the Army. Simon completed Basic Training at Camp Beale, CA, where the 2nd Armored Division was headquartered followed by additional training in maneuvers at the Mohave Desert in CA. Having had some experience in the AL Highway Department training as an engineer assistant, his Military Operational Specialist (MOS) was as a weapons sergeant and as a demolition

expert. Simon was sent to the Pacific Theater in August, 1944, where he participated in the combat battles of removing the remnants of the Japanese forces in New Guinea. Simon traveled on a Landing Ship Tank (LST) for 11 days and nights from New Guinea to the Lingayen Gulf at Luzon where he was involved in blowing up bridges and rebuilding pontoon bridges to help the Infantry to get equipment across rivers. He also had guard duty with machine guns on the perimeters. Joseph remained at the Philippines until after the Japanese surrendered August 15, 1945, and he was discharged from duty February 14, 1946, at Camp Shelby, MS, at the rank of Staff Sergeant.

Simon’s conclusions about his military service are, “It means a lot to me. I have a lot of memories both good and bad. It is something that I am proud of having served because I think that the people who served during WWII are no better than those who are serving now, but they were a lot younger and a lot less prepared than those who go into the service now.”

After release from military service, Simon’s civilian life included starting a family, completing his education and working with companies in AL and FL. Simon returned to Montgomery, AL, where he married Johnnie Hogue, and they were married 43 years until she passed away. They had four children, four grandchildren and nine great-grand-children. Simon worked as half-owner of the Riverside Heights Grill in Montgomery, AL, for three years. Using the G.I. Bill, Simon attended Huntingdon College where he had a double major in History and in Business Administration with emphasis in accounting. Selling his interest in the Grill, he went to Jacksonville, FL, working for General Electric as an expeditor in the apparatus division getting equipment from the factory to the job site at the Indian River Reservation which is Cape Canaveral today. Simon returned to Montgomery where he worked for 40 years as the Secretary-Treasurer and Controller at the Southern Sash Supply, a company which sold widows and building materials. Then Simon moved to Destin, FL, where he operated the Beachside Café as the President and Manager for one year. In 2013, Simon retired and moved back to Montgomery to assist his brother who was in ill health. Simon served as a charter member of the American Veterans (AMVETS) Post No. 29 in Destin, and he enjoyed fishing and swimming and playing golf until he reached age of 86.

David Payne: Vietnam Veteran: Age 70

David Payne is a U.S. Naval Seabees veteran who served in Vietnam. He is a veteran of the Alabama Army National Guard and the Alabama Air National Guard, and he was attached to numerous Special Forces including 20th Special Forces in AL, 82nd Air Bourne, 101st Screaming Eagles, and Marine Corps for 20 years in active duty and in a National Guard component. He is dedicated to serving veterans assisting them in navigation of the VA systems of benefits. He received awards throughout his service.



David Payne was born December 14, 1949, in Montgomery, AL, to his parents, Dave and Ruth Payne, and the family moved 19 times before he was 16 years of age because of his father’s employment with the VA and Social Security that required frequent moves. Payne attended high schools in Verbena and Montgomery, AL.

In 1967 at age 17, Payne joined the U.S. Navy and completed Basic Training at the Naval Training Center in San Diego and the Marine Base at Camp Pendleton, CA. He then went to the Seabees Base at Port Hueneme, CA, where he attended the Class-A School for 22 weeks learning how to handle heavy equipment. Payne was then attached to other branches of the military in remote,

jungle areas of Vietnam. He was part of the U.S. Naval Construction Battalion known as the Seabees, and his unit was the MCB-8.

Payne was deployed to Vietnam for two and one-half tours for a total of 15 months during 1968-1969. At Vietnam, he went to Da Nang, Camp Eagle, Camp Evans, Hue, Rock Pile, Phu Bai, Ben Hoa and Long Binh. He served in A Shau Valley and the Alamo along the Dragon’s Tail in the Ho Chi Minh Trail where he worked building an air strip and a helicopter pad for a Special Forces camp for several weeks. His Military Occupation Specialty (MOS) was equipment operator going into key jungle locations where he was engaged in building helicopter pads, airfields, hospitals, dispensaries, schools, bunkers, slip-trenches and fighting positions as well as putting in concertina wires and mines. His unit was also involved in destroying military equipment rather than sending it back to America.

Payne’s unit came under attack several times by mortars which were referred to as harassing fire. His foot was injured when he stepped on a booby trap, and he also received an arm wound from a hot round; however he never received a Purple Heart because he was not in a secure area where medics were available to document such injuries, and he did not think that he merited a Purple Heart. Payne’s conclusions about his service in Vietnam are, “I am a firm believer that I was there for a purpose. I did my job. I served. I fought. I was wounded. I think that I made a difference.”

Returning to Alabama, Payne remained in the Inactive Reserves for four years suffering from PTSD during this time. Payne then joined the Alabama Army National Guard with 95 Bravo scoring well on the ASFAB resulting in his serving with the Military Police (MP’s). He then switched to the 187th AL Air National Guard, and he retired in 2003.

Payne and his wife, Sylvia, have been married 42 years, and they have two children and five grandchildren. Payne has served as the President of Chapter 607 Vietnam Veterans of American for most of the 27 years of its existence.

Payne’s holds deep convictions about American veterans’ deserving unending assistance from its government stating, “The service members who served overseas in harms’ way should never be treated as second-class citizens. The U. S. government should take care of them for the rest of their lives because of what they have endured and for the blank check that they signed when they entered the service.”

Our Veterans love reading the July issue of *The Alabama Gazette!*

William L. Carl
Age 85



Joseph Edward Boyett
Age 84

James Robert Phillips
Age 80



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A 50-year Story of Love & Devotion



Everett and Alice's engagement.

In 1970, they couldn't imagine their lives in 50 years. Now in 2020, those 50 years have come and gone! Oh, the adventures those 2 young people have experienced! Still 'young at heart' their adventures continue!

On July 3, 2020, Everett and Alice Law Cole celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary with around 100 friends and family at their home. Precautions were observed and, as far as they know, no one became sick with

have eight grandchildren to round out the family!

Living by the philosophy of 'Making Lemonade when Life Deals you Lemons,' Everett and Alice have enjoyed visiting all 50 States at least once, during the five total knee replacements, multiple other surgeries on his legs and finally the amputation of the left leg in 2014. Through all of that, the golden couple finished this bucket list item in 2018 with a 6-week, 6,000-mile road trip to the Northwest and cruise to Alaska.



Everett and Alice's wedding, July 3, 1970.

COVID-19 because of the gathering of folks to celebrate their Golden Anniversary with them! In 1995, Everett and Alice had renewed their marriage vows with a wedding, also outside, at their home on Butler Mill Road. Using the same book for guests to sign in at all three events created lots of smiles, as guests were able to look back and see where they'd signed this book before.

DeeDee Keahey was just a little girl at the first wedding and really got a kick out of seeing her name in the book way back then! Roxanne Chandler Young's creative talents were evident in the beautiful arrangements of the 'fancy tables' on the back deck where cupcakes and a punch fountain were located. The carport served as location for the tasty bar-b-que sandwiches Carl Boyd had cooked the meat for, decorated in 4th of July décor by the family.

Bruce and Jodi Chesnutt sent Randy, who was one of Everett's groomsmen and lives in Malibu, CA, a 'We were Here' picture so he felt included in the celebration! Their beloved Ben Slauson who had married them in 1970 and 1995 has passed on, but his son, Gary, spent some time visiting with Everett and Alice. Mrs. Lela Foshee and Carron dropped by for a short visit. Many church friends from throughout the years and members of the Military Order of the Purple Heart came out.



The Coles renewed their vows in 1995.

The Good Lord has truly blessed the Cole family with health and happiness in spite of Everett being a combat-wounded Marine during the Vietnam War. His grit and determination to be the husband and father God would have him be is well known among their friends and acquaintances. In spite of losing one leg to an explosion in Vietnam and the other damaged very badly, he has lived his life as 'normally' as possible, playing baseball, bowling, quail hunting, dove and deer hunting, fresh and salt water fishing, and learning to play the guitar by ear, while stopping smoking in the early 1970s.

Everett and Alice met in the VA Hospital in February 1970, where she was a young clerk typist in Dietetic Service. A 'hospital romance' occurred until he was released in May 1970. They were married two months later. Everett and Alice were blessed with three daughters: Tina, Meloney and Helen, and now

Loretta Grant, founder of the *Gazette*, has cherished The Coles' friendship for many decades, and all of us here wish them many more years of wedded bliss!

Right: The Coles on final "Bucket List" trip.

Below: The Coles celebrated their 50th Anniversary on July 3, 2020, at their home in the Snowdown community with family and friends.



Everett K. Cole is a U. S. Marine who served in combat in Vietnam, stepped on a mine May 22, 1969 and immediately suffered the loss of the right leg at the ankle with multiple severe shrapnel injuries to the left lower leg, damage to the knee and severe muscle damage to the left thigh.



Read Everett's complete story in the February 2020 issue of *The Alabama Gazette*!



Land That I Love: Restoring Our Christian Heritage

With the gracious forcefulness of a true Southern lady, **Bobbie Ames** confronts us with our current societal dilemma, traces its development, reminds us of our compelling history at God's Hand, and leads us toward the solution to the recovery of America's great heritage.

This overview of four hundred years of American spiritual struggle and victory should grace every home and educational institution, to read and re-read for decades to come.

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

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Veterans Celebrating Birthdays

Thomas Blake: August 6th
Charles E. Morris: August 10th
Morgan C. Barnes: August 13th
Roy Thomas Sublette: August 17th
Carolyn McMeans: August 18th
Daniel R. Mims: August 25th
Donald Lee Applegarth: August 30th
Joseph Edward Boyett: August 31st



*Happy
Birthday,
Alex George!*

WWII veteran, Alex George, when he celebrated his 101st birthday on July 24, 2020. His article was published in the May 2020, issue of the *Alabama Gazette*.

6th Annual Patriotic Celebration

The 6th Annual Patriotic Celebration was held at the Tallassee Football Stadium June 26, 2020. The program was a celebration of the United States of America and American veterans. Lt. Col Don Bryant, USAF Retired, served as the emcee. Patriotic music included "The Star Spangled Banner," "You're a Grand Old Flag," "America the Beautiful" and "God Bless America." Charles Blalock, US Army 11th Airborne and former Tallassee City Councilman, gave the invocation.



Two special patriotic messages were given by 1st Sgt Faron Golden, USMC Retired and now pastor of the Center Baptist Church at Lafayette, AL, and Lt. Col. Joel A. Burdette, USMC Retired. Martha Poole Simmons, a volunteer with the American Red Cross, described the services provided to the armed forces both to active duty and veterans. Services pins were presented to each veteran in the audience. The highlight of the evening was a reenactment of the Iwo Jima Flag Raising by six members of the "Howling Mad" Smith Detachment Marine Corps League.





Chef David Spooner, Retired Chef ~ Volunteer Fireman, Lowndesboro V.F.D., St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Lowndesboro Board of Registrars, Lowndes County

Our economy depends on cash flow. Our farmers, ranchers and other small businesses need as much help as we can afford. Buy local and help your fellow Alabamians. Also, don't forget to donate to your local food bank whenever possible!



It was 95 degrees with the heat index of 106. If the virus doesn't get you, the heat will. I finished my outdoor chores before 11:00, and I started on my indoor chores. Those chores could be anything: fixing a leak in the bathroom and/or kitchen, fixing the door knobs so they don't come off the doors when you shut them, changing the filters on the air conditioners, and figuring out how to re-wire the fan in the kitchen so the switch in the Great Hall doesn't turn it on or off and re-wire the switch in the sunroom so it doesn't turn on or off the light on the fan in the kitchen. It is fun living in a 190 year-old home.

I don't go grocery shopping like I used to. Before, I would go up and down every aisle in the store and see if there is something new that I should try. Now I make a hard list, no changes, and no additions. I am in and out, and if I forgot

something or see a new brightly covered container of some supposedly delicious, exotic, gourmet, limited-time-only sustenance, well that is too bad! If I go to a farmers market then there is no list. I buy what is in season, fresh and jumps out at me saying, "Take me, take me!"

My go-to foodstuff at this time comes from my garden, my orchard and my beehives. So today's recipes list an item from each. We will use figs from my orchard, tomatoes and rosemary from my garden, and honey from my beehives. One of the recipes will be served warm. The *galette* can be served cold or served warm with ice cream on top. The dressing usually goes on a cold salad.

There are not many recipes that combine tomatoes and figs and beans. I think that this will be a good side for chicken or fish.

HERBED PARMESAN BEANS WITH CHERRY TOMATOES & FIGS

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups canned white beans, drained & rinsed
- 1 sprig of rosemary
- 1 sprig of thyme
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup of cherry tomatoes, halved, if you have a lot of tomatoes, like I do, add more.
- 1 Tbsp of finely chopped parsley
- Freshly grated Parmesan cheese, to taste
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Salt & pepper
- Dried red pepper flakes (optional but does add a nice kick to dish)
- 4-5 figs, stems cut off & sliced



Serves 3-4

METHOD:

1. Add 2 Tbsp of olive oil to large skillet along with rosemary, thyme & garlic. Heat over high heat & cook for a few minutes until oil becomes fragrant.
2. Stir in beans & lower temperature to medium-high. Warm, without stirring for a few minutes, then give beans a nice stir. Cook for another 5 minutes, without stirring. Beans are already cooked, you are heating them up.
3. Sprinkle on some Parmesan cheese and, again, cook for a few minutes without stirring & breaking up the beans.
4. Stir in tomatoes, parsley, salt, pepper & pepper flakes, make sure you taste test for salt & pepper.
5. Continue cooking until beans begin to look golden in places.
6. Transfer everything to a bowl, add figs, sprinkle with more Parmesan, and another tablespoon of olive oil. Toss gently, then serve warm.

I am not much of a cake eater. These rustic summer desserts are easy to make and the great thing about a galette is you can show off your artistic work with the filling.

FIG, MINT AND HONEY GALETTE

INGREDIENTS:

For the dough:
Use your favorite store bought piecrust, I did.
Or make your own crust. I didn't.



Serves 4-6

For the filling:

- 1+ pint of fresh figs, sliced (enough figs to cover center of galette)
- 1 sprig of mint
- 1 tablespoon of honey
- 2 tablespoons of mixed brown sugar and white sugar

METHOD:

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Roll out the dough on a well-floured surface until it is about 1/2 inch thick. Roll out from the center to form a circle. Flour the surface and your rolling pin if the dough sticks. Carefully transfer it to a lined baking sheet.
3. Arrange the fig slices over the dough in concentric circles, leaving about a 2-inch border. Any leftover slices can be place as a second layer.
4. Next, sprinkle the sugar evenly over the figs & then drizzle honey on them. Scatter a few mint leaves on top.
5. Carefully fold over the edges of the dough, pinching them & closing any holes with extra dough. Keep moving in a circle until you've created a pouch with the dough.
6. Brush edges with water & sprinkle with sugar.
7. Bake galette for approximately 50 minutes (start watching after about 35) until the dough is golden brown. Let galette rest for about 15-30 minutes before slicing.
8. You want the honey, figs and sugar to thicken as it cools. (A pizza slicer is ideal for a galette).



A vegetable garden in the beginning looks so promising and then little by little it grows nothing but vegetables; nothing, nothing but vegetables!

Enjoy!
Chef Spooner

HONEY VINAIGRETTE

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 Tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1/2 tsp Dijon mustard
- 2 Tbsp honey
- Salt & pepper, to taste
- 1 sprig rosemary

METHOD:

In screw-top jar, combine all ingredients except rosemary and shake jar vigorously. Add rosemary and let refrigerate overnight. Shake again before use. Good for about a week. Make it your own: Add other fresh herbs, garlic or shallots. Or try white balsamic vinegar instead of red wine.



Yield: 4-8 servings

I included this "recipe" in a past article, and I would like to share it with you again.

Recipe for a Home

One-half cup of friendship
Add a cup of thoughtfulness
Cream together with a
Pinch of powdered tenderness
Very lightly beaten
In a bowl of loyalty
With a cup of faith, one of hope
And one of charity.
Be sure to add a spoonful each
Of gaiety that sings.
And also the ability to laugh
At little things.
Moisten with the sudden tears
Of heartfelt sympathy
Bake in a good-natured pan
And serve repeatedly.

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**Stan Hurst***Associate Sports Writer*

From Pigskins to Rawhides

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

The “New” Ballgame

*Photo by UnSplash/FreeRangeStock*

Opening day for the **2020 MLB Season** is just a few days away. Albeit, it’s just 60 games, but at least we have baseball. On July 23rd, the Yankees open at the Nationals, and the Giants open at the Dodgers. It’s new territory for all of us. There will be no fans in the stadiums for this third of a regular baseball season. At least one team is offering the fans a way to participate. Dodgers fans can purchase a placard of themselves to have placed in the stadium for all home games. While I don’t see them available on the official Dodgers website, I’ve read reports that the price is between \$300 and \$400 per fan. MLB will be piping in crowd noise for the games. I’m just wondering if this crowd noise will include “heckling” the umpires as well? Is the crowd noise for the players, or does it just make for a better TV experience? Without question, every game will matter, and, to put this 60-game season in perspective, the college baseball season is 56 games.

However, for a nation weary of safer at home, the MLB season is a much-needed respite from the COVID-19 ravaging our public consciences. There are difficulties in watching MLB, with more and more games being televised by the subscription service MLB.TV. However, they will offer a 90-minute delay after the live feed starts for us die-hard baseball fans.

College football is frankly in doubt at the time this article is written. Currently, the Big Ten and the PAC 12 conferences have announced a conference-only schedule, along with the Ivey League, and a number of smaller conferences. The SWAC has cancelled all sports for the 2020 season and will resume in the spring of 2021. The South Eastern Conference will wait and see until the very last possible moment. Already, Alabama has lost the opportunity to face off with the University of California in the opening games of NCAA football. My understanding is that BYU will fill that open spot in the Tides Schedule. Auburn has lost their opener against Alcorn State, a member of the SWAC. The Tigers may be hard pressed to find a replacement for its opener. Much of the uncertainties lies at the office of the SEC commissioner, Greg Sankey. The SEC is currently in “wait and see” mode, weighing options as the

*Photo by UnSplash/FreeRangeStock*

fate of the SEC season waits on a clearer picture of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Think for a moment about the SEC adopting a conference-only schedule. Perhaps the season opens and ends with Auburn and Alabama playing the opener and the final game of the SEC season, home and home. Worse things could happen.

Football in Alabama is big business, big in the hearts of the patrician faithful, and big in the economy. The economies of the sports programs of Auburn and Alabama, and the economy of Alabama as a whole. Football

is big business in the hearts and minds of our student athletes. They work relentlessly to stay in shape and are devoted to their craft. While there are monetary considerations, first and foremost are considerations and concerns for the players. Let’s consider the impact on our seniors, kids that have worked so hard for so long, only to have the chance to compete snatched away. We’ve already lost the college baseball and basketball seasons; will football be the next domino to fall? As much as it pains me to predict this, I’m succumbing to the numbing fact that we’re going to lose college football this season. I believe the SEC will make the decision to do one of three things: cancel the football season outright, play an SEC exclusive schedule, or start the season only to have it suspended or ended abruptly. At this moment in time, it seems extraordinarily unlikely to see stadiums full of fans in the immediate future. The workable niche I see would be a SEC only season, with 20 to 30 percent of the seats occupied due to COVID restrictions. I’m sure glad I don’t have to make these decisions, and may God bless those that do.

NFL Football: What a season this one could be! Cam Newton playing for the Patriots, amazing! Two Auburn quarterbacks fighting for the starting position on the Bill Belichick’s New England Patriots. It looks like this will come to fruition. Although the NFL pre-season games have been cancelled, the NFL at this time is committed to a full seventeen game season. The Patriots and the Green Bay Packers have announced that for their respective home games, only twenty percent of the seats will be sold. Talk about a tough ticket to get your hands on. The NFL seems confident it can pull a rabbit out of their hat and actually have a season. There are so many NFL threads that are tracked back to our home state.

A healthy Cam Newton signed for a one-year deal at New England. Jarret Stidham will be working tirelessly to hang on to a job it appeared only a few weeks ago was his. First round Auburn pick Noah Igbinoghene joins Tua, who looks like the sure starter for the Miami Dolphins, not a huge surprise. One of my all-time favorite players, Jalen Hurts signed by the Eagles as the backup quarterback. My prediction is that it’s just a matter of time until Jalen moves into the starting position. Derrick Henry, the NFL’s leading rusher in 2019, has the franchise tagged to keep him just one more season, and then he becomes a free agent. The possibilities seem endless as the NFL continues its quest to have a 2020 football season.

This year, what we’re all living through is an unwanted reminder that we as Americans have it good in the USA. My hopes are that when we emerge from the incubus that has caused so much damage to our society and to us personally and socially, Americans will be more appreciative of the things we simply took for granted. I know this writer will.

Next Time ...**Judge Peggy Givhan**

Southern Gardening

*Potpourri for August**by Peggy Givhan*

Ahhh, August, at times referred to as the “dog days” of summer due to the heat and humidity, which probably contributes to lethargy and just plain no energy. Add to this, the forced confinement of stay-at-home orders during the pandemic making us feel out of sorts. This summer has been most unusual due to the virus having restricted our social and community

activities. However, gardening has saved the day for me since I can be out of doors, planting, pruning and fertilizing without the use of a mask. Outdoors with plenty of fresh air and sunshine, we can soak in vital vitamin D and create beauty. Truly this is one hobby that does not need a team or partners to enjoy. As I wrote in a recent article, gardening contributes to our well being in both the mind and the soul.

Across the board, there are some miscellaneous tasks that need to be done for healthier and happier plants. Blackberries and raspberries flourish when we cut back dead canes, and then fertilize. Layering can propagate woody-stemmed plants such as hydrangeas and azaleas. Just pull a low branch to the ground, put a brick or stone on it so it touches the ground, and then keep moist. Within a short time, the stem or branch will spout roots. Then, cut off the branch with the roots, and plant in a pot with good soil. Incidentally, this is not the month to fertilize woody-stemmed shrubs and plants. Lawns should not be cut too short this month, since we do not want the roots to burn due to the heat. If you have St. Augustine or Bermuda grass, apply a pound of nitrogen per 1000 square feet, but skip the fertilizers for centipede or zoysia grass. Just a rule of thumb. Also, when I water my lawn, I let the system run for about 45 minutes once or twice a week, depending on the heat index, in order for the roots to stay well below the surface. Light watering encourages shallow roots, which may be damaged by the heat.

Plants for a great showy fall flower garden.

1. Seeds: Zinnias seeds can be planted several times per season, so if you have a crop that has become leggy, pull them out now and re- seed for the fall and early winter. My favorite variety is Pacific Giant, multi-colored tall plants that are just a work horse in the beds. Cleome seed can be sown now for fall flowers, much like the zinnias. They make wonderful cut flowers, love a sunny location, plus have the added benefit of having very few pests.

2. Perennials, such as coneflower, day lilies, canna lilies, sedums, black-eyed susans, garden phlox, monarda (bee balm), liatris, rudbeckia, hosta, dahlias,

iris, pentas, red hot pokers (pokers (kniphofias), roses, all types of salvias, dusty miller, verbenas, and sages.

3. Annuals, such as, vinca, gomphrena, impatiens, marigolds, petunias, begonias, cockscomb and other celosias, ageratum coleus, just to name a few.

Browse the garden centers and nurseries in our area, plus make a trip to Petals from the Past in Jemison, just off the I-65, to purchase any of the above, and you just may find a new variety that wants to make your garden its home.

*Photo credit: <https://www.biolib.cz>*

PLANT OF THE MONTH: GOMPHRENA GLOBOSA

This flower is commonly known as Gomphrena amaranth is actually an edible plant that is a compact annual, growing about 12-24 inches in height. The common variety color is a bright fuchsia and native to Central America. A tropical annual, gomphrena has the great ability to spread and makes a wonderful filler of the beds. It is heat tolerant, and dead flower heads drop off without the process of deadheading, which saves time. These flowers bloom from spring through frost. There is also a white variety named “Ping Pong”.

After the flowers die, dry the seed and replant next season.

GOOD GARDENING.

Remembering Carol Ann Hicks Woodall

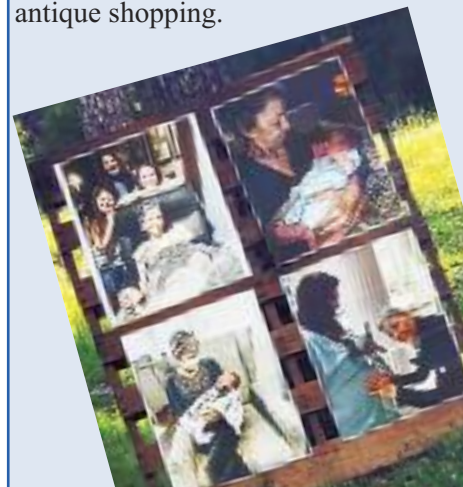
December 7, 1958 – July 14, 2020



Carol Ann Hicks Woodall passed away peacefully on July 14, 2020, with her family at her side. She fought a courageous battle against cancer for four years. Her battle was made easier by an entire community who joined together and made Carol Ann's last years both a blessing to her and those around her. Born Dec. 7, 1958, Carol Ann was preceded in death by her parents, Floyd Glenn Hicks and Mary Glenn Mills Hicks. She is survived by her loving husband and high school sweetheart Dennis Woodall and children Lindsey Woodall Brown (Jeremy); and Casey Woodall Fleming (Eric). One of her great joys in life was her grandchildren; Ansley Brown, Lydia Grace Brown, Jeb Brown, and Ellis Fleming and Marilyn Fleming. Carol Ann is also survived by other family members including her two siblings; brother Pat Hicks (Beth) and their son Caleb; and sister Sandra Hicks Larson (David); and many nieces, nephews, great nieces and nephews, uncles, aunts and cousins whom she loved dearly.

Carol Ann lived her entire life in Dublin, Alabama, and enjoyed telling the world that she was from Dublin – sometimes not telling them she meant the Dublin in Alabama. Beginning at an early age, Carol Ann was the leader of fun! She did not just have fun; she was always dreaming up ways to make others around her happy, something she knew how to do right up to her last days. Carol Ann finished high school at South Montgomery County

Academy and attended Troy University and Huntingdon College. Her real education, however, was self-acquired. She studied landscape horticulture and became a licensed landscape artist. Her artistic abilities were also a part of the fun she created for others, for there was nothing she could not do and nothing that she was afraid to tackle. She created jewelry and was well known for creating spectacular weddings and parties. One of her favorite pastimes was antique shopping.



Carol Ann never gave up her fight, and, with the support of her family and community, she became an inspiration to those around her as she lived by the motto, "God's got this." Family and friends gathered August 2 to celebrate her life. Pastor Cooper Stinson conducted the service in her family's "favorite picnic spot" in Ramer. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests a donation be made to the Ramer Memorial Garden, c/o Ramer Methodist Church, 15153 Hobbie Road, Ramer, AL 36069.

Lindsey Woodall Brown personally wishes to extend the family's deep gratitude for the outpouring of love from the community and friends during this journey.

The celebration was held at the family's favorite picnic spot, where the drive was lined with many memories of Carol Ann. *Pictures courtesy of Hannah Barnhill.*

Jesus 2020 Campaign ... Continued from page 1A

"We wanted to take a stand and revive hearts that have felt despair and hopelessness. We need Jesus! We decided that we would start a campaign for Jesus."

Martha Sikes recalled that she wanted to start this because, "We've got to speak up against the negative that's going on in this country. There is a bunch of evil in our country. We can't let it continue and do nothing."

In the three weeks since its beginning, the group has been able to send out 1,500 signs from its humble beginnings in the Sampey Memorial Baptist Church. They just can't seem to get enough prepared before all the signs are gone and they have to order new ones (the opposite of a problem, of course). People from all over who don't go to their church or perhaps haven't been going to church at all because of COVID-19 have been calling and asking how they can get signs to give to friends and family.

Needless to say, what began as a small idea to encourage people has grown into its own campaign. When asked if it has gone above and beyond what they expected, Mrs. Sikes said, "We hoped it would move. We expected great things. Watching it spread ... it's just amazing to watch it take spark and move on throughout our neighborhood and beyond."

Mrs. Hubbard agreed. "It's gone much farther than we thought. People are calling about signs all the time. So many people are excited to get the signs."

The goal now is to simply get their message out and around the area. "Our goal is to get other churches involved in the experience, so they can order signs to see everywhere, and people can see that people believe in Jesus," said Mrs. Hubbard.

Mrs. Sikes had similar hopes. "We just want other churches to experience this. We started the spark, but we don't want to just be the leaders. They've got to find out about this first...I think it just gives people hope. We know we love Jesus, but now we're putting seed to it. It's a witness to other people when they see it in their yard." What a great way to unite Christians in these uncertain times! Anyone can have a sign and provide hope to themselves and others, no matter what!

"What's great about this is it's a church ministry, but you don't have to gather. You can just put it out in the yard and be encouraged as you're going to work or coming home. People can sit in their windows and see them in the yard, and it gives them hope," Mrs. Hubbard said.

Anyone who wants a sign can go to their Facebook page (Jesus 2020) to request them. If you happen to see a sign while you're out and about, there is a QR code that can be scanned with your camera app that will take you to the page so you can order some. If you would like to cut out the middleman, you are welcome to order directly from the printers. There is a flyer (see pictures below) on the Jesus 2020 Facebook page that will show you how to contact Wells Printing to order your own batch of signs.

If you'd like to simply order additional signs with the group when it places another order, they are more than willing to help with that. You can contact them through Facebook Messenger, or you can call Joyce Hubbard directly, and she will help you get your orders in.

If you wish to make a donation, you are welcome to, though they are not required: Sampey Memorial Baptist Church, P.O. Box 127, Ramer, AL 36069.

Joyce Hubbard (334) 312-3529

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/JESUS2020SIGNS>

Editor's update from the Facebook page: Praise the Lord! The JESUS 2020 campaign is going full steam ahead! We gave out 700 signs [August 1] and have more on the way! Oh, how we have been blessed to be the campaign headquarters for this! We have had calls from as far away as Texas and West Virginia who saw us on TV in their home towns and want to be a part of this revival!!! God is so good!! JESUS 2020!

MCFF Women's Division Cooking Contest at TSN Farms in Ramer, Ala.

by Patricia Killough



The Montgomery Country Farmers Federation met on Tuesday, June 23, 2020 at TSN Farm in the Pines Wedding and Event Venue on Hobbie Road near Ramer, Ala. The business meeting was presided over by Vice President Toni Flowers in the absence of President Jeremy Brown. Kathy Gordon, chairman of the Women's Committee and chairmen of the Alabama Farmers Women's Leadership Committee was in charge of the Women's Division Cooking Contest. The category was Candies. The participants were Toni Flowers (1st Place), Amy Boyd (2nd Place), and Teri Magdon (3rd Place).

Toni will compete in the 45th Annual Alabama Heritage Cooking Contest, September 3, 2020 at the Alfa Building in Montgomery. Judging the contest was John Killough of Montgomery.

Tim and Stacy Nestor are owners of the TSN Farms in the Pines Wedding and Event Venue. They began clearing the land and restoring the existing house the first of the year. Many long, hard hours were invested to get the house ready for their first event. We wish them well in this new venture.

The wedding and event venue is located in an intimate setting on 23 acres of pine ridges and hardwood bottoms. The cottage is a perfect place to sit and enjoy the beautiful surroundings. Please contact the Nestors and let them help plan that special day!



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Patricia Killough
Community Editor

HOME TOWN COMMUNITY NEWS

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

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

Congratulations Extended!

It's a Girl! Elizabeth Gail “Libby” Mason was born July 6, 2020, on her Daddy Frank’s (Skip Mainor) 63rd birthday. What a special gift for granddaddy! Libby’s parents are Chad and Shelby Mason, and she has two big brothers: Trace and Davis. Below, Libby is pictured with her doting grandfather, Skip, and older brothers.





Just Married!

Janice Norman and Chip Searcy married on Saturday, July 18, 2020, at Trinity Episcopal Church in Wetumpka, Ala. A reception for the happy couple was held at the Must Stop Cafe, also in Wetumpka.

Congrats Mr. & Mrs. Cox!

Mr. and Mrs. Michael Taylor announced the marriage of their daughter, Amanda Caroline, to James Matthew Cox on June 13, 2020 at Dalraida Baptist Church. James is the son of Dr. and Mrs. Harold Cox of Montgomery.


They will reside in Auburn, AL. The reception for friends and family was postponed until October 31st at the Elms in Coosada.



Happy Anniversary


2 Mike & Laura Lane	19 Jason & Shawn Adams
4 Frances & Ted Watts	Rob & Minerva Tate (34th)
5 Michael & Jackie Moseley	21 David & Elizabeth Miller
7 Todd & Nikki Windham	22 Johnny & Betsy Walker
Zach & Magan Grambling (10th)	24 Frank & Aileen Kovacic
Charlie & Debbie Moore	25 Bill & Jane Grubbs
8 Leroy & Ina Goodin (74th)	Mr. & Mrs. John Carter (74th)
L.B. & Bessie Wynn (78th)	27 Johnny & Regina Johnson (36th)
9 Turpin & Angie Ashurst	Barbara & Tommy Ratliff (32nd)
11 Mack & Susan Terrell	28 Dr. Karl & Brenda Stegall (55th)
13 David & Julie Livingston	29 Mike & Deborah Kirk
Tim & Cherie Meadows (26th)	Bill & Sharlotte Younkin
16 Leon & Pearl McClain (62nd)	David & Suzanne Webb
Terri & Michael Taylor (34th)	30 Randy & Mae Bishop
18 Earl & Theresa Henderson	Ralph & Murray Norman

Belated Happy Anniversary to Lanie & Doug Graham ~ July 18 they celebrated 60 years of marriage!



Marie Bailey Penn ~ Nov. 13, 1943 – July 7, 2020


Marie was the beloved cousin of Loretta Grant, and will be truly missed. “ReeB”, as she is affectionally known by family and friends, will always be remembered for the way she cared for others. She continually prayed for others and reminding them of their special worth and purpose. An outdoor visitation as held at Alabama Heritage Funeral Home on July 12.



Mason Memorial

A memorial service for William “Billy” Lee Mason was held July 18 at the Kickback Ranch & Event Center, Ramer, Ala. Billy passed away on June 6, 2020, at the age of 83. Billy had 34 1/2 years with Montgomery County Sheriff’s Office and retired in 1998. Former Sheriff Dan Jones told the story of how Billy got the nickname “Sugar Pop: while working in the Sheriff’s office.

August Birthdays



1 Cindy Bolton Ty Bolton Heide Doran	14 Jill McCain Patsy Norman (68th) Ricky Webster (71st)
2 Nichole Lansdon Gibson (46th) Chloe Taylor Jordan George McCurdy Moe Parker Sheryl Schall Tim Schall Rhonda Tatum Gerald H. Thompson (93rd)	15 Connie Mainor (57th) Claudia Adams (98th) Earl Russell (70th)
3 Frances Byrd Lisa Wooten	16 Billy Betts (71st)
4 Harry Baker Chuck Bolton Harris Bolton Linda Hix Eveline & Ernestine Trafford (70th)	17 Tyler Schoknecht Max Webb
5 Chuck Gambrell	18 Doris Talley Matthews
6 Chase Cumbie Luke Davis Tony Drake Joshua Jones (35th)	19 Carl Boyd (66th) Shannon Grant
7 Anna Louise Moseley Bill Ratliff (85TH)	20 Caleb Holmes (42nd) Sydney Mills
8 Mallory Hitson Lauren Meredith	21 Lorraine Hall Paula Jones (66th) Madison Boyd Williams (12th)
9 Audrey Alison Nell Crowe (92nd) Perry Mason (61st) Don White Doris Williams (93rd)	22 Tom Garlington O. C. Thompson (91st) Rhett Tucker
10 Hilda Furlow (94th)	23 Lamar Higgins Lindsey Woodall Brown
11 Wayne Roy (73rd) Shawn Terrell	24 Terri Gulsby Lori McGough Mary Iva Sellers Preston Webb
12 Trisston Burrows	25 Ray Scott (87th) Lloyd Smilie (91st)
13 Bobby Boyd (60th) Barry Ehrlich Maxine Scroggins	27 Angie Herndon
14 Darlene Fuller Davis	28 Bill Hix 29 Charlie Blount Jimmy Grant (66th) Glenn Fuller (85th) Diane McLaney Dawson Moore (3rd) Paul Reynolds
	30 Imogene Bryan 31 Winnie Barton Chloe Mills Sallie Rhodes

Gazette's Sympathy to the families of...

Brasher, Josephine Marie Isaac (93) May 19

Belkofer, Spencer Lane (36) June 25

Ming, Sr., Charles Owen (88) June 26

Bass, Henderson Warren “Billy” (89) June 27

Gandy, Ruth (92) June 27

Mercer, Stella Lenore LaValley (82) June 27

Rushton, Anne Jacquelyn “Jackie” Mock (92) June 27

Baker, Carson “Peanut” (58) June 28

Mills, Robert Louis (90) June 29

Battison, Jodie Massey (49) June 30

Carden, Justin Christopher “Chuck” (37) June 30

Bolling, Earnest Alvin July 7

Penn, Marie Bailey (76) July 7

Smith, George Vernon (63) July 8

Doswell, Samuel Glenn (93) July 9

Williams, Gary Chester (76) July 9

Russell, Obie L. (105) July 13

Bishop, Julie Price (77) July 14

Woodall, Carol Ann Hicks (61) July 14

Brown, Gordon Emerson (77) July 15

Johnson, Katherine (84) July 15

Johnson, Lydia R. (90) July 16

Gouge, James Kenneth “Jim” (78) July 17

Harrell, William “Meredith” (92) July 17

Haynes, Martha Jane Black (71) July 17

Miller, Ruth Oswalt (88) July 18

Rall, Lt. Col. Frederick Ashby (US Army, ret) (85) July 18

Walters, Chattman W. “CW” (80) July 18

Forks, Judith May Brehmer (77) July 19

Cohn, Peggy Levy (91) July 20

Beck, Otis Hayes (77) July 22

Hope, Irene Self (92) July 22

Robinson, Peggy Jean Reeves July 22

Walker, Dr. David Eugene (73) July 24

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In Memory Of

William Brown July 28

Willa Johnson July 27

Betty Wood July 26

Carl Moon July 25

Randy Thrash July 24

Betty Gearhart July 24

Dr. David Walker PhD July 24

Brandy Harris July 22

Otis Beck July 22

Mark Haskell July 20

Billy Jarrett Sr. July 19

Annie Gilliland July 19

Barbara Creamer July 19

Douglas Thompson July 16

Sylvia Blake July 16

Alma Deason July 13

Tolbert Stoddard July 10

Nellie Bailey July 9

Ricky Miskell July 9

Mary Holley July 8

James Selby July 5

Billy Parker July 5

Raymond Lussier III July 2

Michael Estrada July 1

Mrs. Henry Trammell July 1

TODAY'S WOMAN

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



Tears and Laughter: The Cancel Culture is Killing Creativity

By Amanda Walker

There are two types of writers in the world: those who can write...and those who want to be able to write. Proofreading is just part of the process. If the deadline allows, it is best to have a little space between finishing writing and proofing, but I don't do that so much anymore...even as Southern as I am. That is no longer the point of proofing.

People who can't write seem to find great joy in pointing out simple sins in the words of those who can. But it is easy to use the wrong form of a word or to overlook mistakes.

What happens, I think, is when you are writing something that requires a lot thought, for some reason the mind tends to focus on the point, especially if you are creating something out of nothing, if you are literally weaving words (because not all writing is the same). You can report, but you can also teach, or preach, or rant. You can uplift or inspire. You can make people laugh or cry ... just by the way you make words spill onto paper. You can make people think. You can change minds and hearts. You can soften anger, or create it ... if you want. You can explode onto the page, or approach it with quiet grace of Ruth. You can do both in the same paragraph ... if you're good enough, if you are confident enough, if you have the guts to push the limits. If you have the fortitude to embrace the freedom we are afforded.

There is something about writing that is gloriously satisfying for writers. The ability to write a good sentence is a gift. It is detected immediately by the reader, and whatever that is – that dynamic – is what keeps most of us writing for the price of which we write it.

When you are spiritually inspired to write something and are channeling thought, there is an energy that flows through like ink through a pen, like music through an instrument. It is the sweet spot writers search for with all their mind surfing. It is the magical place we are all trying to reach when we shut out the world, shut off our phones, and slink into the back room to write.

And when words finally flow freely, it is as if another part of your mind goes into auto-fill. It just fills in the basics that hold the important stuff together. It plays bass. And it is in there where mistakes can happen that autocorrect can't detect.

But that kind of mistake is not what I look for anymore. No. Now I read each paragraph and stop, and I ask myself if there was anything in there that might offend anybody. Am I going to hurt anybody's feelings? It is like having to put milk in the coffee for fear it will be too strong.

There is seldom anything offensive in anything I write, and if it is then it is certainly unintentional...unless of course it is completely intentional, and I am using it to make a point – as writers sometimes do. But I am hesitant to write to my full ability anymore. I am quiet with my opinion; I am afraid to attempt humor; I am too careful with my descriptions, and I worry...that I am not alone.

It is difficult to be seasoned while feeling squelched. Lewis Grizzard would have been canceled in today's culture. People have become too weak to appreciate even him, too fragile.

We can keep going as we are, but we may need to weigh the give/gain ratio. We are giving up freedom – freedom of speech, freedom of thought, of opinion, of expression, freedom to choose, to think, to decide. We are sacrificing expression, art, creativity, and authenticity. And what are we gaining? Because it sure as hell isn't diversity.

Amanda Walker is a contributor with *AL.com*, *The Selma Times Journal*, *Thomasville Times*, *West Alabama Watchman*, and *Alabama Gazette*. Contact her at walkerworld77@msn.com or at <https://www.facebook.com/AmandaWalker.Columnist>.

Photo by *QuotePixel.com*

**Life is like a
dogsled team.
If you ain't the
lead dog, the
scenery never
changes.**

Lewis Grizzard



Trisston's Tidbits ... “Certainty in Uncertain Times”

By Trisston Wright Burrows
www.trisstonwrightburrows.com

*Ms.Wheelchair America/
Alabama 2005*

Uncertainty. Just that word can make our stomachs churn, our hearts pound faster, and our minds race. Everyone is dealing with uncertainty right now due to the upheaval of the Coronavirus ... your travel, work, schedule, group meetings, church, school, childcare, etc. It all boils down to our plan becoming uncertain. We are used to booking our schedules weeks or months in advance, always having what we need (or want) in the stores, and rarely inconvenienced in a way that technology or a little willpower won't "fix."

I don't know about you, but I really like to be in control or to have systems in place that make me feel like I am in control. My planner, schedule, timelines, phone, etc., while all God-given tools that can and should be used to serve Him and others, are often more about my own little kingdom than about His. This really points to the pride of my heart that the Lord graciously peels back in times like this.

As James 4:13-17 tells us: ***“Come now, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit’- yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, ‘If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.’ As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.”***



Uncertainty has a way of slowing our lives down. All of a sudden, our plans come to a screeching halt. If we allow Him, God will reveal to us what we place our trust in. When there is uncertainty, I often get anxious. My tendency is to “pedal faster” than simply to “be still.” Uncertainty can put us in one of two postures: one that spins out of control or one that recognizes there never was in control to begin with and therefore simply just receives. Sometimes the Lord holds us in that uncomfortable space of uncertainty to show us that the only source of certainty (and joy) was only ever Him to begin with.

But God. God is too big, too grand, too EVERYTHING to be contained by my little agenda, my “boxes.” If I spend too much time looking at my prideful way of clinging to control, it will keep me stuck. But when I look UP to the One who IS in control, my grip loosens on all I've clung so tightly to.

What a comfort to bring all of this to the certainty of the cross. ***“He Who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will He not freely give us all things?”*** Romans 8:31. The “all things” may not be exactly what we think we want or need—but as we look to His hands pierced for us, our hands slowly release our grip on control.

Sometimes the bravest, most God-glorifying thing we can do is to just “do the next thing”. It doesn't have to be radical. It can be doing that load of laundry. Calling a neighbor. Speaking kindly to a loved-one. Getting off social media and the news and into the Word. Going on a long walk outside. Staying in the moment with God, with the people of God, with His Word, with whatever large or small task He sets before us.

May this season of uncertainty be a time that we all remember what's most important and rest all the more in the steadfast certainty of God.

Many Blessings!



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