





Inside the Statehouse with Steve Flowers

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

www.steveflowers.us



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

Congressional Lines and Congressmen will Remain the Same

For several years leading up to the 2010 Census count, the national projections were that Alabama would lose one of our seven congressional districts and drop to six. When the count was taken, we surprised ourselves and the nation and kept our seven seats in the United States Congress.

Therefore, the legislature’s task in drawing our seven congressional districts was relatively easy. Except for some tweaking here and there due to growth in Madison, Limestone, Lee, Shelby and especially Baldwin counties, and the loss of population in the Black Belt, our congressional district lines were kept basically the same as they have been for the past few decades.

We essentially have six of our seven districts that are safe Republican seats. We have one dedicated majority minority African American Democratic Congressional District.

That Democratic seat is held by Congresswoman Terri Sewell. She has been in that seat for over a decade and has become a respected leader in the Democratic House leadership. The Democrats are in the majority which makes her a powerful member of the House. However, most political experts and polling indicates that this year’s election will bring a swing of 30 or more Republican seat pickups or takeovers, thus making the Republicans the majority party. This will be beneficial for Alabama since six of our seven seats are held by Republicans. It will be particularly beneficial to folks in the fourth district, who have Robert Aderholt (R-Haleyville) as their Congressman.

Aderholt is the most senior member of our delegation and is the ranking Republican on the House Appropriation Committee.

Congressman Mike Rogers (R-Anniston) is also gaining ground in seniority. He is a ranking member of the Armed Services Committee.

Congressman Gary Palmer (R-Jefferson) represents the suburban areas of metro-Jefferson, Hoover and Shelby. It is considered one of the most Republican House districts in America.

We have two freshmen Republican Congressmen, who are finishing their first two years in the House. Jerry Carl (R-Mobile) represents the coastal first district of basically Mobile and Baldwin Counties. He has taken to Congress like a duck to water.

Barry Moore (R-Enterprise) represents the second district made up of the

Wiregrass and the fast growing Pike Road area of Montgomery as well as the populous counties of Autauga and Elmore.

All six of the aforementioned incumbents will be reelected without opposition.

The only excitement in Congressional politics in the Heart of Dixie will play out in the fifth district. This Huntsville-Tennessee Valley seat is currently held by Mo Brooks, who has opted to run for the U.S. Senate, thus leaving a seldom seen open congressional seat contest. There are six Republicans vying for this open fifth district seat. The contestants are Dale Strong, Paul Sanford, Casey Wardynski, Harrison Wright, Andy Blalock, and John Roberts.

Madison County Commission Chairman Dale Strong appears to be the strongest candidate. He is far outdistancing the field in polling and fundraising. Some say that he could eclipse the field without a runoff.

The most ardent challengers will be former State Senator Paul Sanford and former Huntsville City School Superintendent Casey Wardynski. Dr. Wardynski has done a good job fundraising.

There will be a large turnout in this congressional race. In fact, this Huntsville-Madison-Limestone Tennessee Valley area of the state will more than likely have the largest percentage turnout in the state. Not only is there an open congressional seat, but Mo Brooks is the local candidate for the open U.S. Senate Seat, and popular, incumbent Republican state school board member, Wayne Reynolds, will also be on the ballot with token opposition.

In addition, the only hotly contested Republican State Senate race between Tom Butler and Bill Holtzclaw is in the Madison-Limestone area. There are also three open hotly contested State House races, including filling the seats of Speaker Mac McCutcheon and veteran House member Howard Sanderford. There is also a hotly contested open sheriff’s race in Limestone County. Furthermore, the phantom candidate for the U.S. Senate, Mike Durant, claims Huntsville as his home. All of these ingredients are a recipe for a larger turnout in the Tennessee Valley than the rest of the state on May 24.

The Congressional lines and six of seven congressmen will remain the same for this 2022 election cycle. However, hold the phone. The federal courts could change that for 2024.



Justice Will Sellers

THE CONSENSUS JUSTICE

It was no surprise when 60 years ago President Kennedy nominated Byron White as an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

With few detractors and almost nationwide acclaim, White was almost everyone’s choice, and his confirmation was dizzying.

Nominated on April 3, his judiciary committee hearing began just eight days later. After White testified

for 15 minutes, his nomination was unanimously approved and immediately moved to the Senate floor, where he was confirmed by a simple voice vote.

On April 16 - less than two weeks after his nomination was announced – White took the oath of office.

During his 31 years on the Supreme Court, Justice White did his best to remain obscure. He loathed the press, rejected all attempts at biography, and even destroyed his personal papers. He considered his 994 opinions as the best expression of his judicial philosophy.

Though little-known today, White was once a household name – a sports hero whose fame and name identification rivaled anyone appointed to the court before or since.

Typifying what would now be referred to as a scholar athlete, White was a halfback at the University of Colorado, leading his team to an undefeated regular season followed by post-season play in the Cotton Bowl.

Nicknamed “Whizzer White” because of his swift rushing ability, White was the runner-up for the 1937 Heisman Trophy.

At the ripe age of twenty-one, he faced a critical decision. He was nominated for a Rhodes Scholarship but was also drafted by the nascent NFL Pittsburgh Pirates and offered the highest salary in the league. White considered his options and decided to do both, committing to play professional football in the fall and then head to Oxford when the season ended. Solving this personal dilemma would portend his practical way of handling cases.

White’s matriculation at Oxford was cut short when World War II began in Europe. He enrolled in Yale law school and used his earnings from professional football, which he continued to play, to fund his tuition.

Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, White left law school and joined the navy. He served in the Pacific as an intelligence offer and was assigned to debrief a young John F. Kennedy when his PT boat sunk. At war’s end, White completed law school graduating first in his class and earning a clerkship with Chief Justice Fred Vinson.

He eventually returned home to Colorado, where the economy was booming. White developed a successful law practice negotiating contracts and closing transactions for businesses and investors. His courtroom experience was limited to a handful of minor criminal cases.

While never a candidate, White was active in the local Democrat Party, working on any number of campaigns and using his celebrity status as a football hero to lend credibility to the candidates he supported.

One candidate, in particular, needed credibility by association.

John F. Kennedy was a backbench U.S. senator from Massachusetts, and few in Colorado, much less the western United States, had any idea who he was.

In searching for someone to organize his presidential campaign in the West, Kennedy’s advisors chose White. It turned out to be a brilliant decision, and as the campaign developed, White grew close to the Kennedy family, which came to rely upon him for solid, practical advice.

Once Kennedy was elected, White’s raw organizational intelligence and managerial skill earned him a job in the administration. The Kennedys’ realized that White could run the Justice Department while Bobby held the title of Attorney General and worked on other matters.

As Deputy Attorney General, White handled the day-to-day operations of the Justice Department, hired staff, and organized the bureaucracy to support President Kennedy’s agenda. His work gave him a very high profile, especially with members of Congress who wanted certain constituents appointed to positions within their states.

And so, when a vacancy occurred on the Supreme Court, he was the president’s confidential first choice, but before White could be officially nominated, other candidates, for publicity’s sake, had to be vetted. As a result of this process, Kennedy was confronted with the opportunity to appoint the first African-American as a Supreme Court justice.

During the presidential campaign, Kennedy had proactively worked to earn the support of Martin Luther King, Jr., and other prominent Black ministers throughout the South, but, in return, they demanded more than lip service to promoting civil rights and appointing minorities to office. With the first Supreme Court vacancy, Kennedy was worried that Dr. King might demand the nomination of Judge William Hastie, but King never expressed disappointment with White.

While White’s nomination was well-received, a few detractors worried that his lack of courtroom experience and judicial service might prove detrimental. In addition, no one could determine if he would be a liberal or conservative jurist, and when asked to define the role of the Supreme Court, White simply replied, “to decide cases.”

White became the justice liberals loved to hate and conservatives hated to love. No doubt Kennedy supporters were disappointed in his dissenting opinions in landmark cases like Miranda and Roe. But conservatives, too, would find White’s jurisprudence hard to embrace when he approved affirmative action in higher education, agreed with campaign finance regulation, and ruled Georgia’s death penalty to be unconstitutional.

When he announced his retirement, the press was elated to see him go. His decisions were viewed critically, and his career on the court seen as the one blight tarnishing the Camelot myth.

The enigma of Byron White may be that in an age of celebrity judges, high stakes confirmation hearings, arguments over judicial philosophy, and national political groups funding campaigns to oppose and support a nominee, he was a judge who merely wanted to decide cases.

He eschewed pontificating on various high-minded principles, did nothing to court favorable public approval and left no record of his means or methods of reaching decisions. Much like Sir Christopher Wren’s tribute in St. Paul’s Cathedral in London, “If you seek his monument, look around you,”

Byron White’s legacy is contained in his decisions.

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ROBSERVATIONS... WHEN IS ENOUGH, ENOUGH?

by Robert Tate

Enough is enough. I cannot stress that “enough.”

I know I am not supposed to speak ill of our leaders and I do pray for the President often. But at the same time, every single one of us in this country has got to come to the realization that this man is in no way “in the game.” He is absolutely horrible but I believe that can be attributed to his clearly decreasing cognitive abilities and shame on his wife and all other people who let this man go into the public eye and continually embarrass himself and this country. Countries from around the world continue to poke fun at him and his administration. Why? Think of all the low hanging fruit they serve up every day. If you want a sad chill to run down your spine, just watch some of the news outlets out of Australia. They are relentless in the reporting and doing the job our press, for the most part, refuses to do.

Not that I am in anyway a follower of the Russian-controlled Pravda newspaper, but they just recently published an article questioning President Biden’s cognitive abilities. And I hate to say this, in some ways, they are clearly on to something. They listed five areas; forgetfulness, disorientation, aimless wandering, behavioral changes including aggression, and difficulties in movement to bolster their argument. Unfortunately, with an honest eye, most of us can say we have seen these manifested in our President. www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/russia-accuses-biden-of-having-dementia/ar-AAWnC74?ocid=msedgdp&pc=U531&cvid=64ab126f65e6491fa6e012775005f017

I am not going to sit here and bash the President. I am just not. I am not the guy who goes around shouting the “Let’s Go B...” mantra. Not going to do it. Ever. I honestly feel sorry for the man. But when I watch his decline, our President and the supposed leader of the free world, it both saddens and sickens me. He seemingly has no idea of what to do and the people around him do not seem to care in the least. I think the only thing keeping him in office, and yes, I wrongfully predicted he would have been out of office by now, but the only thing keeping him employed is that his VP Kamala is even worse than he is. And that is saying a lot. Who could have predicted exactly how terrible and ineffective she would be in her job.? How about that 35% approval rating? She is the perfect example of why winning an election should never be any kind of popularity contest.

But over the last month, as the war in the Ukraine continues to rage, President Biden has said some fairly egregious things. What is worse, almost the minute he says them, his administration immediately comes out and says to the effect, “Yeah he did say that but what he meant was . . .” Anytime the man goes off script, we can expect some recanting by his handlers. Here are just some recent examples.

1. We are sending troops to the Ukraine: While addressing US troops in his recent Poland visit, Biden alluded to the fact that we are going to send troops to the Ukraine and in fact mentions that some of those he was addressing had already been there. This despite the continued line that we are not going to do just that. Biden’s words were, “You know, with the Ukrainian people, Ukrainian people have a lot of backbone, they have a lot of guts and I’m sure you’re observing it. And you’re gonna see when you’re there, and some of you have been there.” Okay, wow. You know, that is pretty clear to me what he said. For their part, however, his handlers walked it back by stating, “The president has been clear we are not sending U.S. troops to Ukraine and there is no change in that position.” Now that is what I call a retraction. So, which one is it? Does he even know? He clearly said what he said. www.dailywire.com/news/watch-biden-appears-to-tell-u-s-troops-they-are-going-to-ukraine

2. Sanctions don’t deter. Okay, this is one of the stupidest statements I’ve heard him utter. Sad stuff actually. When challenged by a reporter that sanctions failed to stop Putin from invading the Ukraine, Biden responded with an incredibly misleading statement. Unfortunately, the reporter asked the wrong question in terms of tense. The President said, “Let’s get something straight. Do you remember, if you covered me from the very beginning, I did not say that, in fact, the sanctions would deter him. Sanctions never deter. You keep talking about that. Sanctions never deter.” www.dailywire.com/news/watch-biden-appears-to-tell-u-s-troops-they-are-going-to-ukraine

Where the heck do I start with this one? I spent ten years teaching operational planning at Maxwell AFB and part of the coursework was a class I taught on coercive strategies. (i.e. getting people to do what you want without sometimes actually having to fight them.) I am here to tell you, if applied correctly, the threat of sanctions can deter if applied correctly. The problem Biden has is that he and the U.N. implemented sanctions after the invasion had already taken place. Here comes the big, “Duh.” In this way President Biden was correct in that applying sanctions after an invasion is not going to deter that invasion. Duh! How can he not see that? But as part of an effective coercive strategy, if the threat of significant sanctions is presented before hostilities, they can have the desired coercive effect. This is not to say sanctions will definitely have worked against Vlad, that is a different issue, but to say that sanctions “never” deter is

doctrinal insanity. If before the invasion, the UN together with the rest of the world all said in agreement something along the lines of, “If you invade the Ukraine, you will lose your permanent seat at the UN, no countries will purchase any of your oil or other products, no countries will be allowed to import any goods to Russia, we are going to freeze your assets (i.e. sanctions) etc.,” might that have dissuaded Putin from invading? Maybe, but we will never know because nobody tried. The point here is that doctrinally, sanctions as part of a complete coercive strategy, can have a desired strategic effect. The President should know this. Clearly, he doesn’t.

3. Regime Change: Again, the White House had to walk back another Biden claim. When the man starts talking, nobody, and I mean nobody has an idea of what he is going to say next. This is why at least twice, the White House has cut a live feed while Biden was going off on another of his tangents. In another such diatribe, the President clearly called for a regime change in Russia. He said that Putin “cannot remain in power.” Wow, that is pretty specific. No matter how much they walked back this statement, like others, not remaining in power is a clear call for a regime change. No matter how you spin it. But again, immediately after this, the administration walked it back saying that is not what he meant. In other words, don’t believe your lying ears.

4. Respond in Kind. In a rare question and answer segment, Biden was asked if Russia used weapons of mass destruction, what would be NATO’s response? Biden clearly stated that we would respond “in kind.” www.cnn.com/2022/03/24/biden-says-us-would-respond-to-russia-if-putin-uses-chemical-or-biological-weapons.html. Again, no level of walking back this statement can take away from what the President said. In kind means guess what? In kind. Hello!! Questions? On what planet is that not clear? In other words, if Putin uses them, so will we. Did President Biden really mean it? No, I really do not think he did but that is the whole purpose of this column. The man continually says things that have to be retracted, ignored or over explained. His people know that he cannot possibly say anything off the teleprompter without guarded fear of what may slip out.

5. Easter Bunny: Did you guys see the President on Easter Sunday on the White House lawn. You can see him talking to people when as reported, he was beginning to answer questions about Afghanistan when a White House staffer, a woman from the communications shop, dressed up as an Easter Bunny, actually got between the President and the reporter, turned the President away and walked him away from the reporter. You simply cannot make this stuff up. There are dozens of outlets with the video. An Easter Bunny has more sway at the White House than the President. How sad.

Again, the entire point of this Robservation is that I, along with millions of others around the world see President Biden for what he is. A tired old man who seems to have little grip on the reality of what he is doing. And I am not even talking about the record inflation, the Afghanistan debacle or our southern border, but from finishing a speech and turning to shake hands when nobody is there to getting lost on the White House lawn, we have a sad picture of a man who needs to step down but apparently cannot because his VP is a worse proposition than he is. As for me, I will continue to pray for the man but I cannot ignore the reality of what he is and what he is doing.



Screengrabs from video: www.dailymail.co.uk/

DID YOU KNOW?

— Eighth in a Series —

In 1860, 90% of federal revenue came from tariffs (also called customs, duties and impost), and excise taxes. The remaining 10% came from sales of land.

As an agricultural society, the South manufactured few of the goods it needed. Wealthier than their Northern counterparts, Southerners eagerly imported European made goods which were of lower cost and higher quality than Northern made goods.

Tariffs were a source of contention between the North and South from the founding of the country. Southerners considered tariffs unfair, largely because they fell most heavily on the Southern States. This was exacerbated when tariffs were enacted to protect Northern industry.

In 1860, approximately 75% of tariff revenue came from the Southern States. This meant two-thirds of the federal revenue came from the Southern States. Loss of these States would mean the loss of this revenue.

The Republican Party platform of 1860 called for an increase in tariff rates to support growing industry, when the majority of industry was in the Northern States. This was strongly supported by Abraham Lincoln and strongly opposed in the South.

“That, while providing revenue for the support of the general government by duties upon imports, sound policy requires an adjustment of these imposts as to encourage the development of the industrial interests.” Declaration 12

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Remember Every Joesophant AND MAGAt

As expected, Joe's approval numbers are in the 'Trumpster.' Duopoly voter buyer's remorse once again set in as election hype attenuates. You'll find admission of remorse difficult to extract from any **Joesophant** (blind Biden supporter) as was the case with **MAGAts** (blind Trump supporters) after the 2016 election Kabuki show.

Readers of past columns may recall my explanation of stolen Presidential elections as taken from the PEOPLE under our current, very UN-representative republic results. I don't care which political thief (Biden/Clinton/Trump) was installed. Blue or Red parasites undoubtedly care about the rigged election outcomes, but the generic productive citizen interested in promoting the **general** welfare (**not specific** interests) is indifferent, which colour parasite is sucking them to death.

This is the cycle we'll continue to observe under our current unconstitutional election results, mostly due to the 435 limit [imposed in 1929] and hyper-gerry-mandering this wrongful limitation generates. In many States like Alabama, the corrupt results are amplified by some of the most anti-competitive ballot access laws in our hegemonic union.

Disheartening to observe so many I know, who possess the intelligence and integrity to see this failure (not adhering to the Constitution on determining HoR members and the Electoral College) putting themselves on the emotional roller-coaster every four years. Compelling their otherwise rational mind to vote for one of the deeply flawed duopoly candidates instead of refusing to vote in the race or better still, start voting for alternative (non-duopoly) candidates to be a path-breaker shepherding more competition into elections. This mental anguish has consequences. After the 'feel good' moment of participating in the rigged duopoly choice wears off... the reality sets in with obvious buyer's remorse soon thereafter followed by 'in the Trumpster' approval ratings reported these past weeks. Easy to see why we've become a much more despaired people, while 'big-Pharma' parasites feast as those psychotropic prescriptions come rolling in.

In 2016 I was disappointed Trump was elected, but certain Clinton would've been no better. Johnson voters going Libertarian showed Democrats they could've won with more concern for civil rights, esp. not taking our life, liberty and property. The Democratic Party offers little promise of return to their roots championing low taxes and smaller government again to induce libertarian voters' help on the margin in the future. Tired of losing to Republicans (who set us on our path of class warfare, corporate welfare, high taxes, *etc.* imposed by hegemony) Dems 'out republicaned' the Republicans which quickly accelerated US toward the morass we've 'progressed' into today.

A Party machine so comfortable installing Biden as their Presidential candidate (up against such an inferior opponent like Trump) was revealing. When Amy Klobuchar redirected some of her supporters over to Biden at the Iowa Caucus so Joe wouldn't be DOA at the starting gate made it clear the fix was in and ended any independent voter's credibility for Klobuchar. Some think this (more than the 'Kabuki Theatre on counting) is driving the movement to no longer have the 'Iowa Morasses' in such a powerful lead position. Tulsi Gabbard was the only remaining Democratic candidate traditional Democrat type independent voters would've supported if she'd won the nomination. Someone of Gabbard's accomplishments and integrity will never get far in either of the duopoly parties, but pressing Hillary on some of her many flaws was not going to be allowed by the Dem machine.



Source: Wikipedia

The saddest outcome of the 2020 election was Johnson voters unwilling to vote Libertarian again to affirm their resolve to not waste their vote on duopoly candidates - esp. when the choices are so poor. Four more years of Trump was easy to forecast as bad as a decade or so Biden then Harris. Trump re-election could've been a wake-up to Democrats to stop running big govt. thieves, even if the Biden crime family was inoculated (by a Senate which refused impeachment witnesses and testimony) and as untouchable as the Trump crime family.

In short, remember every **MAGAt** and **Joesophant** who supported and remained unapologetic about these two political thieves. They are unworthy of anyone's ear to influence your vote and understanding of what's going on from DC down to your county commissioners, local school boards and city council. Felon Hubbard/Riley's press for the Amendment One tax explosion was all the 'acid test' small govt. advocates required to write off these traditional Republicans. Stunning how many **MAGAts** still defend them. Similarly, the other Don - Siegelman that is ... championing hospital fraud and flawed gambling legislation Don advocated killed any credibility for this political thief. Equally stunning how many **Joesophants** still defend this former federal inmate.

Time for Alabama to look itself in the mirror and admit their role in aiding and abetting big govt. Democrat Trump simply because he quickly changed to a Red jersey clearing the field for his friend and promised protector Hillary. Anyone who can see beyond Kabuki realizes none of these big time political crime families (Bushes, Bidens, Clintons, Trumps) will ever be locked up. There's no one more culpable in Alabama than embarrassment Jeff Sessions who could be defeated by a mediocre college football coach who's too apathetic or incompetent (does it matter?) to understand the playbook (US Constitution) in the game he's currently so inept at playing. Cash register Shelby showed equal disregard for our lives, liberty and property and made it clear he was no fan of Sessions for using Alabama to launch the "Trump show," but Shelby's minion is now parading herself as 'Trumpier than thou' riding the current corrupt political winds as instructed by her masters in the Senate race.

Another Senatorial candidate is doing his best to play the "Trump card" and hide his 'Never Trump' backing. There's only one Senate candidate who had the courage to stand against Trump early on, then tried to work with him decently once installed by our rigged electoral process. Sufficiently pooped on by Trump several times it seems this candidate has learned his lesson and would go a long way toward getting Alabama back on track toward undoing or at least ameliorating some of what Comrades Biden and Trump have accomplished in DC - our Moscow on the Potomac.

As Trump fades further into our rear-view mirrors, likely to become a smaller, distant image as more Trump candidates lose in other States (like GA and PA) independent voters will be looking for leadership to move away from our increased command and control economy. **Joesophants** and **MAGAts** may be sufficiently discounted enough for rational voters to look for those who had the courage to stand against this madness, but tried (however foolishly) to work with such madmen. Although disappointing to witness once sound thinkers like Rand Paul and Mo Brooks become Trump suckers, they are two leaders who may have what it takes to shake off the poop from the Trump propeller and get back in the game with the greatest success of moving forward out of the mess we've 'progressed' into these past years.

"The Informed Southerner"

The Confederate Constitution: An Improved Version of the Original Compact

Patrick Henry opposed adoption of the U.S. Constitution and warned the South about its partners, the New England "Puritans." Realizing the antagonistic regional economic interests, Henry reasoned that once the North gained a firm majority, Southern rights would be trampled. He said: "I am sure that the dangers of this system are real, when those who have no similar interests with the people of this country are to legislate for us—when our dearest interests are to be left in the hands of those whose advantage it will be to infringe them." Henry's predictions soon became reality.

Seventy-five years of struggle with New England interests and the election of the entirely sectional Abraham Lincoln led several Southern States to leave the union. Before being militarily coerced back into the "union," the Confederate States created a constitution that removed most flaws within the original compact. Structurally, the Confederate Constitution mirrored the old document: Article I: legislative powers; Article II: executive powers; Article III: judicial powers; Article IV: defined relations of States to each other and to the general government; Article V: the process for amendments; Article VI: legal principle and international law; and Article VII: provisions for ratification.

The Confederate Constitution began with "We, the people of the Confederate States, each acting in its sovereign and independent character..." instead of the more ambiguous "We, the people of the United States..." Both constitutions were voluntary creations of the States—the Confederate Constitution removed all doubts.

Article 1, Section 2 of the Confederate Constitution forbade non-citizens and foreigners from voting in elections. Additionally, the power of impeachment was expanded beyond the House of Representatives to include giving States power to impeach corrupt federal officers (including judges) operating within said State.

Article 1, Section 3 stated when a senatorial election would be held. Previously, senators were elected by each State's legislature with no specific time limit for election.

Article 1, Section 7 expanded Executive power by allowing a line-item veto whereby the President could veto parts of a spending bill without vetoing the entire bill. The South had been frequently pummeled with the North's pork and "internal improvements." The Confederate Constitution prevented Congress from appropriating money "for any internal improvement to facilitate commerce," except for improvement to facilitate waterway navigation. But 'in all such cases, such duties shall be laid on the navigation facilitated thereby, as may be necessary to pay for the costs and expenses thereof..."

The U.S. Constitution stated Congress had power to collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises to "promote the general welfare." Patrick Henry and others

pointed out the ambiguity of this "General Welfare Clause." The Confederate Constitution remedied this problem, stating Congress could collect taxes, duties, etc., to "carry on the Government of the Confederate States..." This was key in limiting special interests.

Article I, Section 8 of the Confederate Constitution had no parallel. It was pro-trade/anti-protectionist, stating, "no bounties shall be granted from the Treasury; nor shall any duties or taxes on importation from foreign nations be laid to promote or foster any branch of industry [over another]." This was a strike against corporate welfare and protectionism of favored industries, tactics employed by the Protectionist Whigs and a considerable sector of the Republican Party (e.g., the Radical Republicans), at the expense of the Southern States. You could say they approved the fusion of favored corporations and government.

Article 1, Section 9 outlawed the international slave trade, making it the first American constitution to do so in the original text. Slave labor was allowed (as in the U.S. Constitution) and it was left up to the individual States (existing or future) to decide how its citizens would handle it. In the same article and section, there was an attempt to eliminate entitlements: "All bills appropriating money shall specify...the exact amount of each appropriation, and the purposes for which it is made...Congress shall grant no extra compensation to any public contractor, officer, agent, or servant, after such contract shall have been made or such service rendered." In other words, the bid amount was final, there would be no cost over-runs, and politicians could not enrich their "friends."

Article II of the Confederate Constitution called for one six-year presidential term (no second term). Article III, Section 2 eliminated Diversity Jurisdiction, which allowed federal intervention when two States had a legal dispute. Finally, in Article V, Section 1 the States, rather than Congress, initiated the amendment process.

The Confederate States produced a constitutional gem to rebut Lincoln's regime "of the corporations, by the corporations, and for the corporations." The Republicans were the original "corporate welfare" party but, as fellow Alabama Gazette columnist John Sophocleus noted, "The Democrats have learned to out-Republican the Republicans." Indeed, we still suffer from the rotten fruit borne out of Lincoln's forced union.

Sources: Constitution of the Confederate States, March 11, 1861, *The Avalon Project*, Yale Law School, Lillian Goldman Law Library; Randall G. Holcombe, "The Confederate Constitution," *The Free Market*, Mises Institute, June 1992; Admiral Raphael Semmes, *Memoirs of Service Afloat*, Blue and Grey Press, 1987; and John M. Taylor, *Union At All Costs: From Confederation to Consolidation*.



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Is There an Interesting Recent U.S. Supreme Court Case?



Ronald A. Holtsford

There is a case decided in March 2022 arising out of the state of Texas. Factually, it involved the horrific murder of Texas resident Pablo Castro in 2004 by John Ramirez [and two other assailants] for less than \$2.00. [All three were convicted of three robberies that same night]. One woman managed to escape unharmed by giving the three her purse after the knife used to kill Castro was held to her neck in front of her 2-year-old son. Another woman escaped in her vehicle after the trio attempted to rob her in a fast food drive through line.

The vehicle with the perpetrators in it was identified and pursued by police until it ended in a foot chase. Two accomplices were captured, the killer managed to escape and went to Mexico where he was later arrested near the border just over three years later. Ramirez was sentenced to death in 2008. For over a decade, Ramirez managed to prolong the visit to the death chamber by lethal injection.

Ramirez filed a prison grievance that he wanted his spiritual advisor in the execution chamber during his execution. Initially Texas refused it then later determined that it would be allowed. Ramirez then filed a Step 1 Grievance in June 2021, not only to allow his spiritual advisor in the death chamber but also to be given the ability to verbally utter prayers and to “lay hands on him,” which Ramirez stated was a part of his religion. His pastor stated affirmatively. Texas refused, saying it was not a part of its protocols when in fact it had been allowed. Ramirez then appealed with a Step 2 Grievance and, because Texas did not act with only a month until the execution, he filed suit through the Federal District Court. The suit asserted under the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000 and the First Amendment. Ramirez sought preliminary and permanent injunctive relief unless such religious accommodation was allowed in the death chamber. The Complaint was amended to include the pastor audibly praying and laying hands on during the execution. Texas refused and was supported by the Federal District Court as well as the Fifth Circuit as well as a stay of the execution. A Writ of Certiorari was filed with the United States Supreme Court and the Court agreed to hear the case.

The issue is whether the execution should be halted for full consideration. However, to do so Ramirez, “*must establish that he is likely to succeed on the merits, that he is likely to suffer irreparable harm in the absence of preliminary relief, that the balance of equities tips in his favor, and that an injunction is in the public interest.*” *Winter v. Natural Resources Defense Council, Inc.*, 555 U.S. 7, 20. I must say I got a bit of a chuckle out of the test consisting of “irreparable harm” when Ramirez was definitely facing that but not because of the issue at

hand. Under 42 U. S. C. §2000cc–1(a). *A plaintiff bears the initial burden of proving that a prison policy “implicates his religious exercise.” Holt v. Hobbs*, 574 U. S. 352, 360. *A prisoner’s requested religious accommodation “must be sincerely based on a religious belief and not some other motivation.” Id., at 360–361. The burden on the prisoner’s religious exercise must also be “substantial.” Id., at 361.Pp. 9–18.* Looking at Texas execution protocol and history it does not appear that the allowance as requested by Ramirez will restrict the state from carrying out its compelling governmental interests and it does not appear that the burden on Texas would be substantial. Texas was also concerned that the allowance of a verbal prayer could allow for the exploitation of a “statement” to be made but the Supreme Court did not see that considering the sincerity of Ramirez’s pastor. It was also felt that the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000 [RLUIPA] would succeed on its merits. The lower Court opinions were reversed and remanded back to the trial Court for reconsideration on the merits. Chief Justice Roberts wrote the majority opinion as well as concurring opinions written by Justices Kavanaugh and Sotomayor.

Surprisingly only Justice Thomas voted in dissension and wrote a dissenting opinion. His feeling was that Ramirez, through numerous and various procedures, had long delayed his execution. Thomas wrote, “*In RLUIPA, Congress created a potent tool with which prisoners can protect their sincerely held religious beliefs. But, like any tool, it can be wielded abusively. And few have a greater incentive to do so than death-row inmates. To counter such abuse, federal courts sitting in equity have a duty to dismiss piecemeal, late-breaking, dilatory, specious, speculative, or manipulative litigation. RLUIPA itself complements that process by requiring a prisoner to demonstrate sincerity.*”

Meanwhile, Congress passed the PLRA [The Prison Litigation Reform Act 42 U.S.C. § 1997e] *to force prisoners to exhaust their complaints through state prisons’ administrative review processes so that prison officials might resolve, or at least build a record to help shed light on, an alleged problem before it escalates to litigation. Federal courts have a duty under the PLRA to dismiss these unexhausted claims.*

Today, the Court shrugs off both of these duties. *It grants equitable relief for a demonstrably abusive and insincere claim filed by a prisoner with an established history of seeking unjustified delay, harming the State and Ramirez’s victims in the process. The Court also forgives the same prisoner’s complete failure to exhaust another claim. Because I would deny equitable relief for the first claim and dismiss the second under the PLRA, I respectfully dissent.*”

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

This article is informative only and not meant to be all inclusive. Additionally this article does not serve as legal advice to the reader and does not constitute an attorney-client relationship. The reader should seek counsel from their attorney should any questions exist. No representation is made that the quality of legal services performed is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers. As always if you do not have an attorney, ask a trusted friend or family member or contact the Alabama State Bar, Lawyer Referral service.

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Biden on a Mission to Destroy American Economy



Perry O. Hooper, Jr.



Founder Let the People Speak
Former Alabama State Representative

Joe Biden has shown his true colors. He has sold us out lock, stock and barrel to the most leftist fringe elements of the Democrat Party. He now worships at the altar of the Green New Deal. In his own words, “No more subsidies for the fossil fuel industry; no more drilling including offshore; no ability for the oil industry to continue to drill period. It ends.” Under President Trump, we had regained our energy independence much to the chagrin of the global elites. When he took office, Biden’s first acts were to cancel the Keystone XL Pipeline and rejoining the Paris Climate accords assuring that America would no longer be energy independent for the first time since World War II.

His administration welcomes \$10.00 gallon gas so everyday Americans can no longer afford to drive their car. He is ready to turn the country into an energy starved third world country all because of his crazy debunked climate change theories and his desire to be loved by global elites.

No matter what the crazies in the Biden Administration and the United Nations tell you, our capitalist society hasn’t embraced fossil fuels out of hatred of the planet. It’s the exact opposite. Fossil fuels are the foundation of economic growth and prosperity. Affordable, reliable, dependable sources of energy enable us to protect the environment while creating jobs and the goods and services we need. Expensive and unreliable energy, like the kind produced by wind and solar destroys jobs and harms the environment. Replacing our entire fleet of internal combustion engine cars and trucks is worse than an impossible pipe dream; it is pure insanity. Our current fleet generates its own energy efficiently. Electric vehicles need even more power generated for operation. They only store power in inefficient, environmentally dangerous batteries for their operation. This is a simple fact the left refuses to accept. No matter how many charging stations Biden builds, they all have to be connected to power plants.

Oil is a miracle fuel. Alex Epstein of the Center for Industrial Progress writes that it is “almost eerily engineered by natural processes, not just for cheapness, not just for reliability, not just for scalability, but also for another characteristic crucial to a functional civilization: portability.” It powers cars, trucks, and jets, without which the modern world as we know it wouldn’t exist.”

Alabama State Republican Executive Committee
Alabama Trump Victory Chairman 2016

Alabama Trump Elector 2016
Alabama Trump Team Leader 2020

The Green New Deal has another big ally, Vladimir Putin. Evidence continues to mount that he is responsible for unaccountable millions in dark money (anonymous donations) to American and European non-governmental organizations. These organizations fund programs that discourage energy exploration, shuts down nuclear plants, and encourage the use of unreliable and expensive energy, such as solar panels and wind turbines whose utilization is propped up with taxpayer funded government subsidies.

Utilizing this strategy, Russian became the major supplier of natural gas to Europe while the green agenda shut down domestic European production. So, as Putin seeks to decapitate Ukraine, he knows that one source of income for his war machine remains the natural gas that our NATO allies such as Germany must have in order to survive.

Biden administration’s totally inept energy policies have played directly into Putin’s hands and our oil imports from Russia have filled his coffers.

Soaring energy prices are harming every American and killing the Democrats in the polls. Returning to energy independence by eliminating regulations, restarting the Keystone pipeline, drilling offshore and in Alaska does not fit their agenda. They could care less about creating good high-paying American jobs. Instead, they seek temporary increases in oil production from the worst despots in the world that they can reverse as they see fit.

They want to reinstate Obama’s horrible Iran nuclear deal that President Trump so wisely ended. Iran will be able to ramp up its state sponsored terror when they can legally get their oil back on the world market. They are going hat in hand to the Saudis and are begging them to produce more oil. These are the same Saudis who just barbarically executed 80 individuals without fair trials, the largest such executions in modern history.

Finally, they are making overtures to Venezuelan dictator Nicolas Maduro. Biden wants Maduro’s oil and does not care what happens to the people of Venezuela.

We must make it clear at the polls in November. We must return America back on the path to energy independence by returning the House and Senate to Republican control.



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START MONTH

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Golf on the Taxpayers

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

Cities across America own golf courses, but analysis from the Reason Foundation shows that many lose money on them. Is subsidizing golf a proper function of government?

The Reason study found over cities reporting finances for their golf courses. Seventy percent of cities lost money in 2020, which may have been unrepresentative due to state COVID restrictions. All four Alabama cities reported on (Fort Payne, Gadsden, Millbrook and Pelham) lost money on golf.

In the market, losses indicate that businesses are not producing value equal to the value of resources used. Producing low valued products or services with scarce resources reduces our standard of living. Are cities wasting money on golf?

Answering this question is a little tricky. Golf courses create value in two ways. One is through play (although golfers sometimes wonder why they pay for such frustration). Golf courses also boost the value of adjacent real estate. Developers may build golf courses to sell houses, not to earn profits from course operation. Privately owned courses may create value even if losing money.

Cities generally do not generate auxiliary revenue from golf, so operating deficits are likely being covered out of the budget. Tax dollars have alternative uses, like repairing roads. Should the courses be closed, or is the problem poor management?

Interestingly, firms in the golf industry manage municipal courses. Companies offering this service include Troon, Hampton, Club Corp, and Arnold Palmer. Peter Hill helped build one of the first management companies. A Golf Week story summarized his observations: “Often, municipalities allowed courses to fall into disrepair, didn’t manage the books well, or had trouble finding the proper price point. Or sometimes they realized they simply didn’t know how to run a golf course efficiently.”

Abraham Lincoln said that government should only do things that people “need to have done, but can not do at all, or can not so well do, for themselves.” The existence of private golf courses creates a strong presumption against government golf. Yet local governments provide many services also provided by businesses. Government offers unfair competition for business. A city facility charging prices too low to cover costs rarely goes out of business and the manager (a government bureaucrat) may not be fired. Businesses can go broke competing with tax subsidized prices.

The political influence of avid golfers is a bad reason for government golf. Although municipal golf courses are open to all, only 24 million Americans



played a round in 2019. Avid golfers are a portion of this total and on average have incomes well above the national median. Taxpayers should not fund anyone’s hobby.

Two better arguments exist. The first is expanding opportunities. Golf is an expensive sport, which many children never get to try. It offers many networking opportunities for professionals, so some familiarity could help promote upward income mobility.

Private efforts like the World Golf Foundation’s First Tee program, however, may better achieve this goal. Cities could use tax dollars for vouchers for play by low-income residents or golf field trips for middle and high school students instead of owning golf courses.

The second argument is as an amenity. Restaurants, museums, recreation, and golf affect the “livability” of a region and help businesses attract and retain good workers; economists call these local public goods. Businesses do not provide these and may have to pay higher salaries for employees in areas with few amenities.

The conditions for legitimate investment in amenities, however, are strict. There must be no privately owned, open to the public golf courses within reasonable driving distance. (This also alleviates unfair competition concerns.) Many amenities are not available in rural areas. Evidence should be presented to show the value of golf versus other amenities (e.g., bowling or laser tag).

Local governments are probably better served focusing on roads, schools, and trash collection. Enterprising politicians are sometimes called political entrepreneurs. Politicians who want to go into business should use their own money, not tax dollars.

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

Throw the Bums Out

For nearly four years, we fed-up Alabama citizens have been anxiously waiting for this May 24th Republican primary to clean up our political nightmares—rotten politicians who had earlier promised to follow the fundamentals of our U. S and state Constitutions, individual sovereignty, and minimal government intrusion. Instead, they have corrupted their ethics, their duties, our state, and our nation.

As I have said in the past, I keep wishing for gubernatorial, legislative and local elections every two years, instead of every four. Then we could limit the terms of the rotten apples before they have time to contaminate the entire state.

Who shall we throw out? Obviously they would be the ones who created and supported oppressive pieces of legislation. Examples could be record budgets that are always bigger than previous ones, the gasoline tax increase, hiring officers to harass our people and eat out their substance, and extreme anti-COVID measures that have imposed major economic losses, hardship, misery, sickness, hospitalizations, and deaths, well beyond the normal inconveniences of leaving people’s personal decisions strictly alone.

Several angry Alabamians have voiced their opinions:

Henry W.: *Hey... are you GOING TO STAY AT HOME ???*

John C.: *Anyone know if “(X)” can be subject to recall? Asking for a Patriot.*

Jeanette D.: *Well, a [\$500] fine was imposed... hhhmm.*

Kody L.: *Welcome to communism.*

Atlas A.P.: **#government** Tyranny. Arm up Alabama.

Gordon S.: *This is mass hysteria. We are all prisoners now.*

Greg B.: *Welcome to Camp Alabama. Every Friday, more restrictions.*

Stephen E.: **URGENT!!** *Hate the lockdown? Call (the Governor) now!*



The terminations of corrupt politicians are long overdue. We must “Round Them Up” with an extra potent dose of election “Glyphosate” to forever eradicate their treachery.

We must never forget a treasonous bill (SB255) to expand the power of state health officers and let them impose the very type of “emergency” abuses that must forever be forbidden. **This would permit Alabama health officers to issue whatever “emergency”**

orders they wish with no limit—to supersede existing laws and nullify the U. S. and State Constitutions.

Anybody with half of a brain would immediately say **NO** to this fascist idea, but 29 state senators approved it, six abstained, and **NOT ONE** had enough backbone to vote against it. That is ample justification to throw out the entire Alabama State Senate.

Fortunately, the 2022 session ended before the bill could pass in the House. I am praying it will not pop up next year and sneak through. Judging from past experience, killing a bad bill nearly always has a higher priority than supporting a good bill. SB255 was a perfect example.

Another bad bill this year was the “Numeracy Act,” which will expand the state bureaucracy and cost an extra \$92 Million every year.

The people who we choose to run our nation and state must always remember that their duty is to **SERVE** and **NOT** to **RULE**. Anyone who violates that ethic deserves to be **FIRE**D.

Throwing the bums out is a two-step process. The second step is very simple—vote **OUT** every stinking Democrat in the general election. But before we get there, we must do the step that really matters—the May 24th Republican primary. Here is where we separate the true patriots from the RINOs (Republicans in name only)—those who promise to keep government in check, but continue to collude and vote in lockstep for bigger government like lemmings marching into the sea.

This year, we will be nominating candidates to protect our sacred individual rights—one U. S. Senator, seven U. S. Representatives, a new governor, state senators and representatives, other state offices, and various local offices.

We now have less than four weeks to study our candidates and what policies they will be supporting or refusing. Researching them, especially the new ones is not an easy process. Some can be found at political rallies and other events. Others tend to avoid them, and we must search for phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and other means to contact them.

Political ads rarely illustrate the issues that really matter. They are mostly filled with candidates’ families, churches, professions, education, experience, and similar “qualifications.” Only a few include crucial public policies and what they intend to do to fix them.

This year, we will be electing a U. S. Senator, a governor, seven U.S. representatives, and various state and local candidates. Incumbents with good records of minimizing government and protecting individual rights can be re-elected. Those who fail must be dumped. Many candidates, especially the new ones, need to be seriously studied to assure their dedication to become servants and not rulers. Every citizen is urged to contact every candidate he is likely to vote for and ask the following specific questions:

1. TAXES: What will you do to STOP tax increases, to STOP new taxes, and to ROLL BACK taxes that are already excessive?

2. SPENDING: What will you do to MINIMIZE spending? What programs and departments will you cut back, or even eliminate? Will you strive for budgets that are SMALLER than those of previous years?

3. REGULATIONS, MANDATES: Will you do your utmost to MINIMIZE all regulations and mandates and REPEAL as many as possible?

4. VICTIMLESS ‘CRIMES’: The U.S. has the world’s highest incarceration rate. Alabama’s is even higher, and our prisons are overcrowded. Are you willing to DECRIMINALIZE any “crimes” that are consensual and have no actual victims (recreational drugs, possession of “controlled substances,” possession of “pornography,” prostitution, gambling, “streaking,” doing honest work without a license, etc.)? Are you willing to insist that the victim in a crime must be the one to initiate charges rather than the state? Are you willing to OPPOSE building any new prisons?

5. TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT: Are you willing to MINIMIZE trivial and excessive traffic stops, “fishing,” checkpoints, speed traps, harassment, unjustified citations, excessive fines and penalties, and similar actions that impede traffic and endanger motorists?

6. BUREAUCRACY: Will you work to reduce the quantity of government personnel down to a reasonable level and eliminate needless government positions and invasive nannyism?

7. And one final question: WHAT WILL YOU DO TO MAKE GOVERNMENT SMALLER, LESS INTRUSIVE, AND LESS EXPENSIVE? Listen very carefully to his response. If he waffles and/or suggests something like becoming more “efficient,” he fails the test. A big government that is efficient is more dangerous than a big government that is lazy.

When talking to any candidate, MAKE SURE [he/she] understands AND WILL UPHOLD the following:

“THAT THE **SOLE OBJECT AND ONLY LEGITIMATE END OF GOVERNMENT IS TO PROTECT THE CITIZEN IN THE ENJOYMENT OF LIFE, LIBERTY, AND PROPERTY, AND WHEN THE GOVERNMENT ASSUMES OTHER FUNCTIONS, IT IS USURPATION AND OPPRESSION.**” Alabama State Constitution, Article 1, Section 35.

BIG GOVERNMENT IS PUBLIC ENEMY #1, and by a huge margin. Our government—federal, state, and local—has only three legitimate functions—national defense (federal only), roads and bridges, and protecting people from the wrongdoings of other people (criminals). Otherwise, the duty of government is to **leave people alone and get out of the way**. That’s it.

If any candidate even hesitates to commit to these fundamental principles, he does not deserve anybody’s vote. We must work diligently to nominate the most freedom-minded people available. We should not be forced to settle for “the lesser of two evils” in the general election in November.

Support local Law Enforcement



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Sheriff's Office App

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

- Go to your phone's setting icon
- Scroll down and click "Applications"
- Scroll down to "MCSO" or "Montgomery County AL Sheriff"

OR

- Click "Application Manager", if it doesn't take you directly to the location
- Click "Notifications"
- Turn 'on' "Allow Notifications" and "Previews in pop-ups"

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



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Firearms Familiarization Course

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

Class participants must obtain a Montgomery County pistol permit prior to taking the class. Applications are made in our Legal Services Division at the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office, 100 South Lawrence Street in Montgomery on the second floor.

Please keep in mind that pistol permit applications can be processed within minutes.

Future Class Date: June 25

For more info, please call
334-832-1339.



Camp Show-N-Tell

The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office is accepting applications for our annual **FREE Camp Show-N-Tell** summer camp held at YMCA's Camp Chandler, August 1-5, 2022. Activities include canoeing, archery, arts and crafts, swimming, outdoor survival skills and a big dance. Applications are available by visiting our agency at 100 S. Lawrence Street, Montgomery, Alabama 36104 or you may call 334-832-2515 to request an application by fax, email or mail. For more information, please call MCSO Support Services at 334-832-2515.



Junior Fishing Rodeo



Sheriff Derrick Cunningham and the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office would like to invite the youth of Montgomery County to grab their fishing rods, bait, and tackle and join us for our annual **FREE Youth Fishing Rodeo** on Saturday, June 11, 2022, from 6 am - noon. The event will take place at the Montgomery County Ponds on 231 South (Troy Hwy.), which is across the Meriwether Road and Sweet Creek Farmer's Market. Questions? Contact MCSO Support Services Division at 334-832-2515. We hope to see you there!



at the Montgomery County Ponds on 231 South (Troy Hwy.), which is across the Meriwether Road and Sweet Creek Farmer's Market. Questions? Contact MCSO Support Services Division at 334-832-2515. We hope to see you there!

Thank you...

Sheriff Cunningham and Staff would like to personally thank everyone that came out to our annual Easter Egg Hunt because without you, we wouldn't had just a successful community event!



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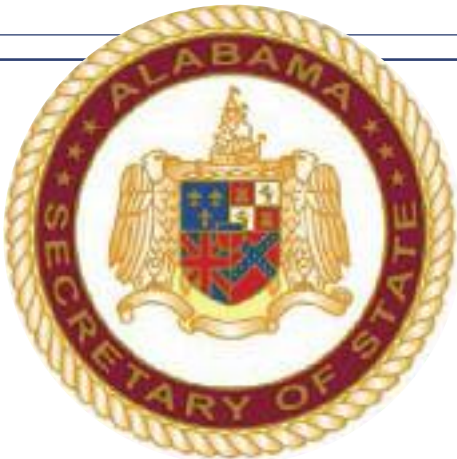
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ELECTION PRIMARIES – MAY 24

May 24, 2022 – Primary Election ❖ June 21, 2022 – Primary Runoff Election
November 8, 2022 – General Election



Register to Vote

Voter registration and updating of voter records is closed during the 14 days prior to each election in Alabama. **VOTERS ...** Visit the Alabama Secretary of State website to do any of the following:

- Absentee Voting

Assistance for Voters with Disabilities

County Election Officials

COVID-19 Resources Related to Voting

Election Information
- Election Laws

Elections Data

Find Your Elected Official Map

Find Your Polling Location

Military/Overseas Voting
- Poll Worker Information

Provisional Ballot Status


Vote in Honor of a Veteran

Voter ID requirements

Voter Registration

www.sos.alabama.gov/alabama-votes/voter/register-to-vote

To download the Montgomery County Democratic Primary Sample Ballot, visit:
www.sos.alabama.gov/sites/default/files/sample-ballots/2022/pri/Montgomery-Pri-2022D.pdf



ALABAMA REPUBLICAN PARTY

SAMPLE BALLOT

OFFICIAL BALLOT

REPUBLICAN PRIMARY AND
CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ELECTION
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, ALABAMA
MAY 24, 2022

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TO VOTE YOU MUST BLACKEN THE OVAL ○ COMPLETELY! ●
IF YOU SPOIL YOUR BALLOT, DO NOT ERASE, BUT ASK FOR A NEW BALLOT.

<p>FOR GOVERNOR (Vote for One)</p> <p>○ LINDY BLANCHARD</p> <p>○ LEW BURDETTE</p> <p>○ STACY LEE GEORGE</p> <p>○ KAY IVEY</p> <p>○ TIM JAMES</p> <p>○ DONALD TRENT JONES</p> <p>○ DEAN ODLE</p> <p>○ DAVE THOMAS</p> <p>○ DEAN YOUNG</p>	<p>FOR STATE REPUBLICAN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PLACE NO. 1 (Vote for One)</p> <p>○ BART COOK</p> <p>○ DON FISHER</p> <p>FOR STATE REPUBLICAN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PLACE NO. 8 (Vote for One)</p> <p>○ CONNIE GRIER</p> <p>○ J ALLEN MEADOWS</p> <p>FOR STATE REPUBLICAN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PLACE NO. 9 (Vote for One)</p> <p>○ CHANDELL H. ALEKZANDER</p> <p>○ TREY GARNER</p>	<p>"Shall the following Amendments to the Constitution of Alabama be adopted?"</p> <p>PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO APPEAR ON THE BALLOT STATEWIDE</p> <p>STATEWIDE AMENDMENT 1</p> <p>Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of Alabama of 1901, authorizing the issuance and sale of general obligation bonds of the State of Alabama of up to \$85,000,000 for the purposes of the improvement, renovation, equipping, acquisition, provision, construction, and maintenance of Alabama state parks under the jurisdiction of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and public historical sites and public historical parks under the jurisdiction of the Alabama Historical Commission. (Proposed by Act 2021-326)</p> <p>○ YES</p> <p>○ NO</p>
<p>FOR UNITED STATES SENATOR (Vote for One)</p> <p>○ LILLIE BODDIE</p> <p>○ KATIE BRITT</p> <p>○ MO BROOKS</p> <p>○ KARLA M. DUPRIEST</p> <p>○ MIKE DURANT</p> <p>○ JAKE SCHAFER</p>		
<p>FOR ATTORNEY GENERAL (Vote for One)</p> <p>○ STEVE MARSHALL</p> <p>○ HARRY BARTLETT STILL III</p>		
<p>FOR ASSOCIATE JUSTICE OF THE SUPREME COURT, PLACE 5 (Vote for One)</p> <p>○ GREG COOK</p> <p>○ DEBRA JONES</p>		
<p>FOR SECRETARY OF STATE (Vote for One)</p> <p>○ WES ALLEN</p> <p>○ CHRISTIAN HORN</p> <p>○ ED PACKARD</p> <p>○ JIM ZEIGLER</p>		
<p>FOR STATE AUDITOR (Vote for One)</p> <p>○ STAN COOKE</p> <p>○ RUSTY GLOVER</p> <p>○ ANDREW SORRELL</p>		
<p>FOR PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION, PLACE NO. 1 (Vote for One)</p> <p>○ JOHN HAMMOCK</p> <p>○ STEPHEN McLAMB</p> <p>○ JEREMY H. ODEN</p> <p>○ BRENT WOODALL</p>		
<p>FOR PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION, PLACE NO. 2 (Vote for One)</p> <p>○ CHIP BEEKER</p> <p>○ ROBIN LITAKER</p> <p>○ ROBERT L. McCOLLUM</p>		

This is the Republican Primary ballot for Montgomery County

Please visit the Alabama Secretary of State website for other counties and ballots.

This is a common ballot.

END OF BALLOT

ELECTION PRIMARIES - MAY 24

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- ▶ I am committed to free and fair elections as the cornerstone of our representative democracy.
- ▶ I have 24+ years of service to the people of Alabama in the Secretary of State's office, participating in the administration of over 400 elections.
- ▶ To promote and maintain voters' confidence in our election system, I will work with the Alabama Legislature to enact procedural audits after each election.
- ▶ I represented the Secretary of State's office when the State of Alabama's photo voter ID requirement was attacked in federal court. The State of Alabama won that lawsuit.
- ▶ At the request of the City of Mobile, a team from the Secretary of State's office monitored elections in Mobile in 2017 and 2021 to ensure voters were afforded free and fair elections. I was a member of that team.

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Alabama Supreme Court

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— Judge Debra Jones

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Gas Tax

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Snapshots into the History of the Alabama Secretary of State's Office

Photo credit: www.antiquewoodcameras.com

Alabama Secretary of State

The Secretary of State's Office was established in 1818 and is the oldest office in Alabama's history. Henry Hitchcock was Alabama's first Secretary of State and served from 1818-1819. [Current] Secretary Merrill is the 53rd. The Constitution gives the SOS more than 1,000 assigned duties, which include business incorporation, licensing and trade names, international adoptions, elections, and so many others. Minimum requirements for the job are that the Secretary of State must be at least 25 years old, a registered voter, a resident of the state for five years, and a United States citizen for seven years. The Secretary of State's Office produces revenue for the state's General Fund.



Photo Credit: www.alabamaheritage.com



The Great Seal of Alabama



Photo Credit: www.wikimedia.org

The Secretary of State is the sole custodian of the Great Seal of Alabama. Use of the Great Seal is controlled by state law, and only a few staff members within the SOS Office have permission to affix the seal to documents.

The design of the seal was chosen in 1817 by William Wyatt Bibb, Governor of what was then the Alabama Territory, after he received congressional authorization to use an official seal. Bibb designed the seal showing a map of Alabama with its rivers to reflect the importance of the river system to the state. Custody of the Great Seal was officially transferred from the Governor to the Secretary of State in 1852. The Reconstruction Legislature abolished the use of the seal in 1868, and it's believed Secretary of State Charles A. Miller (1868-70) suggested the new seal's design, which featured an eagle and a shield. John Brandon was Secretary of State in 1939 when the Legislature passed a law that changed the seal back to a design similar to the original seal.



Dr. Martha Poole Simmons

Honoring Our Heroes



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

Master Sergeant David Gordon Stainback: Age 78

Master Sergeant David Gordon Stainback (MSGT) served 20 years in the United States Air Force. His Military Occupational Specialty Code (MOSC) was Fire Protection Superintendent. He received the following awards, decorations and medals: Air Commendation Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, NCO Academy Graduate Ribbon, Air Force Longevity Service Ribbon with four Oak Leaf Clusters, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal with two Bronze Stars, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, Air Force Good Conduct Medal with five Oak Leaf Clusters. His military education included: Senior NCO Academy (by correspondence) June, 1979, Fire Investigations (two weeks) November 1975, SAC NCO Academy (five weeks) August 1975, Fire Prevention technician (three weeks) March 1973, HH-43B Rescue Helicopter Fire Suppression Ground and Flying Transition April 1961 and Fire Protection Supervision (three weeks) September 1968.

MSGT Stainback was born December 26, 1943 to his parents, Thomas and Lucy Stainback in Montgomery, AL. His father contributed to the WWII effort working as a crane operator loading war ships at Tampa, FL. After the war was over, his father worked in road construction in North Carolina until he passed away. His mother and her six children moved back to Montgomery, AL, where MSGT Stainback attended school and graduated from Lee High School in 1961.

After working at Montgomery Aviation for two years, MSGT Stainback volunteered for military service in the United States Air Force November 17, 1961. He completed Boot Camp at Lackland Air Force Base (AFB) San Antonio, TX. After taking an aptitude test, he was selected to serve in fire fighting. He trained at the fire fighting school at Lowry AFB at Greenville, MS, followed by four years of service at Little Rock AFB, AK. He was trained in fire protection, suppression rescue and jungle survival at the Air Force helicopter training school in Denver, CO. He was deployed for one year’s hazardous service in Vietnam 1965-1966 where his helicopter, the HH-43, flew air rescue in Vietnam and Cambodia for crews of downed aircraft. The aircrews for this type of aircraft saved more lives in combat than crews flying any other USAF helicopter. Several times, he was involved in crash landings after receiving ground fire.

Returning from Vietnam, MSGT Stainback served four years at Hurlbert Field (USAF) and at Holley Field (Naval Outlying Landing Field), FL. where he trained Thai and Vietnamese pilots to fly small aircraft. His next assignment was for four years at Rhein-Main Air Base, Germany, where he inspected fire prevention safety equipment at U. S embassies in Europe. He was transferred for 18 months to Minot AFB, ND, followed by transfer for one year to Camp Willingham, AK, an advanced radar warning site. MSGT was next assigned to Mountain Home AFB, ID, where he served for four years until his military retirement November 30, 1981.

After military retirement MSGT Stainback worked as a real estate broker for 26 years working with Century 21 and ReMax in Roswell, GA, and with Clardy Realty in Montgomery, AL retiring in 2005. Sgt Stainback and his wife, Barbara, were married 12 years until she passed away, and they had one child. His wife, Myra, and he have been married for 38 years, and they have 10 grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and one great-greatgrandchild. He enjoys playing the bass guitar with the Gospel Strings of Eastmont Baptist Church of Montgomery. He likes to shoot handguns and to ride his motorcycles. He is a master chef and enjoys baking, a skill that he learned while serving in a remote area of Alaska. He is a 38th Degree Mason. He and his wife spend six months of each year at the Deer Creek RV Resort at Davenport, Fl where they use his 43 ft. motor home.

MSGT Stainback’s conclusions about his military service are, “Military service to me was a kind of family tradition. My father did not serve in the military, but he served for the good of the county. I had four brothers who served in the military. I thought it was the right thing to do. I do not regret my 20 years in the military. I am glad that I did it.”

MSGT Stainback states, “I would like future generations to remember that I tried to do the right thing. I believe in being honest and up front. I teach my grandchildren to be good stewards of their time and money. I feel blessed to be where I am.”


end

Resources for Veterans

Veterans Crisis Line www.veteranscrisisline.net

National Center for PTSD / 855-948-2311 / ptsd.va.gov

Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System
2400 Hospital Road, Tuskegee AL 36083 / 334-727-0550
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/VACentralAlabama>



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or visit: <https://www.buglesacrossamerica.org> and fill out the form for requesting a live bugler, and provide date, location and time of internment.

Petty Officer Second Class Johnnie L. Williams: WWII Veteran

Petty Officer Second Class Johnnie L. Williams served three years in the U. S. Navy in the Asian-Pacific Theater. His Military Occupational Specialty was cook on board the USS Minneapolis, a New Orleans-class heavy cruiser, which was involved in heavy fighting in the Pacific. The ship had eight-inch calibre main guns, and the ship joined a carrier force to the Gilbert and Marshal Islands and to Guadalcanal where it protected carrier tack forces. His decorations, medals, badges, citations and campaign ribbons included: Asiatic-Pacific Medal with 12 Stars, Philippine Liberation Medal with two Stars, World War II Victory Medal and Good Conduct Medal.

Petty Officer Second Class Williams was born November 11, 1922 to his parents, Nathaniel and Emma Thorn Williams, in Montgomery, AL. He attended the Trinity Lutheran School and Loveless School, and when he returned from his military service, he received a diploma from Lowe’s Adult School.

Petty Officer Second Class Williams volunteered for military service April 28, 1942 in order to financially assist his parents in the care of his eight siblings. After Germany and Japan surrendered ending WWII, he was honorably discharged December 2, 1945.

Petty Officer Second Class Williams was married to Willie Lee Gosha 68 years before she passed away. They had four children, 10 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. He graduated from a barbering school in 1948, worked at the Veteran’s Hospital in Montgomery, AL, and was employed by Brockway Glass Company as a furnace operator for 38 years.

Petty Officer Second Class Williams was ordained as a deacon at Montgomery’s Mount Gilliard Baptist Church. He was also a deacon at Bethel Missionary Baptist Church where he served as a volunteer with Meals on Wheels assisting with meal delivery to elderly people.

Petty Officer Second Class Williams passed away May 15, 2021 at the age of 98. People remember him as a Christian family man who worked to provide for his family and his extended family.

His conclusions about his military service are, “It made me very proud to serve my country in the military, and it provided steady pay so that I could help my parents.”

end

Veterans Celebrating Birthdays

Edward G. Platt – May 2
Linda Lake Boyle – May 6
Jimmy F. Meacham – May 5
Joel A. Burdette – May 6
Lenora White – May 19
Ronald Webster Balkom – May 20
Jerry Elmer Fossum – May 20
Willis Durham – May 22
Charles Lynn – May 23
David L. McFarland – May 16
Ell White – May 27
Jamie Michael LyBrands – May 30

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Lt. Col Harold Howell (100)

Lt. Col Harold Howell's military service includes three years in the U.S. Navy during WWII and subsequent 25 years in the United States Air Force. His Military Occupational Specialty Code (MOSC) was Navy torpedoman 3rd Class and U.S. Staff Judge Advocate in the Air Force. His decorations, medals, badges, citations, and campaign ribbons awarded included: Purple Heart and 13 Stars for WWII Campaigns on USS Wilson DD408 and US Gregory DD802.

Lt. Col Howell was born January 31, 1922 in Cincinnati, Ohio to his parents, Claude Edison Howell and Faye Wood Howell. He was reared in Birmingham, AL where he graduated from Phillips High School in 1940. He volunteered for military service and enlisted in the U.S. Navy in June 1942 in Birmingham, AL.

Lt. Col Howell completed his Naval Basic Training at San Diego, CA, and was assigned to the USS Wilson DD408, a Benham class destroyer, and the USS Gregory DD802, a Fletcher class destroyer. His Naval service included hazardous duty in the Pacific Theater in the Koro Islands, Guadalcanal, Savo Island, Leyte in the Philippine Islands and Okinawa. His ships were attacked by Japanese kamikaze pilots, and often his ships rescued other American Naval forces whose ships had been sunk.

Lt. Col Howell attended Birmingham-Southern College after high school prior WWII. After WWII in 1945-1946, he completed his undergraduate work using the GI Bill at San Francisco State Community College. In 1947, he moved to Tuscaloosa, AL to attend the University of Alabama Law School and graduated from the University of Alabama School of Law in 1949. He received a Master's Degree in Business Administration from the University of Dayton in 1966.

After receiving his law degree, Lt. Col Howell enlisted in the U. S. Air Force, and his first assignment was to serve as Staff Judge Advocate at Reese Air Force Base A.F.B., Lubbock, TX, 1950-1951 followed by service at McConnell A.F.B., KS 1951-1952. At the end of 1952, he transferred to Birmingham AL and served in the Air National Guard and worked for an Insurance Company in Birmingham. He served with the Air National Guard in Birmingham, AL 1953-1956. In 1956, he reenlisted in the Air Force and was stationed at Sandia Army Base as a Staff Judge Advocate 1956-1957. In 1958, he was transferred to Pusan Korea for a year. In 1959, he was transferred to Kirkland A.F.B., Albuquerque, New Mexico and stayed there until 1962 when he was transferred to Sandia and Monsanto A.F. Bases in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He then served at Wright-Patterson A.F.B., OH, as the Staff Judge Advocate in 1964-1966. In 1966, he was deployed to Tachikawa Air Base, Tokyo, Japan serving as Staff Judge Advocate from 1966-1969. He was transferred to McGuire A.F.B., NJ in 1969 and served as Staff Judge Advocate until 1971. Lt. Col Howell's last assignment was as Staff Judge Advocate for the Civil Air Patrol at Maxwell A.F.B., AL, from 1971-1975. He retired from service there in September 1975.

After his military retirement, Lt. Col Howell joined his son's law practice. The practice grew and is known as Howell, Sarto, Howell with the practice continuing from 1976-2009 until partners left because of health reasons. A new partner, Chris McKay, was added in 2016, and the firm became Howell, Sarto, Howell, and McKay. Lt. Col Howell worked as a professor at the University of Maryland's extension in Japan while he was stationed there, and he also worked at Troy State University at Montgomery, AL. He retired from all employment in 2017.

Lt. Col Howell and his wife, Junetta Marion Severson, were married 57 years until she passed away. They had five children, 12 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren. He enjoys fishing, attending Gideon meetings, attending church services and visiting with his family members.

Lt. Col Howell has exhibited his strong Christian faith by his memberships and service in many churches. He has held memberships in the following organizations: Calvary Baptist Church in Birmingham AL, First Baptist Church in San Francisco, CA, Hoffmantown Baptist Church in Albuquerque, N.M., Hermosa Baptist Church in Artesia, N.M., Eastern Hills Baptist Church in Albuquerque, N.M., Vandalia Baptist Church in Vandalia Ohio, Shimoakaska Baptist Church in Tokyo, Japan, Trinity Baptist Church in Montgomery AL, Camelia Baptist Church in Prattville AL and Glynwood Baptist Church in Prattville, AL. He has served as a deacon in all of those churches, as moderator of Glynwood Baptist Church and as a leader in starting many of these churches. He has served on the Board of Trustees of the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, President of School Board Narimasu High School in Japan and board member of Northern Burlington Country High School in New Jersey. While serving in Japan, he taught English and the Bible to Japanese college students, and he worked with Baptist missionaries teaching Bible classes on Sunday nights for three years.

Lt. Col Howell's reflection about his military service are, "I have considered it an honor and a privilege to serve my country. I love the United States of America." He states that he would like future generations to remember him saying, "I was a good grandpa and great-grandpa and that I loved the Lord."

end

Wish of a Lifetime from A.A.R.P.

Veteran Ronald Webster Balkcom received his Wish of a Lifetime from A.A.R.P., a 501c3 non-profit and a charitable affiliate of A.A.R.P. The organization grants lifelong wishes to older adults, which includes honoring individuals who have served their country. Balkcom is a veteran who served two years of active duty and four years in the Reserve in the United States Marine Corps with two tours in Vietnam where he received two Purple Hearts and other medals.

Wish of a Lifetime sent Balkcom and his wife on a three-day trip to historical Charleston, South Carolina. While there, they visited Ft. Sumpter, two U.S. Navy vessels from the WWII era, the USS Liffey, a destroyer, and the USS Yorktown, a carrier, and the Vietnam Exhibit. Balkcom's article was published in the March 2021 issue of *The Alabama Gazette*.



100th Birthday to WWII Veteran: Petty Officer 1st Class Lynn W. Jinks, Jr.



The 100th birthday of Lynn W. Jinks, Jr., a WWII veteran, was celebrated April 4, 2022 at the Crossings, a senior adult living facility in Montgomery, AL. (His 100th birthday was January 10, 2022; however because of restrictions on meeting of groups of people because of Covid-19, the celebration was delayed.) The special event was sponsored by the American Red Cross as part of its service to the Armed

Forces active duty and veterans. Presentations were made in his honor. **Brigadier General Jeffry Newton**, Assistant Commissioner Operations/Chief of Staff Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs, presented a commendation from **Governor Kay Ivey**. **David Wilbanks**, Executive Director of the Crossings, presented a proclamation from **Montgomery Mayor Steven Reed declaring January 10, 2022, to be Lynn W. Jinks Day in Montgomery**. **Laundrena LaPradd-Bradley**, Associate Director of Patient Care Services of the Central Alabama Veterans Healthcare System, presented a blanket and a commendation from **Amir Farooqi**, Director/Chief Executive Officer of the Central Alabama Veterans Healthcare System. **Petty Officer 1st Class Jinks, a member of American's Greatest Generation in WWII, served as a Navy Air Controller in the Pacific Theater.** His article was published in the January 2021 issue of the *Alabama Gazette*. (Above) Petty Officer 1st Class Jinks' WWII picture.



(Above) Pictured at the 100th birthday celebration for Jinks on April 4, 2022, are (front row, left to right) Ruby Jinks (his wife) and veteran, Lynn W. Jinks Jr., and (standing, left to right) Martha Poole Simmons, American Red Cross; David Wilbanks, Executive Director, The Crossings; Laundrena LaPradd-Bradley, Associate Director of Patient Care Services, Central AL Veterans Healthcare System; and Brigadier General Jeffry Newton, Assistant Commissioner/Operations Chief of Staff AL Department of Veterans Affairs.



The Origins of Memorial Day ... continued from page 1

Official Birthplace Declared

In 1966, Congress and President Lyndon Johnson declared Waterloo, N.Y., the "birthplace" of Memorial Day. There, a ceremony on May 5, 1866, honored local veterans who had fought in the Civil War. Businesses closed and residents flew flags at half-staff. Supporters of Waterloo's claim say earlier observances in other places were either informal, not community-wide or one-time events. By the end of the 19th century, Memorial Day ceremonies were being held on May 30 throughout the nation. State legislatures passed proclamations designating the day, and the Army and Navy adopted regulations for proper observance at their facilities. It was not until after World War I, however, that the day was expanded to honor those who have died in all American wars. In 1971, Memorial Day was declared a national holiday by an act of Congress, though it is still often called Decoration Day. It was then also placed on the last Monday in May, as were some other federal holidays.

Some States Have Confederate Observances

Many Southern states also have their own days for honoring the Confederate dead. Mississippi celebrates Confederate Memorial Day on the last Monday of April, Alabama on the fourth Monday of April, and Georgia on April 26. North and South Carolina observe it on May 10, Louisiana on June 3 and Tennessee calls that date Confederate Decoration Day. Texas celebrates Confederate Heroes Day January 19 and Virginia calls the last Monday in May Confederate Memorial Day.

Gen. Logan's order for his posts to decorate graves in 1868 "with the choicest flowers of springtime" urged: "We should guard their graves with sacred vigilance. ... Let pleasant paths invite the coming and going of reverent visitors and fond mourners. Let no neglect, no ravages of time, testify to the present or to the coming generations that we have forgotten as a people the cost of a free and undivided republic."

The crowd attending the first Memorial Day ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery was approximately the same size as those that attend today's observance, about 5,000 people. Then, as now, small American flags were placed on each grave — a tradition followed at many national cemeteries today. In recent years, the custom has grown in many families to decorate the graves of all departed loved ones.

The origins of special services to honor those who die in war can be found in antiquity. The Athenian leader Pericles offered a tribute to the fallen heroes of the Peloponnesian War over 24 centuries ago that could be applied today to the 1.1 million Americans who have died in the nation's wars: "Not only are they commemorated by columns and inscriptions, but there dwells also an unwritten memorial of them, graven not on stone but in the hearts of men."

To ensure the sacrifices of America's fallen heroes are never forgotten, in December 2000, the U.S. Congress passed and the president signed into law "The National Moment of Remembrance Act," P.L. 106-579, creating the White House Commission on the National Moment of Remembrance. The commission's charter is to "encourage the people of the United States to give something back to their country, which provides them so much freedom and opportunity" by encouraging and coordinating commemorations in the United States of Memorial Day and the National Moment of Remembrance.

The National Moment of Remembrance encourages all Americans to pause wherever they are at 3 p.m. local time on Memorial Day for a minute of silence to remember and honor those who have died in service to the nation. As Moment of Remembrance founder Carmella LaSpada states: "It's a way we can all help put the memorial back in Memorial Day."

(Article source: www.va.gov)



Dr. Lester Spencer

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

Soul Searching

“STRANGELY WARMED” (JOHN WESLEY, THE METHODISTS AND WHAT HAPPENED ON MAY 24, 1738?)

John Wesley, who founded the Methodist movement back in the 1700s, impacted the world and the church in ways that many people, even Christians, don't really understand. Most haven't a clue who John Wesley was, and many Christians have no idea the influence that his teachings, his thoughts, and his writings still have upon the church today. The Methodist movement later became the Methodist church and the Wesleyan churches around the world, but Wesley's influence was far greater than just the Methodist and Wesleyan denominations. Like no one else before him, Wesley used social work to model what he preached. The message of the Gospel of grace combined with his actions influenced Christ followers around the world to minister to the least, the last, the lost. Wesley gave the world a great gift; he articulated the ways we can experience the power of God's grace!

Wesley was born June 17, 1703, in Epworth, England. His father, Samuel, was a priest in the Church of England. His mother, Susanna, gave birth to nineteen children, nine of whom died as infants. In 1709, the Wesley's parsonage caught on fire during the night. The entire family was at home, and they all escaped except for little John, who was trapped on the top floor. This was a three-story house with a thatched roof, and it was quickly engulfed in flames. Five-year-old John came to the window as his horrified family watched. He was about to be burned alive. In a final desperate act to save the child, the men of the village began climbing one on top of the other to get to him, and he was miraculously saved. His mother, quoting from the Book of Amos, always said that her John was a "brand plucked from the burning" for some special purpose of God. When he was older, he would see this event as a metaphor for being saved from the flames of hell.

Along with his brothers Charles and Samuel, Wesley felt the call to the priesthood, and in 1732, he left home to study at Oxford University. While there, the brothers formed what they called the "Holy Club". (Incidentally, another member of that Holy Club was George Whitefield, who later became a famous evangelist in both England and the American colonies and was the best friend of Benjamin Franklin.) The members of the Holy Club became lifelong friends. They met every morning at 4:30 for prayer. They fasted, studied the Bible together, visited prisoners, and visited the sick, all while completing their college studies and participating in other extracurricular activities.

Fellow college students noticed how methodical they were about their religious practices and began making fun of them. Remember, this was Oxford University, a typical college environment, where students liked to party just as they do today. These straight-laced guys in the Holy Club would have stuck out like a sore thumb and were probably viewed as religious nerds. Their fellow students jokingly came up with a name for them, calling them "methodists" as a putdown.

John Wesley and his friends took it all in good humor, a sign of spiritually healthy folks, and they started referring to themselves as "Methodists." For you Methodists out there, that's how you came to be called a Methodist!

After he graduated from seminary, Wesley received an invitation from General James Oglethorpe to go to the new world and serve as a missionary to the Native Americans on Georgia's coast. Believing it to be a call from God, he set sail in 1736 on a ship called the *Simmonds*. Wesley had the head knowledge for the word of God, but despite being called to be a priest, he had not yet accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior in his heart. He knew the message, and he was trying to practice it, but like many people, he was trying to please God through his good works and his right beliefs. It wasn't working! Wesley realized during the voyage he lacked assurance of salvation. As the ship sailed across the Atlantic, it encountered five storms, one of which was said to be a hurricane. Many of the passengers and crew, Wesley included, feared for their lives. While the waves crashed over the ship and the wind howled, he cowered in the hold, and like almost everyone else on board, he was seasick.

Traveling on the same ship was a group of Moravian Christians who had also been called to serve as missionaries. While Wesley was trembling and afraid, the Moravian Christians were moving around on the deck and in the hold of the ship ministering to the people on board. Wesley was troubled by this. He thought to himself, I'm a pastor. I should be out there helping people, but here I am huddled in the corner, throwing up, trembling and afraid of dying.

When the ship arrived in Savannah, General Oglethorpe went ashore and returned with the leader of the Moravians in the new world, a man named August Spangenberg. Wesley complimented his fellow travelers to Spangenberg and

said he wished to be more like them.

This experience at sea bothered Wesley. It rocked his world and turned his relationship with God upside down. He realized he didn't have assurance of his salvation or of life eternal. He continued to grapple with this as he began his missionary work in Georgia, attempting to minister to the settlers and the Native Americans with these lingering doubts and serious questions about his own relationship with God.

Wesley was a prim and proper British man of relatively small stature (probably about five foot two) whose Holy-Club-at-Oxford way of doing things didn't work with the Southerners in Georgia. From the start, he couldn't seem to connect with the rough-hewn settlers or with the Native Americans. The chemistry wasn't there!

Due to a broken heart (because of a failed relationship with a woman that Wesley loved) and feeling like a failure as a missionary, Wesley decided to return to England. During his voyage back to England, he wrote in his Journal, "I went to America, to convert the Indians; but oh! Who shall convert me? Who, what is he that will deliver me from this evil heart of mischief?" (47)

Wesley arrived in England depressed, thinking about leaving the ministry, and not knowing what to do.

A few months later, he was invited by some friends to go to a Bible study on Aldersgate Street in London. It was May 24, 1738. Martin Luther's preface to the book of Romans was the topic of study that evening.

As Wesley joined with others in studying the Book of Romans, God touched his heart, and he finally had his conversion experience. In fact, he wrote these words in his Journal about that night:

In the evening, I went very unwillingly to a society on Aldersgate Street where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for my salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death. (56, 57)

John Wesley's life was transformed from that point forward. He would never be the same. Along with his brother Charles, who was recovered from his illness and who had already had a similar experience, John began to preach on the streets and in the fields, catching people as they headed to and from work. He preached all over the British Isles. In fact, in his lifetime, he rode over 250,000 miles around England, Wales, Ireland, and Scotland on horseback. He preached over 40,000 sermons – approximately eight hundred every year – and it is primarily from these sermons that we read and learn about the ways we can experience the power of God's grace. This was the beginning of the Methodist Movement in England. Eventually, it spread from England to America and then to all the world, but it all started that night on Aldersgate Street when John Wesley came to experience God's grace. He ultimately led multitudes to a relationship with God through Christ by telling them about God's prevenient, justifying, and sanctifying grace.

If you're thinking that you never knew there are different types of grace and different ways of experiencing it, I invite you to check out my book, **Free For All**.

By His Grace,
Dr. Lester Spencer
 Lead Pastor, Saint James Church

Dr. Spencer is Lead Pastor at Saint James Church in Montgomery, Alabama and writes the **Soul Searching** column for *Alabama Gazette* each month.

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SCAN FOR APPT.



Judge Peggy Givhan

Southern Gardening

Potpourri for May

May reminds me of a time when children danced around a Maypole with an assortment of ribbons hanging down from the top. The end result would be the pole covered in a woven design of brightly colored ribbons. Truly a magical sight to behold.

I came across an article last year, which promotes using newspapers in the garden. I have always heard of using newspaper in the bottom of a birdcage, but the garden? The following are tips I remembered from the article.

First use was to layer newspapers on top of bare soil about 3 -4 layers thick, then add the dirt. The benefit is enormous as you would not need to sterilize the soil with herbicides. The newspaper is biodegradable and will smother out any weeds. It is cheaper than landscape cloth used for the exact same purpose. I did try this last spring when starting a new area in the bed and this technique worked perfectly. I wish now that I had saved more newspapers.

Second, newspapers can be formed as seedling holders for starting seeds. Lay about 4 layers of paper down flat, then cut into 8-inch strips. Next roll these into a cone, and cut off the bottom point. Place several of these into a terracotta pot, Fill each with soil and water until the paper is very wet. Now sow the seed into the soil. Since terracotta and also plastic pots dry out very quickly, this newspaper-lined pot will hold the moisture and ensure better germination.

Third, working off this same concept of conserving water, for container gardening with terracotta or plastic pots, line the pots with layers of newspaper, and the pots will not dry out as often.

Fourth use of newspapers involves storing bulbs in the winter. Many bulbs do not like a hard freeze so newspapers are a good cheap alternative to peat moss. And newspapers are a good wrap for fresh vegetables like tomatoes, squash, and eggplant. Vegetables do not like their skins to touch, and when wrapped in newspaper will keep longer in dry storage.

Fifth and the last tip is to use newspapers to clean garden tools. Wipe the dirt from the ends of the tools, then plunge them into a bucket of sand and a cup of oil. No more rusty tools.

When working with perennials, do not be afraid to divide them. Suddenly the garden seems overrun and these flowers are trying to take control. We cannot let this happen and must assert authority over this problem. Every few years, the perennial clumps get larger while the bloom heads get smaller. This is a sure sign they need to be dug up and divided. Look up the plant on Google to verify that it can be divided as most can. Spring and fall are the correct times of the year to perform this task. Just dig the plant, roots and all, and begin to separate into smaller clumps. Place one clump back into the hole, and replant the others elsewhere or be a good neighbor and share.

PLANT OF THE MONTH: Cyrtomium – Shield Fern Family

We have all heard of the holly fern or the Christmas fern, but did you know that it is a garden favorite in our hot Southern climate. This plant works well in the landscape or in the flowerbeds. The stiff arching fronds are deep dark shiny green that almost looks like they have been waxed. They are used as foundation plantings, as border plants in the flowerbeds and as ground covers.



Source: Stan Shebs / www.wikipedia.org

For foundation plantings, they do well in mass plantings or mixed with other flowering shrubs such as azaleas or Indian Hawthorn. When looking to use them in the garden site, clumps do well beside hosta or other flowers, and gives the beds an added texture. They do like sun or shade and thrive in moist but well drained soil. I have seen these used in steep areas as erosion control.

Happy Gardening!

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



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OUTDOOR Truths



By Gary Miller

I was with several other guys during my recent trip to Texas. We were all there for my Outdoor Truths Circle Event and to try our hand at downing a Rio gobbler. I look forward to this event each year. During that week-end most hunters arrive on Friday and begin their hunt that evening. My friend John is a great host, and his ranch has provided some memorable trips for both new and seasoned hunters. This year was no exception. While three toms were taken, the stories were all different. Don was first to take his bird that Friday evening. He got it done early while others came back empty-handed. Todd, however, didn't have to wait to long. He bagged his on the next evening when a big tom came in without any problems. Mark's success came later – on the last morning – and not without a bunch of highs and lows. And that was after the previous few days of he and Darrell (friend and fellow hunter) chasing and calling one bird after another. At the end, if we look at each trophy picture, there is something that is common. They all made it and they all celebrated for the other.

God was, and is, all about celebrating – especially when it comes to one's new-found faith. Jesus frowned and scolding those who refused to do it. He tied three parables together just to highlight this. The parable of the woman who found a lost coin, a shepherd who found a lost lamb, and a father who welcomed home a lost son, was all about religious people not celebrating those from all walks of life, who came to Jesus. He had to reiterate celebration because he wanted to remind them and us, that grace is not fair. It is offered to all. Some accept it early in life and some on their deathbed. But both get the same love and welcome on entrance to heaven. Grace must be unfair if it is to be all-inclusive. And it is both. We can be reminded of that each time we think of the thief on the cross beside Jesus. On that evening, Jesus heard his confession, read his heart, declared him clean, and promised him no less of a place than the most dedicated God-fearing believer. Because grace isn't fair. And as far as we know that thief was the first one to be welcomed into heaven after the crucifixion of Jesus. As one preacher said, when the angel welcomed him to heaven, he might have asked, "How did you get here?" To which the thief said, "I'm not sure. All I know is the man on middle cross said I could come." And no matter what our past, positions, possessions, or popularity, none of us will be able to add any other word to that one statement. So, the best thing to do, is just celebrate everyone.



Source: www.freeimages.com

Tips to Start or Expand Your Garden and Make it Thrive

Starting a garden for the first time or expanding an existing plot is easier than you may think. With a little love and care, your green space will bloom and thrive.

"For anyone with the inclination, a beautiful lawn and garden is always within reach," says Jamie Briggs, director of marketing, Exmark, a leading manufacturer of commercial mowers and equipment for landscape professionals and homeowners with a lot of lawn to cut.

This is the driving idea behind "Backyard Smart," a free online video series. These short explainer videos are full of facts and relevant information to answer your most common lawn and garden questions. The following planting strategies come directly from two recent "Backyard Smart" episodes:

- Start With Seeds: Looking to add new plants to your garden and flower bed? Try starting from scratch. While most nurseries have limited species of mature plants to select from, there are literally thousands of varieties of seeds available at dirt cheap prices. A quick trip to the seed kiosk in your local hardware store offers the potential for you to enjoy flowers you've never seen and vegetables you've never tasted.

"It's easy to be intimidated by the prospect of growing plants from seeds but the truth is that all you need is soil, just the right amount of water and lots



of sunshine," says Briggs. "Nature will handle the rest."

- Practice "Companion Planting": Whether it's growing marigolds alongside tomatoes to block bad bugs or planting corn next so squash to provide shade, plants are kind of like people, they do better with a buddy. Companion plants help block weeds, prevent pests, create fertile soil, promote pollination and offer plants a place to climb. In fact, people have been practicing this technique for centuries to create vigorous gardens.

For more entertaining, easy-to-understand approaches to making the most of your outdoor spaces, check out the Exmark Backyard Life site at exmark.com/backyard.

If you've always dreamed of having your own, homegrown, fruits and vegetables in your cooking, or brightening your home with fresh-cut flowers, there is no better time than the present to pursue this dream. The long sunshiny days of summer are ideal for developing your green thumb.

(Source: StatePoint)

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Social Security Services

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

Can you believe it's been 10 years since we launched **my Social Security**? Since then, 67 million people have signed up and benefited firsthand from the many secure and convenient self-service options. And we've added and upgraded features that make your life easier when doing business with us online. We take great pride in providing this and all of our services. It's part of how we help you secure today and tomorrow.

Social Security Honors OUR Military HEROES

On Memorial Day, our nation honors military service members who have given their lives to preserve our freedoms. Families, friends, and communities come together to remember the great sacrifices of military members and ensure their legacies live on.

The benefits we provide can help the families of deceased military service members. For example, widows, widowers, and dependent children may be eligible for Social Security survivors benefits. You can learn more about those benefits at

Photo credit: army.mil

www.ssa.gov/survivors.

We also offer support to wounded warriors. Social Security benefits protect veterans when injuries prevent them from returning to active duty or performing other work. Both the Department of Veteran Affairs and Social Security have disability programs. You may qualify for disability benefits through one or both programs. Read our new fact sheet, "Social Security Disability and Veterans Affairs Disability — How Do They Compare?" at www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-64-125.pdf. Depending on your situation, some members of your family, including your dependent children or spouse, may be eligible to receive Social Security benefits.

Wounded military service members can receive quicker processing of their Social Security disability claims. If you are a veteran with a 100% Permanent & Total compensation rating from the Department of Veterans Affairs, we'll expedite your disability claim.

Want more information about how we can help? Visit www.ssa.gov/woundedwarriors for answers to frequently asked questions or to find information about the application process.

Thinking about retirement or know a veteran who is? Military service members can receive Social Security benefits in addition to their military retirement benefits. For details, visit our webpage for veterans, available at www.ssa.gov/people/veterans.

Please share this information with the military families you know. We honor and thank the veterans who bravely served and died for our country and the military service members who serve today.

Social Security Supports Teachers Online

The past two years have been difficult for everyone, including educators and students. Our nation's teachers have adapted and provided for their students in so many ways. This year, we celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week from May 2 through May 6, and honor all educators who prepare our children for the future.

We know that well-informed instructors can have a powerful and positive influence on their students. That's why we created an Educator Toolkit. It's a shareable online resource for teachers to engage students and educate them on Social Security. The toolkit includes:

- Lesson plans with objectives.
- Infographics and handouts for each lesson plan.
- Links to Social Security webpages.
- Talking points.
- Quiz questions and answers.

You can access the toolkit at www.ssa.gov/thirdparty/educators.html.

We value and welcome the efforts all teachers make to educate America's young people. We want to help spark discussion with students about Social Security. Please share our toolkit with the educators in your communities today!



Photo by: RonnachaiPark / freerangestock.com

Do You Qualify for Social Security Spouse's Benefits?

Social Security benefits are a crucial part of millions of Americans' retirement income. If you don't have enough Social Security credits to qualify for benefits on your own record, you may be able to receive benefits on your spouse's record.

To qualify for spouse's benefits, you must be one of the following:

- 62 years of age or older.
- Any age and have in your care a child younger than age 16, or who has a disability and is entitled to receive benefits on your spouse's record.



Photo by: RonnachaiPark / freerangestock.com

Your full spouse's benefit could be up to one-half the amount your spouse is entitled to receive at their full retirement age. If you choose to receive your spouse's benefits before you reach full retirement age, you will get a permanently reduced benefit.

If you wait until you reach full retirement age to receive benefits, you'll receive your full spouse's benefit amount, which is up to one-half the amount your spouse can receive. You'll also get your full spouse's benefit if you are under full retirement age, but care for a child and one of the following applies:

- The child is younger than age 16.
- The child has a disability and is entitled to receive benefits on your spouse's record.

If you're eligible to receive retirement benefits on your own record, we will pay that amount first. If your benefits as a spouse are higher than your own retirement benefits, you will get a combination of benefits that equal the higher spouse benefit.

For example, Sandy qualifies for a retirement benefit of \$1,000 and a spouse's benefit of \$1,250. At her full retirement age, she will receive her own \$1,000 retirement benefit. We will add \$250 from her spouse's benefit, for a total of \$1,250.

Want to apply for either your or your spouse's benefits? Are you at least 61 years and nine months old? If you answered yes to both, visit www.ssa.gov/benefits/retirement to get started today.

Are you divorced from a marriage that lasted at least 10 years? You may be able to get benefits on your former spouse's record. You can find out more by visiting www.ssa.gov/planners/retire/divspouse.html for more information.



Photo by: RonnachaiPark / freerangestock.com

New Statement Fact Sheet for People with Limited Earnings

If you have a personal **my Social Security** account, you can view your *Social Security Statement* online to learn about your future benefits and recent earnings history. Included with the Statement are fact sheets that provide useful information based on your age group and earnings situation. Last month, we released a new fact sheet specifically for people with limited earnings.

The new fact sheet covers how you and your family members may qualify for benefits, including:

- Supplemental Security Income.
- Social Security retirement benefits.
- Children's benefits.
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.
- Help with health care costs – including Medicare, Medicare Savings Programs, *Extra Help* with Medicare prescription drug costs, and Medicaid.

We're committed to helping you learn about all your benefit options. Our Benefits Eligibility Screening Tool at ssabest.benefits.gov is a convenient way to find potential benefits that best fit your situation.

To learn more, visit our *Social Security Statement* webpage at www.ssa.gov/myaccount/statement.html. Please share this article with your friends and family – and post it on social media.

Please help inform others by sharing these messages with family and friends.

Kylle' McKinney, SSA Public Affairs Specialist: kylle.mckinney@ssa.gov

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TODAY'S WOMAN

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



Amanda Walker

Tears & Laughter: American Heartbreak for Ukraine

It is difficult to watch Russia’s invasion of Ukraine isn’t it?

Since the beginning, citizens of the world have watched helplessly. As individuals, it can feel as if there is practically nothing substantial we can do to help as the war continues rage on after 50 days.

We can donate or we can pray, but it seems much too little too late either way.

It is hard not to look away from the images and videos coming out of Ukraine. It is reminiscent of World War II for people who were not even born yet during World War II. It reminds us of the horrors, and how they were not in black and white when they happened. Only the pictures were.

Wilcox County is not a county that is well-known for its wealth like it was once upon a time, but what it lacks monetarily it makes up for with heart.

I won’t go so far as to call it hospitality.

We are capable that too of course. The place is pretty much still steeped in that. It’s the Deep South.

But having heart is different than being hospitable. Hospitality can sometimes have a hint of ostentatiousness surrounding it – guest towels, cut flowers in ornate vases, elaborate table setting. Bubbly drinks in crystal glasses. Hospitality can sometimes run parallel to a show and tell of what a person owns and has accomplished.

Nothing wrong with that, but that is not what I am not talking about when I say heart, which tones down some of what might otherwise be emphasized.

Wilcox County, like most counties in the whole nation I would think, has heart. We care.

It is a poor county and a lot of people here know what it is like to struggle, or barely get by, or have a genuine need.

But even being a place that may lack in ways, when disastrous things happen, our natural instinct is to help. When hurricanes target neighboring states and send evacuees this way, the parks are opened and we host potluck dinners for anybody who needs a meal. People bring and give freely of what they have to help fill the needs. The spirit of giving prevails.

When a family loses a home to fire, we scratch up the beginnings of a whole new household by nightfall.

This kindness is repeated across the United States in small towns, and communities, and cities alike.

We can’t host a potluck for the entire country of Ukraine.

We can’t just open our hearts and parks and give of our community. It is not as simple as that. The Ukrainians need far more than material belongings or temporary lodging.

They have lost loved ones. They have lost their country as they knew it.

We can’t share, or listen, or gather our children to play with theirs just to try and make life feel normal and calm for a moment.

We are inhibited by distance. An entire ocean separates us. It feels like there is little we can do on a meaningful scale...other than donate, and pray that a power greater than the powers of this world can provide for the people of Ukraine.

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.



Ms. Wheelchair America/
Alabama 2005

Trisston’s Tidbits ...

By Trisston Wright Burrows
site.trisstonwrightburrows.com

“A Cord of Three Strands is Not Quickly Broken”

As humans, we like to plan. Whether they are big or small, we plan what we are going to eat for dinner and we plan what we want to do as a career or where we want to move after college. We plan for both the little things and big things. But sometimes life doesn’t quite go as planned. God has a different plan and throws us curve balls sometimes.

“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.” – Ephesians 4:2

The only thing we can do to make sure we have a great future and a good life, is to trust God. Trust in His plan for you. Say yes to what He gives you and situations that He puts you in. If he wants to push you out of your comfort zone, then do it. He knows what is best for you, so let go of your own plan and trust Him.

This month my husband, Brian, and I will celebrate our 14th wedding anniversary. My, oh my! How time flies! Historically, ivory was the traditional symbol for the 14th anniversary; however this has now become an issue because of poaching and animal rights issues. Instead, the elephant is often taken as the 14th anniversary theme ... reflecting the stability, patience, and dignity inherent in a long marriage.

“Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken” – Ecclesiastes 4:12)

In our 14 years of being married, we have certainly been thrown some curve balls. However, we can see how being stronger together ... most importantly, being bound together with God...has turned the extremely difficult into extraordinary victory.

How wonderful it is to know that God’s plans are better than our own. He is a good, good Father!

Many Blessings!

P.S. Happy 14th Wedding Anniversary to my husband, Brian! I love you!! “I have found the one whom my soul loves” Song of Solomon 3:4



5 Tips to Make a Great First Impression

Interviewing for your dream job? Going on a promising first date? Meeting your girlfriend’s parents? Here’s how to make a great first impression during all the most important moments:

1. Be on time: To arrive at your destination calm, collected and without breaking a sweat, give yourself more than enough time for travel. Take into account such unforeseen circumstances as traffic, road closures and parking snafus. If you’re in an unfamiliar area, consider mapping your route the day before.
2. Prepare for the unexpected: From coffee drips to spaghetti mishaps, unexpected wardrobe malfunctions can happen to anyone and any time. Always be prepared to remove the most common on-the-go stains. Pack a portable stain remover like the OxiClean On the Go Stain Remover Pen. Working like an eraser, it’s designed to tackle tough stains without leaving a residue, ensuring your outfit looks as fresh as it did when you put it on in the morning.
3. Pay attention to details: Other small details relating to your overall presentation matter. In addition to a portable stain remover, a small to-go kit in your car, bag or desk drawer can include dental floss, nail polish for touch-ups, an emergency pair of panty hose, lipstick or lip balm, breath mints, hair ties, moisturizer and anything else you need to make on-the-fly adjustments.
4. Dress for the occasion: It’s important to dress right for the occasion, particularly in professional contexts. While standing out is often a good thing, following the (often unspoken) dress code will help ensure you’re only doing so for the right reasons.
5. Be well-rested: Get a great night’s sleep. Not only will you look your best if you show up well-rested, you’ll also be thinking more clearly, be more engaged, ask more insightful questions and field your own responses more carefully.

While you only get one shot at a first impression, there’s no reason to stress. With a little preparation and attention to detail, you can ensure you’re on top of your game, come what may. (StatePoint)

GUSTAVO IS BACK ON THE OPEN SEAS!



In March, *The Alabama Gazette* first put a face to the Ukrainian plight. For those of you following Gustavo’s story since then, he and his family are doing better than many!

While Gustavo’s family remains in Romania as it is not safe to return to Ukraine, he has returned to the cruise ship to resume his job as piano bar entertainer. This provides his family much needed funds as he is paying for an apartment and studio in Ukraine as well as for living accommodations in Romania. Reports from their home country are that those buildings are still standing, and they are determined to return as soon as it is safe. During the time the family has been in Romania, a group of his devoted cruise line fans have become like his family and have been raising money to keep his family as comfortable as possible. Gustavo and his family are truly some of the fortunate refugees even though they, too, had to leave loved ones behind. So many innocent lives have been lost, families separated, and homes/businesses destroyed since Russia declared war in February.

In March, the U.S. announced another \$800 million in assistance to the Ukraine, for a total of \$2 billion since this war began, but is still not sending troops. Current news outlets report that Russia is now severely threatening the western side of Ukraine, specifically Mariupol, a port city, and by the time this goes to press, that city very well could have fallen. In the meantime, the eastern attacks are increasing, and other important cities are under seige. While Ukranian forces recently destroyed one of Russia’s major warships, the war-torn country continues to brace for fresh assaults.

Ukranian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is in discussion with key people to implement sanctions against Russia and cut-off, or at least greatly reduce, its oil and energy supplies, as well as banking abilities in an effort to cripple Russia’s threat.

Russia has issued another surrender order of May 9, which is significant in history as it was the day the Soviet Union prevailed over Germany in World War II. Intelligence agencies are also reporting that Russia is possibly expected to retaliate against the resistance with cybersecurity attacks.

While we watch this war from the comfort of our homes, please remember that these are men, women and children fighting for their homes and lives that didn’t ask for this war. Continue to send aid where you feel led to do so, and, above all, pray for this war to end soon with as few lives lost as possible.

~ A.C. Beck

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Home Town Community News

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

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

Patricia Killough
Community Editor



May Birthdays

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 Grace Zara "Tiny" Cantey (105) | 15 Ann Macon Adams |
| 2 Judy Grubbs | Waldon Woodall (64) |
| Weston Ashley Sellars (11) | 16 Lonnie Smith |
| Pat Duffell Smith | Stephan Turnipseed |
| 3 Scarlett Box | Devery Wright |
| 4 Brittney Belcher (23) | 17 Wendy Haddox |
| Teresa Grant | Bertha Graham |
| Forrest Taylor (28) | Rosa Nell Watkins |
| 5 Ashton Box | 18 Ken Stafford |
| Connie Bowden | 19 Connie Butts |
| Debra Findley | Dorothy Hall |
| Olivia Propst | 20 Maggie Royster |
| Jayne Ward | 21 Rhonda Alexander |
| 6 Michael Mckenzie | Al Barnett |
| 7 Tory Alexander | Ashley Boyd (47) |
| Bryson Box (18th) | Susan Johnson |
| 8 John P. Hanson | Daniel Selvage (14) |
| Michael Moseley (54) | Sophia Vazquez |
| Mary Peoples | 22 Tom Broadway |
| Janet Suddith | Aileen Kovacic |
| Trinity Woodall | Hunter Meadows (25) |
| 9 Jim Garrett | Brad Williams (43) |
| Bill Jones | 23 Susanne Boyd |
| Paul "Moon" Jones | Julia Grant |
| Jo Oswald | Mike Sikes (45) |
| Thomas Ashley Thaggard | Casey Woodall |
| 10 Nicole Sansom | 24 Brantley Box (22) |
| 11 Johnson Alexander | Sydney Ellen Grant |
| Pam Lynch | Seth Meadows |
| Barbara Strickland (72) | 25 Wynne Ross Sloane (48) |
| Dee Dee Ward | 26 Paula Burgess |
| 12 Mary Ellen Grant | Mary Louise Dobbs |
| Tanya Moore (56) | Rachael Doran |
| Liz Morris | 27 Ronnie Broom |
| Mary White | Emmie Abelia Johnson (7) |
| Zack Witherington | Coley Jones |
| 13 Betty Casey | Carrie Rhodes |
| Chris Cordle | 28 Brian McCord |
| Raven Johnson | 30 Michele Blount |
| Debbie Mills | Kate Sansom |
| 14 Luke Dickinson | 31 Betty Crowe |
| Victor Chad Mason (Trace) (9) | Susan Daffron (74) |

Happy Anniversary

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 5 Haley & Josh Bass (3rd) | 16 Austin & Ashley Owens (12th) |
| 6 Corey & Alicia Smith (25th) | 17 Carl & Faye Boyd (47th) |
| 8 Billy & Courtney Whigham | 19 Billy & Ann Cox (74th) |
| 10 Clint & Tiffany Andrews | 21 Allan & Shannon Vinson (16th) |
| Ashley & Susanne Boyd | 28 Carl & Betsy Penn (60th) |
| Charles & Sue Meredith | 29 Joe & Gail Cotney |
| Al & Shirley Decker (65th) | 30 Richard & Gwen Walters |
| 11 Roger & Sandy Brown | Carma & Bill Marks (56th) |
| 15 Travis & Christle Jordan (16th) | 31 Mike & Connie Northcutt (47th) |
| 15 Woody & Linda Foxworth | |



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

Visit: www.thewomenofhope.org

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

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Sarah Kate Celebrates Seven!

Sarah Kate (Sarah Kathleene Selvage), the granddaughter of Patricia Killough, has been growing up through **The Alabama Gazette** for the last seven years. She recently celebrated her birthday on April 7.



Send us your along with images to algazettesubmit@gmail.com
We will be happy to include your special moments in an upcoming issue (when & where space permits.)

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

Fulmer, Dr. Constance "Connie" Marie (83)	Mar 17
Segars, Jason H. (54)	Mar 24
Rayborn, David (56)	Mar 27
McCartha, Kana Grace (96)	Mar 29
Gunn, Susan Clements (66)	Mar 30
Reece, Elizabeth "Lizzie" Haas (82)	Mar 31
Holley, Billy Everette (84)	Apr 1
McDuffee, Earnest Charles (87)	Apr 1
Taylor, Betty Eileen Davs (79)	Apr 2
Lambert, Peter Breckenridge (69)	Apr 11
May, Isaac "Ike" William (91)	Apr 11
Crews, Elsie Ann Gibson (88)	Apr 13
Patterson, Freddie I. (78)	Apr 13
Savage, Frank Kennedy (73)	Apr 18
Durr, John Wesley (91)	Apr 19
Taff, Horace Milton (95)	Apr 20
Pugh, Joanne Whitman (80)	Apr 22
Blanchard, Ima Frances "Ann" Crowder (78)	April 23
Donovan, Sr., James Milton "Chief" (96)	Apr 23
Wilkes, Shaun W. (37)	Apr 26

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In Memory Of

J D Thrasher	April 18
Mary Jo Wilson	April 17
James John Case	April 12
Mae Ruth Jones	April 9
John Benson Bludsworth	April 8
Connie Irvin	April 7
Joyce Ilene Clark	April 5
Joe Bryant	April 1
Walter Luster	March 31
Infant Emma Nelson	March 31
Mary Reeves Daniels	March 29
Linda Carol Williams	March 29
John Thomas Howley	March 27

Rotary



April 28-29, 2022, Rotarians from across Alabama and Tennessee met in Florence, Alabama, for a multi-district annual conference celebrating the accomplishments of members and clubs in serving not only their region but service projects around the world.



During the conference, Governor Kay Ivey recognized Districts 6860 and 6880 (which covers the entire state) for these and many other accomplishments by proclaiming April 29th, 2022 as Rotary Day across Alabama.

Keynote speaker, Mark Maloney, the Past Rotary International President and current Chairman of the Rotary Foundation, highlighted some of the remarkable successes over the past year including raising millions of dollars going to provide humanitarian relief in war torn Ukraine. Mr. Maloney resides in Alabama and is a member of the Decatur Rotary Club.

District 6880, which includes four Montgomery Rotary clubs, is led by District Governor (DG) Bruce McNeal from the Dothan Rotary Club.

DG Bruce helped lead the three-day conference, which attracted over 400 Rotarians and their guests. Programs directed at world peace efforts and global service projects providing polio immunization and fresh water emphasized Rotary's presence around the world.

A special local service project called "Rise against Hunger" was conducted on Saturday April 30 in which Rotarians prepared and delivered meals to the most vulnerable citizens in the Shoals and surrounding areas. If you are interested in joining the 1.5 million Rotarians around the world, find a local club near you or go to rotary.org for more information.



Mark Maloney

Funny



Not Funny

THE MONTGOMERY MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS ANNOUNCES FLIMP FESTIVAL



Flimp Festival 2021; Photograph by Rob Dabney

Saturday
May 7

MMFA

Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts

WHAT:	Flimp Festival
WHEN:	Saturday, May 7, 2022; 10 AM-2 PM
WHERE:	Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park One Museum Drive Montgomery, AL 36117
INFORMATION:	mmfa.org 334.625.4333 @MontgomeryMFA
HOURS:	Galleries, Sculpture Garden, Terrace, and Store:
	Mondays, Closed Tuesdays-Saturdays, 10 AM-5 PM Sundays, Noon to 5 PM Last entry at 4:45 PM
ADMISSION:	Free! With ample, free parking.

The Montgomery Ballet Spring Move to East Fairview

New Location: 1044 East Fairview

<https://montgomeryballet.org>



Lights at the Chapel \$15.00

05/12/2022 at 6:00 pm

The Chapel at the Waters in Pike Road

1 Chapel Hill, Pike Road, AL 36064

Exciting news ... If you have happened to drive by Fairview you will notice activity in the building. This will become the new home of the Montgomery Ballet. It will be large enough to help host some performances. Danny Mitsios strives to help bring his experience from New York to Montgomery by creating intimate performance spaces and opportunities. Phase II is currently in the final stages. If you swing by the facility you will see lots of work underway. A sprung floor has been installed; mirrors are hung, and the ballet bar is in place. For the first time in over two years, the facility has electricity. Forward progress is very evident and all of this is only possible with the generous support of Mike Watson of Graham Woods LLC, who has single-handedly helped to make this vision a reality.

Upon the completion of Phase II, Phase III will begin. Phase III will begin the process of a new black box theater. The theater will be used by the Montgomery Ballet, Montgomery Ballet School, and will be available to other artists for performance opportunities. Upon its completion, the Montgomery Ballet's studio theater, the Capri Theater, and the Cloverdale Playhouse together will become one of the only theater districts in the South.

The Montgomery Ballet was established in 1958 as the oldest non-profit in the state of Alabama. The professional company began in 1987 in Cloverdale. It is very exciting to bring the company back into its original neighborhood.





Southern Cuisine

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



Though this article is titled Southern Cuisine, I’m adding a subsection this week titled, ***Southern Weather.*** If you have not heard, we had a tornado go through Lowndesboro. Though I have not heard if it was straight line winds or a tornado, the outcome was the same. It hit late Wednesday night March 30 thru Thursday morning. And just like the stories you hear about the strange way that tornadoes act, this one came into town at Highway 80 and did most of the damage on the west side of Broad Street. It toppled trees right through town. There was some damage to the houses on the west side of the street, but it toppled some large trees in almost every yard all the way to the city limit at the end of Broad Street. If your house was on the east side of the street you had none or very little damage. Also you would notice that the older the house the less damage was done. A couple of houses were hidden behind some large older trees. Now they are out in the open. And true to Southern hospitality, as soon as the sun came up, there were chainsaws running and tractors and trucks manned by neighbors helping to clear the debris. Blue tarps were stretched over roofs to prevent rain from leaking into the houses.

There were people making hot dogs and soup and sandwiches for two days to feed the workers. The Highway 80 Cafe whipped up on short notice 50 hamburgers with fries. The food was served at one of the churches and even delivered throughout town to the workers. Even the QV station in Hayneville made food for the workers in Lowndesboro. There were local folks helping direct the trucks through town hauling away the trees. My thanks go out to Alabama Power for getting the power back up as soon as they did. It made us proud to live in a small town in the South, where the town’s people act like the town is a family looking out for each other.

My wife and I have been venturing out a little more lately. There are many new restaurants in Montgomery that have our eye to try out. Though I do not have the recipes for all of the dishes we have tasted, I do have some pictures. I have three recipes to share.

The first dish to try is for a retro dish that my mother prepared frequently. Since we spent years overseas, we were use to eating can goods. From the mid 1950’s to the late 1960’s it was not recommended that you eat food prepared locally and purchased at a local market. Food sanitation was not as good as it is today. The only bacon we had came from the base commissary and came in a can. So did whole chickens and fish. It was years later after we moved back to the States, that I had fresh Salmon. Salmon Croquettes were a treat. There are recipes for Salmon Croquettes using fresh salmon but my favorite way to prepare them for years came from a can. I remember going to the commissary and seeing cans on the shelve that had no logos but were labeled and painted army green.

I will start with the cake. It has been our family’s and our friends’ favorite cake for years. This recipe will add a new flavor, lime. The first recipe was a vanilla bean Bundt cake and has been a Scotch-flavored cake. The zing a lime in the cake and for the icing has made this flavor a real hit. We also tweaked the method of cooking the cake, which made for a much better presentation.

This next recipe gave me sticker shock when I looked at the price for the crab. But I know that Ina would not use just any old crab, she would only use the best.

This recipe comes from Ina Garten, the Barefoot Contessa recipe book *Modern Comfort Food*.

Salmon Croquettes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1–14.75 oz can salmon, drained & flaked
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- ¼ cup grated onion
- 1 cup panko bread crumbs
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- ½ cup milk
- Optional 1 tsp hot sauce and 1 tsp Cajun seasoning
- Olive oil for frying



Yield: 8 croquettes

METHOD:

1. Drain liquid from salmon. Flake and remove any bones and dark skin.
2. In a large bowl, gently mix the remaining ingredients.
3. Use a 1/3 cup measure, to form mixture into round patties. Makes about 8 to 10
4. Coat the patties with additional panko. Let rest on cookie sheet.
5. Fry croquettes over medium heat in ½ inch oil in large skillet, until golden brown. About 3-4 minutes per side.

Serve as a patty on a bun or with a mustard sauce as an entrée.

Crab Nachos

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 oz cream cheese, room temp
- ½ cup good mayonnaise, such as Hellmann’s (I use Dukes)
- ¼ cup sour cream
- 12 oz fresh jumbo lump crab-meat (see note)
- ¾ cup minced scallions, white & green parts (4 to 5 scallions)
- 1 (4-oz) can diced green chilies
- Grated zest of 1 lime
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 12 oz sturdy yellow corn chips, such as Garden of Eatin’
- 6 oz freshly grated extra-sharp white Cheddar
- 6 oz freshly grated Monterey Jack
- 4 oz canned pickled jalapeño pepper slices, drained
- 5 large plum tomatoes, seeded, cored, and small-diced
- 1 cup minced yellow onion
- 3 Tbsp minced fresh jalapeño pepper, seeds removed
- 2 Tbsp freshly squeezed lime juice
- 1 Tbsp good olive oil
- 1 large ripe Hass avocado, pitted, peeled, and ⅓-inch diced
- 3 Tbsp minced fresh parsley or cilantro
- Juice of ½ of a lime, for serving



METHOD:

1. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.
2. In a medium bowl, stir together the cream cheese, mayonnaise, and sour cream until smooth. Gently stir in the crabmeat, scallions, chilies, lime zest, 2 teaspoons salt, and 1 teaspoon black pepper and set aside.
3. Distribute half of the corn chips on a large (12 × 18 × 2-inch) ovenproof serving platter (or a sheet pan). Spoon half of the crab mixture over the chips in dollops and then sprinkle with half of the Cheddar, half of the Monterey Jack, and all of the pickled jalapeños. Sprinkle with the remaining chips, then distribute the remaining crab mixture and cheeses on top. Bake for 20 to 30 minutes, until the cheese is melted and bubbling.
4. Meanwhile, prepare the topping. In a large bowl, combine the tomatoes, onion, jalapeño pepper, lime juice, olive oil, avocado, parsley, and 1 teaspoon salt. Spoon onto the nachos, sprinkle with lime juice, and serve hot.

NOTES: I prefer jumbo lump crabmeat instead of shredded because you can really taste the crabmeat.

Pick through the crabmeat to remove any shells.

Be sure to wash your hands after handling the chilies and pickled jalapeños so you don’t get the spicy oils in your eyes.

Fig Cake

INGREDIENTS:

- 10 Tbsp (1¼ sticks) unsalted butter, room temp
 - 1 cup granulated sugar
 - 3 extra-large eggs, room temp
 - 1 cup fresh whole milk ricotta, at room temperature
 - 2 Tbsp sour cream
 - 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
 - ½ tsp grated lemon zest
 - 1¼ cups all-purpose flour
 - 1 Tbsp baking powder
 - 1 tsp kosher salt
 - 8 large (or 12 medium) fresh figs, stems removed, quartered through the stem
- NOTE: I used figs that were in my freezer. I defrosted them, let them drain and spread them over the top of the batter in the pan and then sprinkled the sugar over them.*
- 1 Tbsp turbinado sugar, such as Sugar in the Raw
 - Crème fraîche, for serving



METHOD:

1. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.
2. Butter and flour a 9-inch round springform pan, tapping out the excess flour.
3. Place the butter and granulated sugar in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment and beat on medium speed for 3 minutes, until light and fluffy, scraping down the bowl with a rubber spatula.
4. With the mixer on medium low, add the eggs, one at a time, scraping down the bowl and mixing until smooth.
5. Add the ricotta, sour cream, vanilla, and lemon zest and mix until combined. Don’t worry; the ricotta will make it look lumpy.
6. In a small bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder, and salt. With the mixer on low, slowly add the dry ingredients to the batter, mixing just until combined. Pour the batter into the prepared pan and smooth the top.
7. Arrange the figs on the cake, cut sides up, in snug but not -overlapping concentric circles. Sprinkle with the turbinado sugar and bake for 35 to 45 minutes, until the top is lightly browned and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
8. Allow the cake to cool in the pan on a baking rack for 15 to 20 minutes, transfer to a cake plate, and serve warm with crème fraîche on the side.

SOUTHERN, adj.-state of mind. More than where you were born. See also fried chicken, sweet tea, football, bourbon, acoustic guitars, hospitable, being devoted to front porches, magnolias, the GOOD LORD and each other.

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