

12 Pages - 1 Section ©2025

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SPECIAL EDITION

Honoring Our Heroes



100 Days That Changed America: President Trump's Historic Start

In just 100 days, President Trump has delivered a record-breaking surge of leadership, action, and results unlike any other administration. While other presidents wasted their early months in office on ceremony and bureaucracy, President Trump has unleashed a tidal wave of pro-America policies, restoring strength, pride, and prosperity from Washington to Main Street. In his first three months, Trump has launched a historic border enforcement surge, reignited American manufacturing investment, and begun slashing federal waste at a pace Washington has never seen. Critics, clinging to outdated narratives, label his approach as "black-pilled"—overly aggressive and chaotic. They wring their hands over early polling dips, but they miss the bigger story: Trump is delivering results faster and more decisively than any of his predecessors, while Democrats, bereft of ideas, stumble from one failure to the next.

Meanwhile, the media, including so-called business publications like The Wall Street Journal, spend all their time defending the status quo, propping up the very establishment that created America's economic, cultural, and geopolitical problems. A recent Wall Street Journal editorial absurdly warned about "tariff risks" while ignoring the resurgence of American steel and manufacturing towns. The New York Times cannot find a single positive thing to say about Trump 47, and the local lapdogs like AL.com dutifully follow suit, parroting the same tired narratives. They ignore the undeniable reality: Trump is getting big things done, fast.

On immigration, Trump has acted decisively to secure our borders after years of empty promises. With 18 to 19 million illegal immigrants draining resources and depressing wages, Trump's policy of mass deportations and targeting gang members for foreign incarceration is a direct response to overwhelming voter demands. In just 100 days, the border closed, enforcement has been reinvigorated, and sanctuary policies are being dismantled. Meanwhile, Democrats offer no solutions—only more chaos.

On the economy, Trump's strategic tariffs are breathing new life into American manufacturing. Investment is surging, jobs are coming back, and industries once written off are now seeing a renaissance. Democrats, stuck in their free-trade death spiral and green cronyism, offer only subsidies for the well-connected. Polls show voters know who's really fighting for them—and it isn't the left.

Through President Trump's DOGE project led by Elon Musk, Trump 47 has already begun slashing federal waste, targeting a \$37 trillion debt crisis that past administrations ignored. The results are already visible, with agencies consolidating, budgets shrinking, and accountability returning to Washington.

Culturally, President Trump has boldly confronted the toxic ideologies that have undermined national unity. In only 100 days, DEI mandates are under siege, merit is being restored, and the American Dream—earned by effort, not handed out by quotas is once again being celebrated.

On the world stage, Trump's foreign policy has been clear, realistic, and effective.

He has avoided new wars while strengthening America's position against adversaries like China and, in the case of Ukraine, has brought President Zelensky kicking and screaming to the negotiating table after years of being spoiled by Biden's open checkbook. In contrast, Democrats remain stuck in a failed, muddled approach that voters clearly reject.

Another brilliant move in Trump's first 100 days was reaching across traditional political divides to bring in leaders like Scott Bessant, Tulsi Gabbard, and Robert F. Kennedy Jr.—former Democrats who put vision, common sense, and love of country ahead of party loyalty. Their appointments reflect a commitment to American values over political gamesmanship. This bipartisan spirit of putting America First has driven the entrenched Swamp into a frenzy, as their power structures depend on division and rigid party loyalty, not unity and action.

Despite all this progress, critics obsess over short-term poll numbers, failing to recognize that true leadership demands boldness and the willingness to endure temporary backlash. Meanwhile, Democrats' poll numbers are even worse—a clear sign that Americans see through their empty obstruction.

America is also seeing the true face of the Democrat Party: Democrat-appointed judges who openly side with foreign criminals over American citizens, and elected officials who waste hardworking taxpayers' dollars on bloated programs serving special interests rather than the public good. Their priorities are laid bare, and the American people are waking up to just how deeply broken the old system has become.

Trump's first 100 days have set a new standard for presidential action. He has tackled real crises—economic, cultural, and demographic—head-on, refusing to accept decline as destiny. Democrats, clinging to tired old norms and broken promises, offer no path forward.

Democrats are not just struggling; they are consistently failing on every major 80-20 issue—immigration enforcement, economic revival, spending cuts, cultural sanity, and foreign policy strength—where a clear supermajority of Americans demand action. Their opposition to these common-sense priorities reveals just how disconnected they have become from the American mainstream.

America needed leadership, not excuses. In just 100 days, Donald Trump has shown he is delivering. When the Trump Agenda fully takes hold, the future will be brighter than ever. America will see a booming industrial base, secure borders, restored fiscal sanity, a revitalization of free-market principles, and a cultural renaissance grounded in merit and common sense. We will once again lead the world in innovation, prosperity, and freedom. Families will thrive, communities will flourish, and the American Dream will be reborn—stronger, prouder, and more dynamic than ever before. Just imagine a debt-free economy, factories humming across the heartland, our cities safer and stronger—and just imagine what the next 1,360 days will bring if this much has been delivered in only the first 100 days.

Perry O. Hooper Jr.
 Founder Let the People Speak
 Founder Patriots First
 Former Alabama State Representative
 Alabama State Republican Executive Committee



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Honoring Our Heroes



VETERAN NEWS

VETERANS MAY BIRTHDAYS

- Edward G. Platt..... May 2nd
- Jimmy F. Meacham..... May 5th
- Linda L. Boyle..... May 6th
- Joel A. Burdette..... May 6th
- LaQuiesha Andrews..... May 7th
- Sandra Dee Lucas..... May 13th
- Paul Williamson..... May 14th
- David L. McFarland..... May 16th
- Lenora White..... May 19th
- Richard Aldridge..... May 20th
- Ronald W. Balkom..... May 20th
- Willie Durham..... May 22nd
- Eli White..... May 27th
- Joseph Simon..... May 29th
- Jason R. Hughes..... May 30th
- Jamie M. LyBrands..... May 30th
- Danny M. McDonald..... May 30th

The Alabama Gazette wants to honor Martha for the many years of service to our veterans. She has spent countless hours interviewing, showing special attention, writing stories of the many great Veterans in our area that has served in so many of our American conflicts and wars.



Dr. Martha P. Simmons



Major William Stephen Gunter



Specialist Richard Howard Phelps



Chief Warrant Officer Robert Allen Morris



Brigadier General Jeffery L. Newton

We Hope you enjoy reading the Gazette as much as our Veterans!

Support our local Veterans organizations! Remember our Vets on Memorial Day.

New Montgomery-Area Organization: The River Region Veterans Coalition

The River Region Veterans Coalition (RRVC) is a new, diverse organization in Montgomery forming a regional non-profit/apolitical coalition of public and private sector organizations. Other such AL groups are the South AL Veterans Council (SAVC) in Mobile, the Central AL Veterans Collaborative (CAVC) in Birmingham and the North AL Veterans & Fraternal Organizations Coalition (NAVOC) in Huntsville.

The River Region Veterans Coalition has already held meetings in February and March of this year with local posts/chapters of such veteran service organizations as the Air & Space Forces Association, the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, the Marine Corps League, the Military Officers Association of America, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Vietnam Veterans of America in attendance. In addition, government agencies such as the Alabama National Guard and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs have participated as well as such private sector organizations as Bondfire Ranch, the Council on Substance Abuse, Invisible Warriors, Medicare Salute, Operation Iron Ruck, American Red Cross, Sage Health, Veterans Education Training & Support and the Wounded Warrior Project.

Interim officers for the River Region Veterans Coalition are:

- (1) **Keith Rudolph**, President,
- (2) Rear Admiral **Kent Davis**, Vice President
- (3) **Amber Walker**, Treasurer
- (4) **Carol Jahns**, Secretary
- (5) **Chuck Cochran**, Facilitator and Sergeant at Arms
- (6) **Major Norman**, Chaplain
- (7) **Jason Hughes**, Communications Director.

At the April 28th meeting, Mr. Amir Farroqi, Director of the Central AL Veterans Health Care System, was the featured speaker along with representatives from Sage Health, a health-care business. Meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at the Feast Buffet, 5831 Atlanta Highway, Montgomery, AL 36117.

Meals may be obtained at the Buffet for \$11.00. No reservation for meals is necessary. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 26th.



908th Flying Fighter Wing's Family Day

The 908th Flying Fighter Wing held a Family Day at Maxwell Air Force Base on Saturday, April 5, 2025. Personnel with this Wing and their families enjoyed a day filled with games, jumping on inflatable bounce houses, face painting, riding tricycles, videos, vendors such as the American Red Cross and a lunch of freshly grilled hotdogs and hamburgers. The 908th Flying Training Wing is Alabama's only U. S. Air Force Reserve Wing. It has approximately 1,000 members serving in more than 80 career fields with Traditional Reservists, Air Reserve Technicians, Active Guard and Reserve Members and Civilian Civil Servants. The 908th is currently in the middle of transitioning from a tactical airlift mission, flying C-130H Hercules to becoming the Formal Training Unit for the MH-139A Grey Wolf helicopter.

In Memory



Lt. Col John Gibson Hamilton passed away April 14, 2025. He served 34 years in the U.S. Military including six years in the U.S. Marine Corps and 28 years in the U.S. Air Force including a tour in Vietnam. His biographical article was published in the June 2021 issue of the Alabama Gazette



New Montgomery-Area Organization: The River Region Veterans Coalition

God Bless the USA!



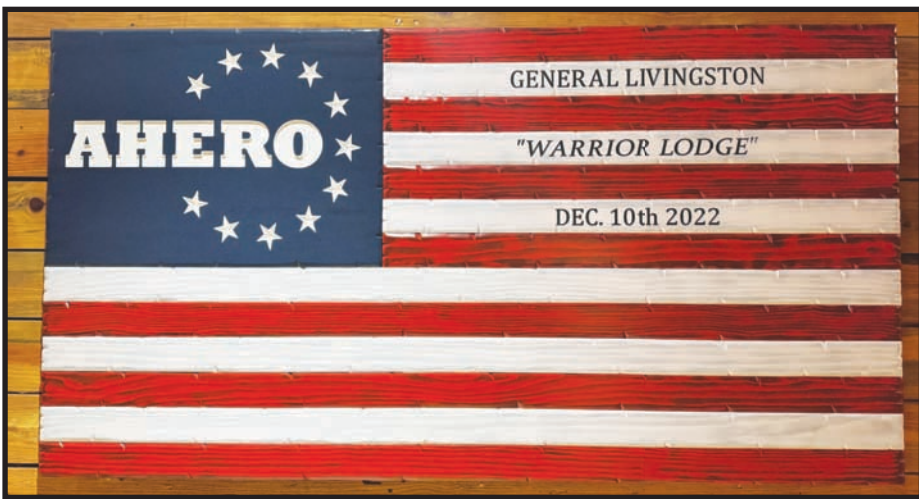
Major General James Everette Livingston MOH, USMC (Ret)



Major General James E. Livingston served over 33 continuous years on active duty in the United States Marine Corps. His Military Occupational Service Code was Infantry Officer. During the Vietnam War, on May 2, 1968, while serving as Commanding Officer, Company E, Second Battalion, Fourth Marines, Maj Gen Livingston distinguished himself above and beyond the call of duty in action against enemy forces during the Battle of Dai Do, and he earned the Medal of Honor, and he is the only recipient of the Medal of Honor from Auburn University. He received the following other medals, badges, commendations, ribbons, citations and decorations: Distinguished Service Medal, Silver Star

Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, Bronze Star Medal with Combat "V", Purple Heart Third Award, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal Second Award, Navy Commendation Medal with Combat "V" Combat Action ribbon, Second Award and various other service and foreign decorations.

MajGen Livingston has received numerous awards from civilian organizations. He has been awarded the Daughters of the American Revolution's highest award for patriotism, leadership and service, the DAR Medal of Honor. At Auburn University in 1990, he received the Sigma Pi Founders Award. In 2001, he received the Distinguished Auburn Engineer and Distinguished Veteran Awards. In 2012, he was awarded the Auburn University Lifetime Achievement Award, and in 2018, he was awarded South Carolina's highest honor, the Order of the Palmetto, by Gov. Henry McMaster. In 2024, he was inducted into the State of Alabama Engineering Hall of Fame. The Warrior Lodge at the A-HERO farm in Macon County, AL, is named for him. Veterans and first responders participate in outdoor activities as a means to recover from their physical wounds and psychological trauma to reintegrate with American life.



MajGen Livingston was born January 12, 1940 to his parents, Myrett and Ruth, and was reared in the rural area of Telfair County, GA, where he worked on his family's farm and graduated in 1957 from Lumber City High School, where he played basketball. In 1957, he entered North Georgia College (The Military College of Georgia) which later became the University of North Georgia and was a member of the school's nationally recognized Corps of Cadets. After one year, he transferred to Auburn University, which was then Alabama Polytechnic Institute, to pursue an engineering degree that was not offered at North Georgia College. While at Auburn University, he pledged and was initiated into the Alpha-Delta Chapter of Sigma Pi fraternity. While there, he participated in the Air Force ROTC and two Marine Corps Platoon Leader Boot Camps at Quantico, Virginia. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in June 1962.

MajGen Livingston's active military service began with his completing six months of training at the Marine Basic School at the Marine Corps Base Quantico, VA. He was assigned as replacement officer during the Cuban Crisis, which was called off quickly, and this was followed by his serving as a platoon commander in teaching the junior platoon leader classes. His early assignments included service as a platoon commander, intelligence officer and as a Recruit Training Regiment series commander. He was transferred to Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, CA, where he served with the Fifth Marine Regiment preparing them to go to Okinawa and then to Vietnam. When he and the Marines arrived via ship as a member of the Third Battalion, Third Regiment, Third Marine Division near Da Nang, they served three months on the ship going ashore via helicopter getting exposure in case they had to go ashore in warfare. He rotated back to Cherry Point, N.C., where he decided to remain in the U.S. Marines. He then served 13 months at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., where he was a series commander in training Marine recruits. Promoted to captain in June 1966, he served one year as the Commanding Officer of the Marine detachment aboard the USS Wasp (CVS-17), a U.S. Navy anti-submarine carrier. The ship carried nuclear weapons, and it patrolled the eastern Atlantic Ocean in case the Soviets attacked the mainland of America.

MajGen Livingston served nine months during 1967-1968 with the Second Battalion, Fourth Marine Division who were called the Magnificent Bastards. The Vietnam War was really heating up at this time because the North Vietnamese were now fighting. MajGen Livingston served with the Third Marine Division (Reinforced) in the Republic of Vietnam beginning in August 1967. On May 2, 1968, while serving as the Commanding Officer, Company E, Second Battalion, Fourth Marines, he distinguished himself above and beyond the call of duty in action against enemy forces. While leading his Marines on a determined assault on the heavily fortified village of Dai Do, he maneuvered his men to assault positions across 500 meters of dangerous open rice paddies. Ignoring hostile rounds impacting near him, he fearlessly led his men in a savage assault against enemy emplacements within the village. He shouted words



of encouragement to his Marines, directing their fire and spurring the dwindling momentum of the attack on repeated occasions. He was twice painfully wounded by grenade fragments, yet he refused medical treatment and courageously led his men in the destruction of over 100 mutually supporting bunkers. He boldly maneuvered the remaining Marines of his company forward, joined forces with the heavily engaged Marines and halted the enemy's counterattack. He was wounded the third time, sustaining a through and through wound from a .50 caliber machine gun and was unable to walk. Only when assured of the safety of his men did he allow himself to be evacuated.

MajGen Livingston was treated for his serious wounds to his legs resulting in seven surgeries at Tripler Army Medical Center in Hawaii. He then served in Okinawa for four months completing his previous assignment. This was followed by attending the amphibious warfare school at Quantico for nine months. Next, he served two years at the Army post, Ft. Benning, GA, as the liaison for the Marines and Navy personnel who attended the Army's Ranger Course, Scout Dog Course, Pathfinder School, and the Airborne School. He was also an instructor at the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Ga. He then served with the First Marine Division at Camp Pendleton, CA, first as the Director of their Division School and then as the Operations Officer for the Third Battalion, Seventh Marines, First Marine Division.

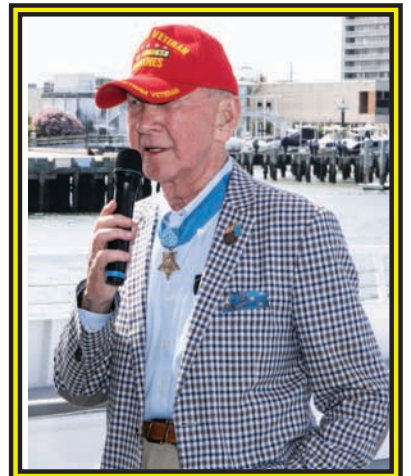
He was then transferred to Okinawa where he served as the Operations Officer initially for the Fourth Marines for four months. He was shortly thereafter re-assigned to serve as the eyes and ears for the Division Commander aboard the USS Blue Ridge (LCC-19), a command ship which was off the coast of Vietnam and used for the evacuation of Vietnam called Operation Frequent Wind. He was on the last helicopter flight from the Defense Attache's compound in Saigon. As the Vietnam War had ended, he then returned to Okinawa and finished his tour. Next, he served at Quantico as the commander of the training of platoon leader's class. This was followed by attending the Marine Corps Command and Staff College at Quantico in May 1977. He was then assigned as commander at the Marine Barracks in London, England, and this was an accompanied tour allowing his family to go with him. From the Marine Barracks London, he was assigned to the Air War College at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, Alabama, where he graduated with a Master's Degree in May 1981.

MajGen Livingston's next assignment was serving as the Commanding Officer, Third Recruit Training Battalion at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, S.C., and then as the Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations and Training. While there, he earned a Master's Degree in Management from Webster University in 1984. He next served for three years at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., where he was the G-3 for the Second Marine Division and Commanding Officer for the Sixth Marines. His next assignment was an accompanied tour with the Joint U.S. Assistance Group in the Republic of the Philippines. He was then promoted to the rank of Brigadier General, and he was assigned to the Pentagon for two years as the Deputy Director for Operations at the National Military Command Center. Then he commanded the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, at Twenty-nine Palms, CA, where he developed the Desert Warfare Training Program used in training the Marines for deployment in Desert Storm and Desert Shield in Iraq. This was followed by his serving as the Commander of the First Marine Brigade in Hawaii. While there, he was promoted to Major General on July 8, 1991. His last assignment was in July 1991 when he assumed command of the Fourth Marine Division Reinforced at New Orleans, LA. He continued that assignment in New Orleans where he directed the reorganization of all Marine Reserve Forces into the newly designated Marine Forces Reserve. After serving there for four years, MajGen Livingston retired from military service in September 1995.

After his military retirement, MajGen Livingston continued living in New Orleans for 11 years and worked in the banking and development business. He was involved in the startup of an ATM company and also involved in banking, building high-rise structures and a 5,000 acre master-plan community in Biloxi/Gulfport, MS. He then moved to the Charleston, S.C., area where he is currently on the board of Beacon Community Bank. He retired from all employment in 2004.

MajGen Livingston and his wife, Sara, have been married 58 years and they have two children and three grandchildren. In his leisure time, he enjoys working out, traveling throughout the world and being involved in public affairs. He belongs to the Marine Corps League, the Washington Light Infantry, Society of Colonial Wars, Charleston Club and the Carolina Yacht Club. He serves as Chairman Emeritus and as an Honorary Board Member of the National WWII Museum in New Orleans, a founding member of the Beacon Community Bank in Charleston, S.C., and an Honorary Life member of the German Friendly Society.

MajGen Livingston's conclusions about his military service are: *"I feel like it gave me an opportunity to give back to the country, and it introduced me to the strength of the country and its' people. It has been a wonderful experience, and the Marine Corps has been the highlight of this experience."* He would like people to remember him as someone who loved his country and enjoyed serving as a U.S. Marine.





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Chaplain, Major Alexander Palomaria: Age: 56



Chaplain, Major Alexander Palomaria served 32 years in the U.S. military including nine years in the Army and 23 years in the Air Force. His Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) was Chaplain, and he served as a chaplain for 19 years. He received the following decorations, medals, badges, citations and campaign ribbons: Meritorious Service Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Force Commendation Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, Air Force Organizational Excellence Award, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Korean Defense Service Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, Nuclear Deterrence Operations Service Medal,

Air Force Overseas Ribbon Short Tour with one Oak Leaf Cluster, Air Force Overseas Ribbon Long Tour, Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon, Air Force Longevity Service with four Oak Leaf Clusters, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with one Hourglass Device, Air Force Training Ribbon with one Oak Leaf Cluster, and Army Service Ribbon.

Chaplain, Major Palomaria was born January 21, 1969 to his parents, Greg and Flora Palomaria in Montgomery, AL, where he was reared and graduated from Jefferson Davis High School in 1987. He participated in the U.S. Marine Corps JROTC and the wrestling team, and he played nose guard on the football team. He felt the call to the ministry while in high school, and he served for three years as an intern on the staff at Frazer United Methodist Church in Montgomery where staff members who had served in the military as chaplains mentored him leading him to his strong desire to serve as a chaplain in the U.S. military. In 1989, he completed Army Basic Training at Ft. Knox, KY, in the Simultaneous Membership Program rising from the rank of a (E-3) Private to an (O1) 2nd Lt. in two years. He then participated in the Army ROTC at Auburn University at Montgomery where he received the first John Ed Mathison Scholarship and a Pell Grant. He graduated with a BSG Degree in General Studies Leadership in 1992. While there, he participated in six weeks of training in the Big Red One, the 1st Infantry Division at Ft. Riley, KS.

After graduation, Chaplain, Major Palomaria's service in the AL National Guard began with his reporting for duty with the Army at Ft. Gordon, GA, where he trained in electronics communication with the Signal Corps for five months. After completion of this training, he was assigned to serve with the AL National Guard at Montgomery, AL. His unit was activated during Desert Storm, but it was not deployed. He began attending the Erskine Theological Seminary in South Carolina because he wanted to serve as a chaplain in the U.S. military. In 1998, he transitioned from service in the Army to the Air Force and

attended the Air Force Chaplain Corps College at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, AL. He then served in the Air Force Reserve and served three years as the associate pastor at the Destin United Methodist Church in FL. While there, he served one weekend per month and two weeks during the summer with Special Ops at Hurlburt Field, FL. In 2002, he began service on active duty at Pope Air Force Base, N.C. for three years. While at Pope AFB, he was deployed for four months to Al Udiad, Qatar. From there, he went on combat missions to Baghdad, Afghanistan and Djibouti in the Horn of Africa, etc. on combat missions. This was followed by service at Altus Air Force Base, OK, for two years. He then completed one year of residency training at Lackland Air Force Base, TX, to serve as a hospital chaplain in the Air Force. While there, using the G.I. Bill, he received a Doctor of Ministry Degree from Oblate School of Theology. This was followed by his first unaccompanied deployment to Kunsan, Korea, for one year. He then served at the joint base, Army Defense Language Institute at Monterey, CA. His second unaccompanied deployment was to Osan Air Base, Korea, for one year. His last deployment was an accompanied tour to Aviano, Italy, and while there he traveled twice each month to Hungary to preach sermons to members of an Air Force squadron. He returned to America and served at Mt. Home AFB, Idaho, for two years. His last military assignment was at Los Angeles AFB, CA, for four years, and he retired there July 1, 2021.

After his military retirement, Chaplain Major Palomaria served three years as the pastor of the Parker Global Methodist Church at Panama City, FL, which is located near Tyndall Air Force Base. There were many Air Force veterans as well as active duty service members living there. Since October 2024, he has served in Congregational Care at Frazer Church, a Free Methodist Church, in Montgomery, AL. He serves on the Board of Directors of Go International, a missions organization. He was married for 25 years, and he has three children and now has four grandchildren.

Chaplain Major Palomaria's conclusions about his service in the U.S. military are: *"Service was a calling. I served God and country like my father and grandfather before me. My grandfather, a Filipino, served in the Philippine and American Armies during WWII and on the Bataan Death March. In 1956, at the age of 20, my father was the first Palomaria to come to the United States, and he arrived in San Francisco and immediately enlisted in the Air Force. My oldest brother served in the military. So I am a member of the 3rd generation in my family who has served. The Air Force truly is a family. We support one another in the mission which is mission first and people always."* He would like people to remember him as being gentle and pure of heart.



Three Generations of Palomaria Family Serving in U.S. Military

(Far left): **Chaplain, Major Alexander Palomaria** (Retired Army/Air Force 1989-2021) and youngest son of Greg Palomaria Sr.

(Second to Left): **Captain Greg Palomaria** (10 years Air Force/Army, 1985-1985, honorably discharged and oldest brother (Third from left:) **Airman First Class Greg Palomaria Jr.**, and father of Sam and Alex Palomaria (served honorably 1957-1961.) (Fourth from left): **Army Staff Sergeant Greg Palomaria Sr.** (Retired, 1941-1961) Father to Greg Jr. and grandfather to Sam and Alex, served in the Filipino and American Armies during WWII and the Korean War



Major Thomas Leon Harrell: Age 82



Major Thomas Leon Harrell served 21 years in the U.S. Air Force. His Air Force Specialty Code included Acquisition Management, Acquisition Project Officer, Configuration Identification Officer and Chemical Engineer. He received the following medals, decorations, badges, citations and campaign ribbons: Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Services Commendation Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal with one device, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, National Defense Service Medal, Air Force Overseas Short Tour Ribbon with one device, Air Force Overseas Long Tour Ribbon with one device, Air Force Longevity Services Award with four devices, Air Force Training Ribbon and Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon.

Major Harrell was born September 17, 1942 in Pensacola, FL. to his parents Alonzo Leon Harrell and Sarah Gertude Harrell. He was reared there, and while in high school, he participated in track and cross country. He graduated from Pensacola High School in 1960. He then graduated from Pensacola Junior College with an Associate of Arts Degree in pre-engineering in June 1962. He transferred to the University of Florida where he received a partial scholarship in track and cross country and graduated with a B.S. Degree in Chemical Engineering in April 1965. He then worked with the Allied Chemical Corporation as a chemical engineer where he was responsible for start-up and operation of a reclamation facility during May 1965 to February 1967.

Major Harrell's military career began March 1, 1967, and he reported for duty as a 2nd Lieutenant at Medina Air Force Base, TX, for officer training school for 10 weeks. This was followed by service at Eglin Air Force Base, FL, for four years as a chemical engineer during March 1967 to May 1971. He was responsible for conceiving and developing technical solutions to assure suitability of test areas and a quantitative assessment laboratory to range operation and chemical/biological warfare test requirements. From June 1971 to December 1972, he was assigned to the Air Force Institute of Technology located at Wright-Patterson A.F.B (WPAFB), Ohio, from where he was sent to The University of Alabama Business School to obtain a Masters Degree in Business Administration/Management, R&D Management graduating in December 1972. After graduation, he switched from chemical engineering to project management in the Air Force and returned to WPAFB. There he served during January 1973 to September 1975 with HQ Aeronautical Systems Division, Deputy for Air-Launched Strategic Missiles, Air Launched Cruise Missile (ALCM) Program as a Configuration Identification Manager. He was responsible for the direction and management of configuration identification activities for the decoy segment of the Subsonic Cruise Armed Decoy (SCAD) missile.

Major Harrell then was deployed to Seoul, Korea, during October 1975 to November 1978 to serve with the Joint U.S. Military Assistance Group-Korea (JUSMAG- K) in the R&D Systems Acquisition area assisting the Republic of Korea Army in developing an Air Defense Missile Maintenance Depot. He worked with other branches of the U.S. Military, and this was an accompanied tour allowing his wife and child to also go with him. During this tour, he and his wife adopted a little Korean boy. He then returned to Eglin A.F.B. from December 1978 to July 1979 working with chemical warfare projects called

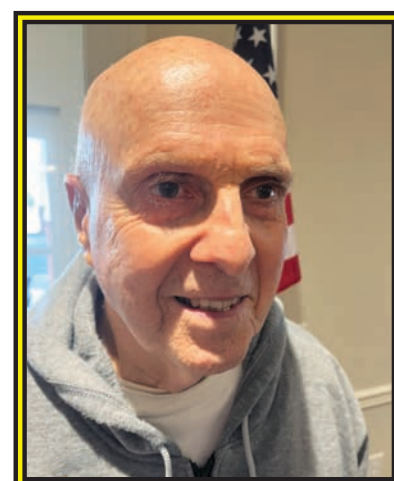
BIGEYE and FAE-2, and while there, he was promoted from Captain to Major. As a result, he was assigned to the HQ Armament Division, Deputy for Armament Systems, Munitions System Program Office as the Deputy for the development of the Multiple Stores Ejector Rack during August 1970 to January 1980. From February 1980 to September 1980, he was assigned to HQ Armament Division, Deputy for Armament Systems, Plans and Requirements Office as an Acquisition Staff Officer.

Major Harrell then was deployed to another accompanied tour to Osan AB, Korea, during October 1980 to July 1982 where he served as Chief of the Program Control Division for the Constant Watch Program; the mission of this organization was to construct a combined US and Korean bunker and an intelligence center. While there, he and his wife adopted a little Korean girl. From August 1982 to June 1985, he served at PACAF HQs, Hickam AFB, Hawaii, as the Chief of the Program Control Division managing all Program Control activities for the Constant Watch Program. He returned for a third deployment in Korea working with the Korean Air Force as a Project Officer assisting the Korean Air Force in its purchase of AIM-9L guided missile system to put on their F-16's. His last assignment was at Maxwell A.F.B-Gunter Annex, AL. serving as Project Manager, and he retired there in June 1988.

After Major Harrell retired, he used the G.I. Bill and received a Masters Degree in Secondary Education in the area of mathematics from Alabama State University. He then was employed as a math teacher at Carver High School in Montgomery, AL, for 14 years during 1989 until 2003. Next he worked as a manager in the local school systems' Logistics Division refurbishing and maintaining science kits for elementary school teachers during 2003-2009. Then he worked as a mathematics substitute teacher during 2009-2024 in the Montgomery and surrounding area Public Schools. Since then, he has volunteered to tutor students in mathematics at Booker T. Washington Magnet High School in Montgomery.

Major Harrell's and his wife, Beth, have been married 56 years, and they have three children. He is an active member of Frazer Methodist Church in Montgomery, and since 1998, he has volunteered to share weekly the Gospel of Jesus Christ to inmates located at The Kilby Correctional Facility.

Major Harrell's conclusions about what serving in the U.S. military means to him are, *"It was life-changing. I met my wife while serving in the military and adopted two Korean children. Also, I met so many wonderful people with some becoming life long friends. I went in attending to serve only four years, but I stayed in for a career. It was a blessing!"*





Senior Master Sergeant Sharon Kay Waters: Age 78



Senior Master Sergeant Sharon Kay Waters served 22 years in the United States Air Force. Her Air Force Specialty Code was Administrative Superintendent for three years and one month and Administrative Technician for 19 years and three months. She received the following decorations, medals, badges, citations and campaign ribbons: Defense Meritorious Service Medal with one Device, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal, Joint Meritorious Unit Award, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with one Device, Air Force Good Conduct Medal with six Devices, National Defense Service Medal, Air Force Overseas Short Tour Ribbon, Air Force Overseas Long Tour Ribbon with one Device, Air Force Longevity Service Award Ribbon with four Devices, NCO Professional Military Education Graduate Ribbon and Air Force Training Ribbon. She completed NCO Academy at Bolling AFB, Washington, D.C. and Senior NCO Academy by correspondence.

SMSGt Waters was born March 5, 1947 to her parents, Loren E. Lewis and Marjorie J. Lewis in Hastings, MI. Both parents served in the U. S. Navy during WWII. Her father then served in the U.S. Air Force retiring as a Tech Sergeant, and her two brothers served in the U.S. Air Force. She was one of five children born to her parents. She moved often as her father was transferred with his military service, but when her father retired from military service, the family returned to Hastings, MI, where she graduated from Hastings High School in June 1965. This is the same high school that her mother graduated from, and her father attended until the 11th grade when he enlisted in the U. S. Navy.

SMSGt Waters' military career began when she volunteered and enlisted June 16, 1965 at Indianapolis, IN, immediately after graduation from high school. She completed Air Force Basic at Lackland Air Force Base, TX, and then she completed four weeks of training at the Technical School at Amarillo A.F.B., TX, where she trained in typing, going over administrative regulations and how to do publications. Her first assignment was at Barksdale A.F.B, LA, where she worked as an administrative assistant to the secretary with the 2nd Supply Squadron from August 1965 to May 1967. Next, she served at Offutt A.F.B., NB, during May 1967 to December 1968. Then she was deployed with her husband who was also serving in the U.S. Air Force on an accompanied tour to Sembach Air Base, Germany for one year where she worked in accounting and finance. The Air Force dentist at Offutt AFB and the orthodontist at Sembach AB gave her excellent dental care to remove teeth and provide dental braces. Then she served at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, during June 1970 to June, 1971, where she worked in a maintenance squadron with typing technical instructions. Then both she and her husband served at Wiesbaden, Germany during 1971-1973. Next, she served at Gunter A.F.B., AL, where she worked in administration in medical systems during September 1973 to February 1978 where she and her husband worked together. Then she was sent to Shemya A.F.B., AK, for one year during February 1978 to February 1979 on an unaccompanied tour leaving her husband

and child behind in AL. Next, she was deployed from February 1979 to 1982 to Ramstein A.B., Germany where she worked with USAFE Intelligence in the administrative office on an accompanied tour bringing her husband, child and mother-in-law with her, and while there, she delivered her second child. From 1982-1984, she served at the Pentagon working with World Wide Medical Information Systems and then to McLean, VA, with Joint Services with the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps. Her last assignment was at Maxwell AFB-Gunter Annex, AL during 1984 to 1987 with the Military Entrance Processing Station where she made the schedules to meet requirements for uniforms, physical tests, etc. for each branch of service. In addition, she processed volunteers for the Air Force dealing with medical, testing, documents, hotel and meal arrangements. One such special event was a dinner called Dining In at the NCO Club at the Gunter Annex where everyone wore dress uniforms. SMSGt Waters retired from military service September 30, 1987.

After her military retirement, SMSGt Waters worked at the Central AL Veterans Health Care System in Montgomery, AL, during 1988-1994. First, she worked in Personnel and then in Quality Management. She used the G.I. Bill, attended Troy State University at Montgomery and received two degrees, a B.S. Degree in Social Science and Abnormal Psychology in 1988 and a Master of Science Degree in Human Development and Counseling in 1990. Then she worked at the Juvenile Center at the AL Department of Youth Services at Mt. Megs, AL. This was followed by working at Chemical Addictions Program Inc. and a rehab center in Montgomery, AL, where she did outpatient services, assessment and quality management of the quality control center from 1994 to 2012. She then taught inpatient family groups. She conducted supervision of master level therapists for licensed professional counselor certification at her home for five years retiring from all employment in 2016.

SMSGt Waters and her husband, Roy, were married 30 years, and they had two sons, two grandchildren and a step granddaughter. She was very close to her twin sister, Cheryl, until she passed. She has an artistic talent for arranging floral arrangements. She belongs to Eastern Hills Baptist Church in Montgomery. In the past, she has served as a volunteer with the Central-East AL Chapter of the American Red Cross with its telephone service to people suffering from disasters.

SMSGt Waters' conclusions about what serving in the U.S. military meant to her are: *"Serving in the military was the greatest pleasure in my life. I learned a lot in the military. It helped me to make a transition from being an 18 year old to an adult. I learned how to treat people even when I disagreed with them. I am grateful for the wonderful supervisors that I had who took an interest in me and helped me to get my teeth straightened and were supportive of my family. It helped me to get an education and allowed me to travel."* She would like to be remembered as a caring, committed and conscientious person.



Master Sergeant Boris Tucker: Age 64



Master Sergeant (MSG) Boris Tucker served 35 years in the U.S. military including 12 years on active duty in the U.S. Army and 23 years in the U.S. Army Reserve including four deployments. His Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) was (92-A) Automated Logistics Specialist. He received the following medals, decorations, badges, citations and campaign ribbons: Purple Heart, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, with two campaign stars, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with 20 year device silver hourglass, Iraq Campaign Medal with three campaign stars, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal (two awards), Army Achievement Medal (four awards), Army Good Conduct Medal (three awards), Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal (two awards), National Defense Service Medal, (two awards), Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Non Commissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon (three awards), Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon (five awards), Armed Forces Reserve Medal with "M" Device and Air Assault Badge.

MSG Tucker was born November 16, 1960 in Mobile, AL, to his parents, James E. Jackson and Mary Tucker, where he was reared, and while in high school, he participated in track and football. He graduated from Willaimson High School in 1980 and attended Bishop State Junior College for one year before volunteering and enlisting in the U.S. Army in September 1981.

MSG Tucker's military service began with his completion of training at the Army's Boot Camp at Ft. Jackson, S.C., and he completed MOS School training in supply with the motor pool at Ft Lee, VA. His first duty station was at Ft. Campbell, KY, for one year where he attended the Sabalausky Air Assault School and trained in rappelling, descending from a hovering helicopter using a rope. This was followed by deployment in 1983 to the Ledward Barracks at the U.S. Army Garrison at Schweinfurt, Germany for two years. Next, he served at Ft. Hood for two years, and he worked in the supply room. His MOS was changed

to Quartermaster where he worked with the laundry. While there, he went to Ft. Lee, VA, where he completed six months of training at the Noncommissioned Officer Academy (BNCO) School. He returned to Ft. Hood, and his unit was sent to Heidelberg, Germany, for one year. While there, he converted from active duty to Reserve in 1994 with his remaining military service involving one weekend each month and two weeks each summer. He then returned to AL and served at Ft. Rucker temporarily. Next, he worked as a civilian in Enterprise, AL, and served with the 383rd Reserve Unit in Troy, AL, for three years, and his Unit served TDY for two weeks at Meinheim, Germany. He then served with the 787th Reserve Unit at Dothan, AL, for two years followed by service with the 803rd Reserve Unit at Opelika, AL. While serving with the Reserve Units, he deployed on three tours to Iraq and one tour to Afghanistan. MSG Tucker retired from all military service April 20, 2015 at Opelika, AL.

Using the G.I. Bill, MSG Tucker received a B.S. Degree in International Culinary Restaurant Management from the Art Institute of Pittsburgh, and he has worked with the U.S. Postal Service since 2006 in Montgomery, AL. He and his wife, Betty, have been married one year. His daughter is currently serving in the U. S. Army. He and his wife are members of the Lily Baptist Church of Montgomery, AL, where he serves as a deacon, an usher and a member of the choir, and she serves as Associate Minister. He is a member of the Charles L. Martin American Legion Post 1948 in Montgomery, AL.

MSG Tucker's conclusions about what his service in the U.S. military has meant to him are: *"It meant a lot to me. It gave me an opportunity to grow as a man. It gave me an opportunity to appreciate life. When I went to other countries, I saw how poor people lived. I thank God for sparing my life."* He would like people to remember him as someone who loved his family and serving his community. He was a good father and husband and someone who loved God.



COACH TOMMY TUBERVILLE

U.S. SENATOR FOR ALABAMA

Veterans First Act



It has been 3 months since President Trump has entered the White House. In less than 100 days, President Trump and his administration have already identified more than \$155 billion in government waste, fraud, and abuse that has gone unchecked for decades.

One of the most shocking discoveries to-date has been the corruption within the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) under the Biden administration. Thanks to the great work of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), the American public became aware of some of the outrageous projects USAID was bankrolling under President Biden. From research in Wuhan to transgender operas in Columbia to Sesame Street in Iraq, USAID was essentially a Democrat slush fund. The extent of the waste at USAID has millions of Americans wondering – why has the government been wasting our taxpayer dollars instead of doing basic things like taking care of our veterans?

This led me to introduce the Veterans First Act with my friend, Senator Mike Lee from Utah. Our bill would take the funds that have been wasted at USAID and instead redirect them to

make improvements to veterans' homes. The VA State Veterans Home Construction Grant Program is a partnership between the VA and states to ensure our veterans have a safe place to call home. Sadly, many of our very own veterans are living in horrible conditions in State Veterans' Homes that are breaking down by the minute. Funding constraints can cause years of delays for homes that are just waiting to receive federal funds for outstanding repairs.

Thankfully, our bill addresses this housing crisis head on and redirects \$2 billion former-USAID dollars toward State Veteran Home repairs and renovations. As the son of a veteran myself, if my dad was living in a home that needed renovation, I would drop everything in order to ensure he had a safe place to call home. This money would go a long way towards helping Alabama's over 400,000 veterans.

Fighting for Alabama's veterans has been a top priority for me since coming to the Swamp four years ago. Since President Trump's arrival back to the Capitol, I have already led several efforts to support veterans this Congress. The ACCESS Act and the Ensuring Continuity in Veterans Health Act work to streamline options for Community Care within the VA system. The HBOT Access Act opens up treatment options to vets who have suffered a Traumatic Brain Injury or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and the Veteran Fraud Reimbursement Act makes it easier for vets with disabilities to be made financially whole. This bill is just the next step in making sure our veterans are taken care of.

I'm proud of this bill and hope to see it pass on a bipartisan basis. After all, taking care of those who have bravely served our country isn't a political issue. This commonsense bill would make sure taxpayer dollars are put to good use, not wasted on left-wing programs. Our veteran heroes were willing to lay down their lives for our freedom. The least we can do is make sure they have a decent place to call home.

Senator Tommy Tuberville represents Alabama in the United States Senate and is a member of the Senate Armed Services, Agriculture, Veterans' Affairs, HELP, and Aging Committees.



INSIDE THE STATEHOUSE With Steve Flowers

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

The State Auditor Office Will Be Open in 2026



The 2026 election season has begun. It is our big election year in Alabama politics. All our Constitutional offices, including Governor, Lt. Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, State Treasurer, and State Auditor are up for election. You will also have two seats on the State Supreme Court up for election as well as two seats on the Public Service Commission. In addition, and probably more importantly, all 140 seats in the Alabama State Legislature are up for election and one of our coveted two U.S. Senate seats will be up for election. The seat currently held by Coach Tommy Tuberville will be on the ballot for a six-year term.

It will be an even bigger year because it will not be an incumbent re-election year for most of our State Constitutional offices. The Brass Ring, the Governor's office, is wide open. Kay Ivey is term limited. Lt. Governor Will Ainsworth is term limited, and Attorney General Steve Marshall is term limited. These three offices election will be marquee events.

All our constitutional and statewide offices are held by a Republican. Democrats cannot win a statewide race in the Heart of Dixie, only token or irrelevant candidates run as a Democrat. Therefore, winning the Republican Primary is tantamount to election. That is why the races are beginning. The Republican Primary is May 26, 2026. That will be election day. The November General Election will be a quiet coronation. Qualifying will begin and end for the May election in January. Candidates can begin raising money for the 2026 election in May. Therefore, that is why you will see the horses begin to mount and the announcements cavalcading in the upcoming next two months of April and May.

There is a domino musical chairs scenario occurring in the secondary Constitutional offices. Lt. Governor Will Ainsworth is term limited, so Secretary of State Wes Allen is running for that post, leaving Secretary of State open. Current State Auditor Andrew Sorrell is leaving Auditor to run for Secretary of State, which leaves the State Auditor's race wide open. Young Vestavia lawyer and conservative Republican stalwart, Derek Chen, is poised to fill the Auditor's office. He is announcing his candidacy this week and will enter as the prohibitive favorite.

Derek Chen is a successful businessman and lawyer. His success affords him the luxury and advantage never before seen in a candidate for this low level position. He would be able to self-fund his campaign and would be able to do so generously.

He will have the money to get out his message and the ability to campaign full time.

Derek has done his homework and spade work in Republican circles. He is the largest individual contributor to Republican candidates in the state. He is by far, the largest contributor to Republican State Senate and House members. They are, in turn, working their districts fervently on Derek's behalf. He is one of the largest contributors to the state Republican Party. He was an early supporter of President Donald Trump since his start in 2015. He has been a frequent guest of President Trump in Washington D.C. and Mar-a-Lago, the Trump home in South Florida. It would not be a surprise if Trump endorses Derek Chen in his Alabama Auditor's race.

If you have been to a Republican event in Alabama over the past few years, you have probably seen Chen. He has been making the rounds all over the state, speaking with and meeting local folks. He has made extensive connections and developed a network of conservatives across the state. He will more than likely receive the endorsements of most of the conservative business groups and conservative social issue groups in the state, such as the Business Council of Alabama, the Alabama Forestry Association, the Alabama Policy Institute, and Eagle Forum, to name a few. He belongs to most of them and has for years.

He is currently working the state, courting the Alabama Farmers leadership. If he gets the ALFA endorsement, it will be the coup de grâce and lights out for any token opposition to keep him from capturing the State Auditor's job.

The Auditor has limited duties. Essentially, they just keep an inventory of the state's property. Given that Derek Chen is youthful and gregarious and holds both a law degree from Cumberland Law School at Samford and an MBA from the University of Alabama, he probably can keep an accurate account of the state's desks, chairs, pencils, and computers.

It should be a fun year.

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

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



Rob Tate

We would watch it sometimes all day long. I know that I am not alone. I have a friend who is a big "gamer" and loves to play video games. He once asked me about it because he thought it was stupid. My response was that I get to watch college football maybe 20 days out of the year and yet he played his video games for hours almost every day of year. Now who is the stupid one?

Enter 2025 and the ridiculously ungoverned an unregulated transfer portal. The biggest name to hit the news this year is obviously Nico Iamaleava of Tennessee. Ever since he showed up in Tennessee, I found it easier to just say Ima Leavin' rather than try to spend time pronouncing his name correctly. Who knew that name I gave him would become reality.

Before I really get started, let me make my position clear on NIL (Name – Image – Likeness). I am totally in favor of NIL. A car dealership puts your mug on a billboard as a way of selling cars, you deserve to get paid. If the university sells a jersey in the student center with your name on the back, you should get a cut of that. A clothing line? You get a cut. Name on a pair of tennis shoes? You get a cut. A cereal box? You get a cut. An action figure? You get a cut. I have zero problems with NIL. If somebody is making money off of you, why should you not get a percentage of that? And no, I am not here to haggle percentages. But the athlete should get something.

The problem? Nick Saban, after he walked out the college coaching door said it best. He said what we have today in so many instances is "pay for play." It too often has nothing to do with NIL but simply paying kids out of high school, large sums of money to play sports at their college or university. And no, I am not in favor of that. One reason is that these are no longer amateur athletes but professional athletes playing sports and wearing a uniform of the college that is paying them. Just last football season, one team played close to \$20 million to get their team on the field.

At the moment, there is the perfect storm of crap brewing in the college athletic world. We have NIL, pay for play and the transfer portal all swirling around and each is mostly either unregulated or at best "under" regulated. In other words, the inmates are running the asylum. I do not like the idea of a bunch of teenagers and young adults dictating to the NCAA how they are going to operate. Even big time College Gameday announcer Kirk Herbstreit has mentioned on several occasions that rules need to be put into place.

With the transfer portal, at the end of every season, dozens of players jump into the portal looking for more money. Can I blame them? On one level, not really. There are so few rules so the wild-wild west rules. With the rules as they are now, why not make as much as you can? For many, the days of honor and commitment to a single team mean nothing compared to the all-mighty dollar. Can you imagine being a coach, and yes this has happened, and one day

Robservations...

IMA LEAVIN'

I love college football. Or should I say, "I used to love college football." There was a time not so many years ago that my wife and I would get up on Saturday morning, read our Bibles and then at 0900, we would turn on College Gameday on ESPN and watch college football until we went to bed that night.

you find out that almost your entire team has hit the portal and now, instead of building upon the last season, you are concerned with just trying to find enough quality players to field a team. Or imagine being a coach like Nick Saban and having some knuckleheaded kids come into your office and threaten to enter the portal if the university doesn't pay him enough money or cannot guarantee him a certain amount of playing time every game. And some wonder why the greatest college football coach in history said, "See ya later, alligator." I cannot blame him. You are going to walk into his office and demand something like that? Nope, ain't gonna happen.

The portal is busted, fix it!! Put some restrictions on it. Cap it to maybe two transfers per collegiate career. Something. If you signed an NIL contract for example, sorry rosebud, you are stuck or you have to sit out a full year. And like Nico Ima Leavin and his younger brother are about to find out, it appears that the University of Arkansas where Nico's brother just left and the University of Tennessee might be suing the Ima Leavin brothers for breach of contract. If this is true, then whatever NIL money they might have been given by their new college of UCLA, might be going to the two universities they left. I for one hope so. I saw a meme the other day and it is fitting for the Ima Leavin brothers. It basically said they are entering a new hood; adulthood. And it is perhaps the most unpleasant hood they have ever lived in.

As for just outright paying these kids to play – no. I cannot agree with that. "We need to get paid," they say. Uhhhhh, you are getting a college education for free. Free room and board, etc. You are getting paid. Going to college should be more than zipping around the campus in your Lamborghini or Mercedes. Shouldn't there be some college in college sports? Don't get me wrong. There are hundreds of dedicated student athletes out there who are able to juggle the pressure of their sport and stiff academics. My hats off to them. At the same time, there are a lot of athletes who do not care about school. One athlete's father famously bragged that his son never once set foot inside a classroom while he was in college. Now that is something to be proud of.

Do I have a definitive answer to the Portal-NIL-Pay of Play problems. Nope. But guess what, it is not my job. The NCAA has some work to do. But don't expect much. Remember, it took an executive order forcing them to not allow men to compete against women in college sports. In other words, men cannot compete in women's sports programs but women can compete in men's programs. It seems that few if any of them are interested in fixing a problem that is clearly spinning out of control. As the saying goes, once the worms get out of the can, they are nearly impossible to gather up and put back into the can. Right now, they are squirming everywhere.

As for the 2025 season, I most definitely will not be watching as much as I have in the past. Much like last season. But if things do not get reigned in, within a few years, only the colleges with the most money will be able to field competitive teams. Oh well. I would rather watch great WWII documentaries and movies than watch millionaire teenagers and 20 somethings play football. What's the point?

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Memorial Day (originally known as Decoration Day) is one of the federal holidays in the United States for honoring and mourning the U.S. military personnel who died while serving in the United States Armed Forces. It is observed on the last Monday of May. Memorial Day is also considered the unofficial beginning of summer in the United States. It is a day for visiting cemeteries and memorials to mourn the military personnel who died in the line of duty. Volunteers will place American flags on the graves of those military personnel in national cemeteries. Others such as family and friends will also come to lay flowers and grieve on the graves of those who died in the US military.





Ronald A. Holtsford

After Recently Celebrating the Resurrection of Christ, How Has Judeo- Christian (Rabbinical/ Ecclesiastical) Law Evolved?



The Trial of Jesus: A Historical Look at the Jewish and Roman Trial Proceedings, an honors thesis, written by Vivian Pryor while at Ouachita Baptist University, 17 April 2024, discusses the trial of Jesus by the High Priests, also referred to as a council meaning the Sanhedrin. It is believed that the Sanhedrin was a council of multiple men, most likely members of the Pharisees and the Sadducees who functioned not only in judicial matters but legislative as well. The Pharisees were priests that not only believed in the Torah but also the oral traditions that were to become a part of the Talmud. They believed in the afterlife. The Sadducees believed in the Torah but not the oral traditions or the afterlife. Because they did not believe in the afterlife, modern Christians may after speaking of the Sadducees say that they “were sad, you see”.

In reviewing surviving writings of a military leader/ writer from the times who was Jewish but also had Roman citizenship named Flavius Josephus, she pointed out some of the errors made by the Sanhedrin in their trial of Jesus. While “lawyers” were not used there were certain procedures that were to be followed. For starters the trial could only be held in the day time which it was held at night. In the case of a death penalty there had to also be an intervening day between the trial and the decision, which again there was not. There were multiple forms of execution that could occur which also included stoning and even strangulation.

The fact was that the Sanhedrin wanted Jesus dead. Where it was necessary to have eye witness accounts, the Priests brought forth witnesses that embellished the truth because they needed the Romans to become involved to carry out the death penalty. Rome found the Jews to be troublesome as a group and tried to not get involved with their affairs whenever possible.

For the trial to go forward, the Jews had to have witnesses account for their personal view of the crime(s). One included the suggestion that Jesus’ words of “*render unto Caesar what is Caesar’s and unto God, what is God’s.*” as encouraging the Jews to not pay the tax to Rome as was levied. Also, by Jesus proclaiming himself as a king, while seen as a slap to Herod by the Jews was skewed to support the “witness” testimony that Jesus was directing Jews not to support Rome by their tax payments. Further, they made claims of blasphemy against Jesus for claiming His divinity, also as a death penalty crime.

Truly as Ms. Pryor pointed out, it was the most “*influential legal case of all time*” and that death sentence and execution is the basis of the ultimate blood sacrifice for the redemption of sins for all of mankind, but specifically for those who repent, trust in faith and call on the name of Jesus as Savior.

After the Jews rebelled against Rome in A.D. 67-70 which culminated with the destruction of the Temple, the Sanhedrin no longer existed. Over time the rabbinical legal system declined for various reasons. Today’s rabbinical courts in Israel have more to do with family law and may work parallel to the civil courts.

The rabbinical courts have jurisdiction over Jewish marriages and sometimes over other marriages within Israel. There may be a race to either the rabbinical or civil court especially after so much of Israel has become more secular leaning.

Christians utilize Ecclesiastical courts in spiritual and connected religious cases (including the correction of religious leaders) and in the UK it includes other matters such as probate. In the United States, Ecclesiastical hearings are a non-adversarial hearing used as a last resort for various reasons related to the local church or a collection of churches of the same denomination. Often times these matters may be related to marriage or family. My understanding and what I have been told as a member of a congregation from time to time is initially an unrepentant member is counseled specifically by a prescribed method in hopes that they will repent of a particular sin or sins and come back into the fold. If the member will not repent then the member may be excommunicated from the congregation, losing all rights and privileges of membership.

Religious legal hearings have their place and the various denominations, faiths or religions certainly need to have free access to govern themselves. The Catholics, Episcopalians, evangelical churches, etc. all have different oversight and rules but must follow their tenants of their faith.

Fortunately, professional jurists and lawyers have a better chance (though not perfect by any means) of coming to a fair conclusion in legal matters than those of the Sanhedrin who were more concerned with power and greed. But the result for the Son of God was long ago prescribed for the redemption of man and occurred at the perfect time in history.

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.”

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Col John Eidsmoe

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, PATRICK HENRY!

Last October, I had the privilege of conducting a wedding in our little country church. The groom is a retired U.S. Army corporal. The bride is a direct descendant of Patrick Henry. Born 29 May 1736, Henry is the subject of my column for May.

Most Americans, when they think of Patrick Henry, are reminded of his timeless words, “Give me liberty or give me death!” They think of Henry as a great orator but not much else. But an orator’s power to move people wells from the depth of conviction in his own soul and his ability to instill that conviction in the hearts of his listeners. John Randolph of Roanoke, also a great orator, said of Henry, “*The united powers of painting and eloquence could, alone, give a faint idea of what he was...a Shakespeare and Garrick combined...when Henry was speaking one felt like whispering to his neighbor, ‘Hush, don’t stir, don’t speak, don’t breathe!’”* Judge St. George Tucker, a fellow delegate who heard Henry’s famous speech, recollected, “*Imagine that you had heard a voice as from heaven uttering the words, ‘We must fight, as the doom of Fate, and you may have some idea of the speaker, the assembly to whom he addressed himself, and the auditory, of which I was one.’*”

Another listener described the speech,

“When Patrick Henry said, ‘Forbid it, Almighty God,’ his arms were extended aloft, his body was thrown back, his coat flung right and left. The tendons of his neck stood out white and rigid like whipcords, his brow was knit, every feature marked with the resolute purpose of his soul. ... ‘Liberty’ he spoke with an emphasis never given it before. His countenance was radiant; he stood erect and defiant; while the sound of his voice and the sublimity of his attitude made him appear a magnificent incarnation of Freedom, and expressed all that can be acquired or enjoyed by nations and individuals invincible and free.”

But Henry was more than a great orator. He was a great American statesman, respected in his time more than any other American except George Washington. As a lawyer he often defended the cause of liberty in American courts. On one occasion in Spotsylvania County, Virginia, as he waited for his case to be called, he saw two Baptist pastors being tried for preaching without a license from the Church of England. He interrupted the proceeds and demanded, “*May it please your lordship, what did I hear? Did I hear an expression that these men, who your worships are about to try for misdemeanor, are charged with preaching the gospel of the Son of God?*” He then joined the defense and also defended other Baptist pastors facing similar charges.

Henry served as a colonel in the Virginia militia and also served six terms as Governor of Virginia. His passion for liberty led him to oppose ratification of the U.S. Constitution, because he feared it gave the new federal government too much power. At the Virginia Ratifying Convention, he and George Mason faced off against the leading minds of the day: James Madison, Edmund Pendleton, Edmund Randolph, John Marshall, George Wythe, Henry Lee, and others. Henry declared,

“Where are your checks in this government? Your strongholds will be in the hands of your enemies. It is on a supposition that your American governors shall be honest, that all the good qualities of this government are founded; but its defective and imperfect construction puts it in their power to perpetuate the worst of mischiefs, should they be bad men. And, sir, would not all the world, from the eastern to the western hemispheres, blame our distracted folly in resting our rights upon the contingency of our rulers being good or bad? Show me that age and country where the rights and liberties of the people were placed on the sole chance of their rulers being good men, without a consequent loss of liberty.”

At the beginning of the debate, proponents of the Constitution claimed they had a 50-vote majority. But Henry held the field against them for 23 days and swayed many delegates. Before the vote was taken, Madison and the other proponents, no longer certain of victory, promised a bill of rights if the

Constitution were ratified. The Constitution then passed 87-79. Henry then *told his angry Antifederalist supporters, “The Constitution has been ratified; we are all Federalists now; I suggest you all go home.”* Many of Henry’s concerns about the Constitution were valid, such as his fear of unchecked judicial review, the lack of term limits for the President, his protest that the sword (the power to declare war) and the purse (the power to tax) were in the same hands, and the lack of a bill of rights. His firm stand is a primary reason we have a Bill of Rights today.



Many historians laud Henry’s achievements but ignore the motivating force behind them – his devout Christian faith. Those who applaud his oratory often ignore the Biblical reference in his speech:

- “*Majesty of heaven [I Chronicles 29:11] which I revere above all earthly kings.*”
- “*Are we disposed to be of the number of those who, having eyes, see not, and, having ears, hear not [Jeremiah 5:21; Ezekiel 12:2], the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation?*”
- “*Suffer not yourselves to be betrayed with a kiss [Matthew 26:48]*
- “*There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations, and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. [II Chronicles 32:8] The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone.” [Ecclesiastes 9:11]*
- “*Gentlemen may cry, Peace, Peace – but there is no peace.*” [Jeremiah 6:14]
- “*Why stand we here idle?*” [Matthew 20:6]

Raised by an Anglican father and a Presbyterian mother, Henry inherited both Anglican stability and Presbyterian fervor. On the way home from church meetings, where for eleven years he listened to the sermons of the Calvinist preacher Samuel Davies, young Henry was required to repeat the sermon text and summarize the sermon content. Henry later called Davies the greatest orator he had ever heard, so it is reasonable to conclude that Henry learned both oratory and theology from that preacher.

As an adult, Henry strongly opposed the Deism of his day and repeatedly avowed his Christian convictions. His grandson Patrick Henry Fontaine says he “*lived and died an exemplary member*” of the Anglican church, adding that he regularly spent “one hour every day...in private devotion. His hour of prayer was the close of the day, including sunset...and during that sacred hour, none of his family intruded upon his privacy.” He studied the Bible at length and read sermon notes “every Sunday evening to his family, after which they all joined in sacred music while he accompanied them on the violin.”

As Henry lay dying in 1799 at age 63, he prayed and witnessed to his doctor, asking him to observe what a reality and benefit the Christian religion was to a man about to die. And his final affirmation of faith is found in his last will and testament:

“This is all the inheritance I can give to my dear family. The religion of Christ can give them one which will make them rich indeed.”

May we ever treasure this infinitely rich heritage – the religion of Christ, and the Biblical principles of government so eloquently proclaimed by this sterling Christian statesman.

Happy Birthday, Patrick Henry!

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



John Martin

America's Great Fiscal Enema

This year (2025), America's most powerful man (Donald Trump) has teamed up with our most brilliant (Elon Musk) to create and administer our new Department Of Government Efficiency. It's mission is to perform our greatest economic rescue in history—a massive colorectal cleanup that has been decades overdue. These two heroes are hustling full tilt to cast off our bureaucratic slave chains and plug our treasury's massive hemorrhage to literally SAVE OUR COUNTRY from financial collapse and impending turmoil. It has already begun to execute its top priorities.

Most people are unaware that at least half (and possibly as much as 90%) of our government is composed of needless departments, agencies, and personnel that WE ARE BETTER OFF WITHOUT. Any doubters can take a quick look at our history—from Woodrow Wilson's income tax through FDR's gold heist, reckless spending and government growth, plus the follies of LBJ, Nixon, Carter, Clinton, "Dubya," Obama, and Biden.

Our top priority is to clean out these dangerous parasites and SAVE our revenue to pay down our skyrocketing debt, which if left unchecked, can bankrupt our country. We must do it in spite of the temporary pain suffered by fired bureaucrats who will no longer be allowed to strangle our economy with abusive mandates and their enforcement. We must crank up our gigantic chain saw and mow down our overgrown jungle of government parasites.

Older people can remember back in the 1950's and '60's when the United States was the world's leader in both agriculture and industry. In proportion to our population, we grew more food and manufactured more products than anybody else. We were blessed with a limited government and minimal restrictions that allowed it to happen.

Since then, government meddlers have imposed regulatory roadblocks that have shut down much of our productivity and allowed China and others to pass us by. Our economy has declined and our trade deficit has mushroomed. Meanwhile, reckless government spending has expanded our national debt to the door of insolvency.

How do we stop it? There is ONE solution: GET BIG GOVERNMENT OUT OF THE WAY. This is how we restore our economy and protect our Constitutional rights. The top priority of the DOGE is to STOP the excess spending, waste, regulation, and bureaucracy that has emasculated our economy for the past six decades (since about 1965). We must follow Javier Milei's example in Argentina to CLEAN OUT our bureaucratic baggage. Nearly all departments must be drastically downsized. Many must be totally eliminated. Regulations and mandates must be repealed. Millions of abusive bureaucrats must be fired. With less government and more private enterprise, we can re-gain our former prosperity. We cannot continue to squander our revenue to maintain gangs of criminals "to harass our people and eat out their substance."

Efficiency can be defined in several ways. In a private farm or factory, there are usually only three:

1. Maximize the output for a given input or cost.
2. Minimize the cost for a given or larger output.
3. Do both.

For government efficiency, different definitions would apply:

1. Do essential actions ONLY.
2. Minimize cost.
3. Minimize taxes.
4. Minimize debt.
5. Minimize regulations, mandates, and penalties.
6. Minimize the overall size of government.
7. Maximize individual liberty.

These are the keys to government AND economic efficiency. Government devastates economies when it grows too big. Today's government has ALREADY grown FAR too big.

To be efficient, government MUST be SMALL—small enough to GET OUT OF THE WAY AND LEAVE PEOPLE ALONE. Our objective is to make government SMALLER, LESS INTRUSIVE and LESS EXPENSIVE. THAT is how we make our ECONOMY more efficient.

The big problem with government is that we have too many departments and too many people devoted to regulation and/or enforcement. The majority have done more harm than good. For the most part they have grown much faster than the legitimate departments that provide needed services.

A classic example is the Biden regime's 87,000 new IRS agents. Why did we suddenly need them? What would they be doing? Would they be working to answer phone calls from taxpayers and help them with their paperwork? Or was Biden planning a blitzkrieg to track down every last unreported nickel with Gestapo-like enforcement and impose heavy fines for trivial mistakes? Would you approve of spending millions of dollars to collect a few hundred that might fall through the cracks? Could you tolerate the tremendous abuse agents could wreak to collect these tidbits? Isn't it much simpler, more productive, and more humane to spend much less and just leave people alone?

We have numerous regulatory agencies that should not even exist. Many of them involve environmental and safety issues. Most of these problems don't need government. They are mostly self-enforcing. Most of them can be better addressed by the private companies on their own WITHOUT government meddling. If a worker has a problem about safety, he can call his supervisor to fix it INSTEAD of calling a government goon to shut down the entire factory and deprive every person who works there of his job and many thousands of dollars of income. A few examples of these vicious departments are OSHA, EEOC, TSA, FEMA, MSHA, NHTSA (including Musk-hating Missy Cummings), Homeland Security, etc. These and many others must be terminated, or at least, drastically downsized. That is the job for the DOGE.

On Gold Rush on TV, I observed several professional trespassers and meddlers from the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) barge into an Alaskan mine to perform an "inspection" without permission. The workers there had never had any accidents or other safety issues. The agents prowled all over the place and wrote down a dozen or more nitpicky "violations." They ordered the mine to be immediately shut down and decreed they could not operate again until every one had been corrected to their satisfaction on a future inspection, which would impose several weeks of costly delays. Alaskan gold mine work seasons last only about a half year, when the ground is thawed and sluices can run. Even with a full season, these miners were already on the cusp of barely making a profit or losing their lease. With the shutdown, they were at risk of a forced bankruptcy.

The mine was working fine with no problems before the MSHA came. They had no legitimate business to even be there. They did not help the miners in any way. The MSHA clearly has an economic value far below zero. It should not even exist. We are better off without it.

If the MSHA had been a legitimate agency, it would have left everything and everybody alone, UNLESS the miners called them to address a problem. And even then, their proper duties would have been to HELP the miners, not shut them down. Otherwise, the MSHA should just get out of the way, or better yet, be eliminated.

This is not an isolated case. Numerous businesses have been heavily fined, seriously delayed, shut down, and even bankrupted by various agencies—costing multitudes of Americans their jobs and livelihoods.

We can place government agencies into five categories:

1. The essential
2. The useful
3. The Useless
4. The counter-productive
5. The oppressive

The essential agencies are the ones we absolutely need to keep our nation afloat. There are very few of these. They include national defense to protect our country from foreign aggressors, but NOT military follies to meddle into other nations' wars and other things that are none of our business. We certainly don't want to trigger World War III. Switzerland is an example of the type of national defense we should have.

We need a few others to maintain our essential infrastructure (highways, airports, canals, etc.).

Useful agencies would include things like maintaining our national parks and other items that are nice to have but are not absolutely needed. We can keep those, but excesses can be found even here.

The last three categories—3, 4, and 5—should be scrapped. The oppressive ones should be the top priority to shut down. Then the counter-productive, and then the useless.

Eliminating this baggage will save TRILLIONS of dollars. That money can be used to reduce taxes and pay down our debt to a manageable level.

People argue that Trump can't just shut down an agency by himself—that it requires an act of Congress. That's true, but he does have Republican majorities in both houses. If too many RINOs (Republicans In Name Only) get in the way, he can at least reduce an agency's staff to a bare minimum or even just pay everyone to do nothing, except play video games or just sleep. It's worth it just to neutralize them until the agency can be dissolved.

Many fired federal workers are already screaming about being "thrown under the bus." Considering the damage they have already done, they deserve it. Most of them have been doing jobs NOBODY should be doing; they have just been abusing people with mandates and needless "enforcement." Their jobs now are to suck it up and get out of the way. Those who are compelled to have something to do can sit on busy intersections with tin cups in their hands and sing, "We are Non-Essential Personnel." Transfer them to jobs at our factories and farms so they can become productive. Give them jobs at our Toyota factories building legendary, high in demand HiLux pickup trucks, Champs, and IMV Zeros. We have a factory right here in Alabama where they can get started.

During the first month of his second term, Donald Trump unleashed several "super model" executive orders that included abolishing birthright citizenship for illegal aliens, withdrawal from the WHO, shutting down the corrupt USAID, reaffirming free speech, establishing English as our official language, ending daylight savings time, and declaring an emergency to stop the invasion at our southern border. That is a good start, but a great deal more is needed to finish the recovery.

Trump has already signed the death warrant for Jimmy Carter's useless Department of Education. Education is the sacrosanct responsibility of parents and families. For government, at any level, it is strictly HANDS OFF—no taxes, no funding, noregulations, no mandates, no meddling, no quotas, and no "political correctness." Let the free market do its magic.

Countless other departments must also be eliminated.

Donald and Elon must be careful with tariffs, especially tariffs on essential needs like raw materials. We do NOT need to incite a tariff war that could alienate our neighbors. China is already rattling swords in response to the ones we have already passed. Canada and Mexico are also voicing opposition and threats of retaliation.

However, substituting tariffs for income taxes might be a good idea. Filing tax forms and other compliance is a huge headache for nearly everybody. I pray it can work out. Getting rid of the IRS, along with runaway spending, would be a great blessing.

Prior to Woodrow Wilson's infamous 1913 federal income tax, tariffs were essentially our only source of national income. Tariffs had built-in practical limits on their rates, which limited bureaucrats on the amounts they could collect and squander. This in turn held the growth of government in check. If funding was insufficient, our government had to cut spending instead of raising taxes.

So far, in just a few weeks, beginning with the infamous USAID, the DOGE has already exposed a mountain of squandered money and has begun the largest government cleanout in American history:

- USAID – \$32.5 Billion
- Afghanistan – \$697 Million
- Pakistan – \$136 Million for schools never built
- Taliban-controlled areas – \$60 Million for women's "education."
- GSA – Cut in half
- CFPB – Operations frozen
- EPA – Lost 134 diversity contracts
- Education – Programs terminated
- Climate Justice Alliance – \$50 Million funding scrapped
- HUD – \$2 Billion in "lost" money
- Thousands of dead people drawing Social Security checks
- Of every \$3 in taxes, \$1 is wasted

And mass firings and layoffs have also been implemented:

- 2000 – Department of Energy
- 3000 – Forest Service
- 1300 – CDC
- 77,000 – Accepting early exit offers

Trump and Musk are now our two greatest national heroes. They have already established a target of \$2 TRILLION in spending cuts by July 2026. That's \$6000 back into every American taxpayer's pocket. That's a good start, but we must downsize far more to get our reckless spending and huge debt down to a manageable level. Let's all kneel down to our Lord and pray for his assistance and to keep treasonous rogue judges out of the way.

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HISTORY BITS AND PIECES

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY



Justice Will Sellers

old school, providing the facts from his experience embedded with combat troops and giving context to the tactical engagements of the boots on the ground.

Few people remember Ernie Pyle today, but his reporting from the Battle of Britain until his death gave readers in newspapers across America a better sense of World War II. While Americans could read about the war in the larger context of arrows on maps showing advances and retreats, Pyle's writing detailed the hardships of average soldiers trudging their way toward victory.

He showed the unvarnished realities of combat and revealed the non-glamorous side of conflict and carnage that soldiers on the front lines witnessed daily. Unlike many reporters, he stayed embedded with soldiers, experienced their privations, and saw firsthand the challenges of command. He called his perspective a "worm's eye view" of the war.

Even though Pyle was an objective correspondent and tried to report the war as he saw it, when he noticed inequality in pay, privations, and pleasure, he worked these observations into his columns. His comparison of the branches of service and his evaluation of their performance and commitment, were, occasionally criticized.

The time he spent embedded with front line infantry made him an advocate for these common grunts. He saw their work as crucial to the success of the war effort and developed a myopic view of warfighting that tended to denigrate the missions of the Navy and Army Air Corps.

He could not understand why aviators received extra "flight pay" for time spent in aerial missions yet front-line soldiers and desk jockeys were paid the same. This criticism and comparison led Congress to pass a law, the "Ernie Pyle Bill," that paid infantry soldiers "fight pay" of 50% extra for time in combat. No doubt this endeared him to the troops he covered.

His greatest criticism came in his coverage of the Navy in the Pacific Theater. Even though Pyle was in the Navy Reserve, he failed to fully appreciate the difference in the war against Japan that required greater naval resources. If there was ever a low point in his career, it was the backlash received when he made unfavorable comparison with life on an aircraft carrier in contrast to his time with the infantry in Europe.

Pyle's writing was different as he uniquely explained the war effort, not in the larger context of strategy from a bird's eye view of territory gained, towns liberated, and battles won. Rather, he focused on the life of the common soldier and wrote about the personal impact of the war. The Army allowed him to use the names of the soldiers he covered to punctuate the authenticity of his reporting.

Remembering Ernie Pyle

One of America's most famous combat correspondents was killed 80 years ago on the island of Ie Shima in Japan. Pulitzer Prize winner Ernie Pyle died when a burst of enemy machine gun struck him in the head.

His death was mourned throughout the country, from President Harry Truman to Eleanor Roosevelt to General Eisenhower to the masses of infantrymen Pyle wrote about throughout the war. He was a journalist of the old school, providing the facts from his experience embedded with combat troops and giving context to the tactical engagements of the boots on the ground.

So good were his stories that he was the only civilian reporter whose columns routinely appeared in the armed forces newspaper, Stars and Stripes.

Pyle's style of telling a story from the ground up is now duplicated in documentaries by using letters service members sent home explaining their exploits. These accounts contained in letters and diaries help documentary filmmakers explain wars and other events based on the perspective of those who experienced and recorded them firsthand.



Explaining the big picture of any event can be accomplished with charts and maps. The same is true in the focus of leaders in war or in any movement. Generals with staff and public relations officers can give the overall context of any conflict, but what Pyle, and now documentary producers, did and do is to show the impact of the active participants by explaining their motivations, frustrations and accomplishments. Giving breath to their words, usually written contemporaneously, creates a much different feel and provides more awareness of the details that led to a success or resulted in a set-back.

Pyle was not immune from the stress and emotional toil of observing the conflict day after day. As a noncombatant, he was able to leave the battlefield and recuperate, but his commitment of giving voice to the common soldier called him back time and again to witness bravery that would otherwise be undocumented.

With the war in Europe coming to a swift conclusion, Pyle left that theater of the conflict utterly exhausted. His goal was to return home, but he was drawn to the Pacific to give his unique perspective in recording the final battles of the war. He had been in harm's way since 1940, accepted the risks and even anticipated death. In fact, he had experienced a couple of near misses and thought nothing of the crack of a rifle or the sustained buzz from machine guns.

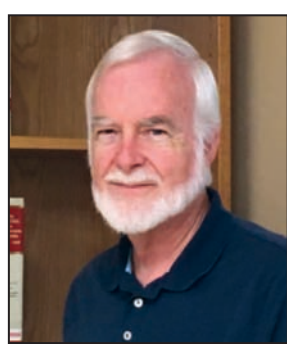
In 1945, as standard fare, Pyle was embedded with an army infantry regiment during the invasion of Okinawa. By the looks of things, the Japanese had been routed, and there was limited opposition as troops ventured further inland to establish a command center. While riding in a jeep, Pyle and others accompanying him heard enemy machine gun fire, so they jumped into a ditch for cover. After a few minutes, hearing nothing and assuming the danger passed, Pyle lifted his head to see the terrain.

He was killed instantly.

Pyle was buried with other soldiers from the battle. The survivors erected a simple monument inscribed: "At this spot the 77th Infantry Division lost a buddy, Ernie Pyle..." Years after the war, a more substantial monument was erected.

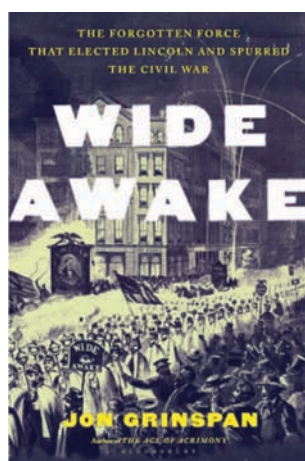
Ernie Pyle gave his life for something bigger than himself—explaining the calamity of war from the vantage point of the common soldiers who secured victory.

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John Taylor

C-Span recently featured John Grinspan speaking about the Wide Awakes, a topic covered on the Abbeville Blog and in Chapter Seven of my book, *Union At All Costs: From Confederation to Consolidation*.



As early as 1856, numerous paramilitary clubs were organized in support of the Republican Party. Examples included the Rocky Mountain Clubs, Freedom Clubs, and the notorious Wide Awakes. This organization differed from the previous group of New Yorkers who wore the Wide Awake moniker. The originals were an offshoot of the Know Nothing Party (or The American Party), which existed in the late 1840s and early 1850s.

As the 1860 election approached, Northern militaristic organizations became more structured. Most members were young White Protestant males in their teens, twenties, or thirties who were motivated by the sectional friction in the 1850's. The Wide Awakes were organized in Hartford, Connecticut, in March 1860. A catalyst for their organization was the political "response to Connecticut's spring election between Republican Governor William A. Buckingham and his challenger, Democrat Thomas Seymour." They strongly supported Buckingham, a longtime Norwich, Connecticut, politician, and mercantilist who helped start the Hayward Rubber Company. Seymour was a lawyer, politician, and Democrat who had served in the Mexican War.



Numerous Wide Awake clubs sprang up throughout the North and Midwest with some even reaching Baltimore and St. Louis. They were militarily structured with defined ranks, duties, and specific attire. A common form of

dress consisted of capes or robes and black glazed hats. They often carried bright torches approximately six feet in length. Many also carried an insignia that featured crossed flags—the U.S. Flag and the Tricolor Flag of Revolutionary France. The center of the flags featured the all-seeing "Eye of Providence" such as the image on the one-dollar bill and often traced back to the Egyptian "Eye of Horus."

The agenda of the Chicago Chapter is indicative of their overall program:

- (1) They acted as political police.
- (2) Escorted prominent Republican speakers.
- (3) Attended public meetings to keep order and quell any disturbances.
- (4) Attended the polls to see that legal voters were justly treated.
- (5) Conducted themselves in a manner to induce other Republicans to join.
- (6) Combined in large numbers to support the Republican Ticket.

Regardless of their location, they uncompromisingly supported the Republican Party. Membership estimates range as high as 400,000; 100,000 is thought to be

The Wide Awakes

more realistic.

Wherever the often fanatical Wide Awakes went, violence typically followed. Bloodshed was common on the East Coast, and bricks, rocks, and torches were often the weapons in play. "In many cases rowdies ambushed Wide Awake parades, hurling bricks and screaming, 'Kill the damn Wide Awakes.'" There was violence in Manhattan involving an attack on a fire company. "The New York Wide Awakes, when asked about their frequent brawls, complained that their torches were made of soft pine and splintered after just a few blows to the head." Conflicts were also commonplace in the Midwest. For example, one incident involved an Ohio clash with a group of Democrats. "The Democratic candidate for coroner in an Indiana town shot a club member in the shoulder, and an Illinois Wide Awake stabbed the 'ring leader of a mob' seven times during a late night brawl." Another incident, known as the Stone's Prairie Riot, occurred in Payson, Illinois, when the Wide Awakes clashed with Stephen Douglas supporters.

The Wide Awakes' intent was to create unrest and disrupt the structure of the South. They were denounced by Southern secessionists William Lowndes Yancey and Henry A. Wise. Texas Senator Louis Wigfall accused William Seward of being an instigator of their activities. Whether or not Seward was guilty of this charge, he showed support for them as evidenced in a speech delivered in La Crosse, Wisconsin:

He expressed his gratification at the strength of this Wide-Awake Organization, and said it was possible their services might not cease with the election. They had heard for two months of the last session of Congress an incessant boasting as to what the South would do in case of a Republican triumph in the Presidential election. That contingency was now a certainty; and though he did not apprehend there would be any effort made to carry out these threats, yet if any effort should be made, this Wide-Awake organization would be found mighty convenient in stifling and crushing out any attempt to overthrow the Government.

Illinois Congressman Owen Lovejoy strove to heighten Southern fear by encouraging the Wide Awakes to invade Virginia and capture Wise. An example of the historically violent "Lincolnian" left, the Wide Awakes aggressively opposed the South's right of self-government—voting to leave the Union was not "overthrowing" the government. As the war arrived, many Wide Awakes joined the Union Army and got a taste of actual combat.

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 "THE WIDE-AWAKES; Fear of the Wide-Awakes at the South Idle Apprehensions," *New York Times*, September 29, 1860, excerpted from the *Columbia (S.C.) Guardian*. NOTE: Middle class, blue-collar White Protestants dominated the Know Nothing party. Leery of immigrants taking their jobs and strongly anti-Catholic, they ran Millard Fillmore for president in the 1856 election. Remaining anti-immigrant, anti-Catholic and neutral on slavery, the Know Nothings declined and many former members became Republicans.

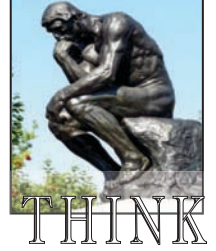


John Sophocleus

M.F.N. Tariff Debacles from FDR to DJT

(Most Favoured Nation)

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



Given 'woke' education from soviet educators who truly believe in 'Hammer & Sickle' command economies as our nation embraced the path of transferring wealth to specific interests over the general welfare, most have heard the acronym MFN (Most Favoured Nation) trading status, yet have little education with this unconstitutional power. Fellow *Gazette* writer Johnny Taylor's book https://www.google.com/books/edition/Union_at_All_Costs/DopXMQAACAAJ?hl=en is the best I've read documenting/explaining our transition from sovereign independence to hegemony which paved the way for abominations like MFN allowing a president to reduce a specific tariff up to 50% without Congressional approval, further abandoning uniformity. A great primer is Taylor's <https://www.alabamagazette.com/story/2023/05/01/history/lincoln-republicans-and-corporate-welfare/2542.html> column on the newly formed/traditional big government Republican's corporate welfare rhetoric to cloak special interest avarice.

History speaks for itself. The easily forgotten October 1987 crash recovery was more driven by market forces. With bond and interest rates increasingly more manipulated in our command economy, the herding mentality into equities/stocks is as distorted as ever and we witness another FDR style soviet with the DJT cult. 'Circuit breakers' and 'curbs' no longer allow short, well defined selloffs as was the case in 1987 - i.e., don't expect to see another 23% one day drop where Wall St. spoke loudly. Furthermore, federal legislation which triggered the 1987 sell off was easy to stop allowing quick correction/return back up to the long-term trend line. Our current situation is more like the 1929 distorted economy and it appears the politburo is pushing toward even more Hoover/FDR type leviathan responses than using this event to bring an end to agencies, policies and programs which trigger more volatile results. No surprise to anyone understanding our 'privatize distorted gains and socialize losses' command economy. This isn't sustainable and accelerates our path to the usual destination of all command and control economies.

The October 1987 *Alabama Gazette* column <https://www.alabamagazette.com/story/2017/10/01/opinion/october-1929-v-october-1987-black-mondays-a-tale-of-two-crashes/1177.html?fbclid=IwAR3P5IvHuyVKWgvGQ-6KYp9kTpOwwSN2foj3IOBcQaiBUt9NwvbqX5KwpYU> is intended to debunk myths of what triggered the two crashes soviet trained PhD economists and historians espouse. The 1929 crash began October 24, when the market opened 11% lower. Institutional investors and financiers attempted to attenuate the 'panic' sell-off with above market bids so the day's sharp losses were blunted and stocks rebounded the following two days. These feeble attempts failed to address the trigger (think *fear*) of this Wall St. sell-off. Hoover's 'jawboning' (similar to Trump's current bloviating from another over-degreed/under-educated soviet) championing the Smoot-Hawley Tariff signaled further resolve toward another high-watermark of protectionism over 'common sense' Constitutional competition. Enacted June 1931, long after the October '29 crash, unemployment immediately spiked up from about 6% to 14%. Well educated economic historians understand Wall St. investors respond to legislative events when they THINK it will pass, not when actually signed (7/17/30) into law. The following Monday, a.k.a. 'Black Monday' in retrospect, closed with the market down 13%, exacerbated by margin calls. Bids disappeared the next day (Black Tuesday) as the market fell another 12% starting the long-term trend line down hitting bottom in 1932 as investors who understood what happened saw the Democrat likely to win the nomination would not reverse the typical big-government Republican policies advanced by Hoover. FDR was just another big-government soviet from NY who was 'black-balled' by the republicans... now wearing the blue soviet jersey.

The month prior to the 1929 crash the market peaked September 3rd with the Dow Jones Industrial Average [DJIA] at 381.17. The bottom was recorded on July 8, 1932, where the DJIA closed at 41.22. A remarkable 89% drop from peak to trough with five 'sucker rallies' which was even more devastating for small-cap and speculative stocks, many were compelled to declare bankruptcy and unlisted from the Exchanges dropping them out of reported data. A quarter century later the DJIA returns to the 381.17 result on Nov. 23, 1954. A brief overview of some economic history is required to understand what shepherded us to the October '29 crash as the US became a dominant player in world events, even if they didn't realize their standing. When the newly formed Republican Party (morphed from the protectionist wing of the Whig Party) deployed federal armies to militarily accomplish their desired wealth transfers when exiting States proved it

would not be achieved politically, other nations (most notably Europe) witnessed our experiment in independent sovereignty over empire and nation building finally fail.

As thoughts of reclaiming New World riches faded following the War of 1812 and how industrious the US revealed itself to be toward consolidation and empire (Lincoln-Lenin Brigade mentality made it clear the New World was leading the way to consolidated/soviet-style government) not to be trifled with again, Europe resumed their cycle of death and destruction instead of decentralized peace and stability. Technologies had ground European Armies to a halt, bankrupting their nations toward stalemate. Whenever Europe goes to war demand for US exports explode, WW I was no exception. Instead of simply benefitting from the folly of this war, the US entered to break the stalemate moving the end result to the Treaty of Versailles impossible for Germany to meet. This shepherded Europe to the more virulent national socialist results of WWII. Another historical thread of interest with so much zeitgeist discussion of China is Japan. President Fillmore's 1853 naval expedition to Japan requesting trade and diplomatic relation with the 'island nation' that exhibited 200 years of independent stability without dependence on trade for sustainability would destroy the Russian Navy [1905 Battle of Tsushima] and allied with US in WWI. MFN will play a role in why Japan becomes an enemy as the now trade dependent nation suffers uncompetitive US tariff rate policies instead of uniformity.

The end of WWI meant return to normalcy, those who benefitted from the short-run boon of war must adjust. As Europe began to clear their fields and reallocate to a peacetime economy - i.e., more desperately interested in feeding themselves than producing arms, American farmers quickly noticed. The so-called "Emergency Tariff" [1921] was a response to Europe getting back on their feet later formalized under the "Fordney-McCumber Tariff" [1922] placing high tariffs on agriculture and raw materials which are our comparative advantage often exported. Republicans promised this would lead to great wealth for the American farmer as they've always asserted protectionism helps American jobs over a uniform tariff [Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1] to keep commerce regular as proscribed in the Constitution. Since our manufactured goods are usually inferior there's less demand for them to be exported. Impeding the flow of refined steel, equipment, etc. increasing the price of inputs for production (esp. construction) has a negative impact on employment, *ceteris paribus*. The political rhetoric of the next boom in farming fooled 'roaring twenties' dumb masses as big gov't. Repulocrats do today. Many reallocated capital, effort, time, savings, etc. into farming. 'Sodbuster' distortions increased prices for farmland, mortgages, tractors, etc. but had very visible negative consequences.

Once the reality of the usual/traditional Republican protectionist result unfolded, demand for US exports decline as other nations respond to our artificial trade barriers 'in kind' [some hear it as 'reciprocal' tariffs] raising protectionist policies in response. The folly is felt all the more when putting protectionist policies on one's comparative advantage because it is often exported - protectionism on inferior manufactured goods less exported will not be as profound. Markets for our Ag and raw materials slowly closed as Europe further recovered from WWI, much of the newly 'sodbusted' land along with longer established farmland was foolish to plant giving rise to the true cause (in spite of 'global warming' claims to get soviet research grants) of the "Dust Bowl." When struggling farmers press Hoover and the Republicans on where all the relief and promised prosperity was, Hoover's response was tariffs clearly were still not high enough.

The Smoot-Hawley Tariff's average dutiable rate of 60% was a little below the Tariff of Abominations highest recorded rate of 61% which triggered the Nullification Crisis. The stage for war between the States was set with the Tariff of 1828, but cooler heads prevailed and tariff reductions avoided conflict. Enter Lincoln (the greatest politician this nation has ever produced) and the Republicans wanting to return the tariff to 1828 levels evoking slavery rhetoric to cloak their avarice while militarily accomplishing their ends after political machinations failed. As Morrill Tariff average dutiable rate (more than double from the 20% benchmark rate to 47%) decreased revenue, the Republicans imposed the first federal income tax, fiat money, etc. to finance forcing States into our now hegemonic union.

More informed investors who understood what was happening correctly forecasted the Democrat likely to win the nomination wouldn't reverse the typical big-government Republican policies advanced by Hoover and reduced Constitutional constraints with the Fed, income tax, etc. already in place. In his first 100 days Comrade FDR did nothing to address Smoot-Hawley; DJT's 100 days this second (non-consecutive) term are closing with

chainsaw shows, a few deportations and short-term firings instead of addressing the long term/fundamental issues. Just as warnings were sounded in the past, a thousand professional economist (before they 'were all Keynesians' as espoused today) sent an open letter to Hoover warning of the consequences (if history were any guide) of pursuing the path to yet another extremely protectionist tariff. Displaying his repudiate for blatant hubris, Hoover ignored the economists' prophetic caveat saying he realized consumers would pay higher prices but would be made better off... sound familiar today? Whenever a politician claims higher prices will benefit consumers (or welfare in general) when those higher prices will NOT motivate more supply, innovation, etc. but are a result of wealth transfers from impeding commerce - hold onto your wallet and **RUN AWAY!**

Easy to understand special interests who receive the transfer championing these policies/programs, but it will not promote the general welfare and allocation (esp. in capital markets) of resources to higher valued use(s) in our economy. Among the most ardent lotharios of leviathan in our pantheon of presidents, Hoover went to his grave lamenting how many of HIS big gov't. programs were attributed to FDR. Once it was clear Hoover and the Republicans would not back off of this new high-watermark of protection, a crash with no foreseeable correction (until a change in Executive and/or Congress) was a rational forecast. Investors in fact observed Hoover and Congress remain obstinate even with the huge selloff response on Wall St. Some argue a 1929 Congress made more comfortable by the recently established 435 limited House of Representatives, enjoying less competition/discipline from voters, aided and abetted these recalcitrant protectionists.

Onto some more myth busting *w.r.t.* Lincoln-like deification of FDR. It was an interesting time for the Democratic Party. After the Grover Cleveland era some considered a tipping point (as the only President to not serve consecutive terms as another popular vote v. Electoral College anomaly) a growing number of traditional Democrats grew tired of losing to the big gov't. Republicans. The race was on to 'out republican the Republicans' and the socialists were accomplishing all the goals traditional big gov't. Republicans (progressives) wanted **without** being elected under the Socialist Party moniker. It took four ballots at the DNC before FDR secured the 770 votes required to lock the nomination as Garner (who would be FDR's VP for most of his four term presidency) finally released his delegates to FDR. It was clear the traditional Democrats (Jeffersonians who rejected corporate **AND** social welfare redistributionists) could not carry the day. Perhaps Garner thought the ills of progressivism were somehow different from deleterious results of the corrupt political machines. While the direction of the transfer matters to the specific recipient(s) the contraction to the economy is nonetheless profound - esp. among those least able to weather tough economic times.

Contracting economies induce the worst out of mankind. As unemployment reaches unbearable levels the word 'racism' [1936] enters our lexicon when competition and merit attenuate as determinants of employment. More explicit, vulgar fallacies of inherent superiority of race carry the day as progressives become more emboldened and empowered over peoples' lives desperate to get or hold onto jobs. Progressives gave birth to the first federal minimum wage in this era, one of the more effective tools still today to enable discrimination against minorities, single moms, teens, etc.

Traditional Democrat voters, slow to see the realignments, think their candidate will come in and clean-up the usual mess of Republican protectionism. Voters, unlike investors, are generally more ignorant of what specifically drives economic results. They were in for a surprise. FDR was NOT a traditional Democrat, he was a big gov't. Republican enamored with his Uncle Teddy's progressive hard charging toward centralized command economy results. Much had already been accomplished (some say the 'Revolution of 1913' today) with a more certain federal income tax, direct election of US senators, federal reserve, debt less tied to specific federal projects, etc. Some of our top soviet economists say the Fed didn't do enough with monetary tools at their disposal, but they **DID** - it failed because it was addressing a symptom, not the problem. DJT wanting artificially low interest rates also will not address the problems of our command economy.

Sharp increases in Discount rates, buying bonds, etc. were met with further increases in unemployment as it showed further resolve to continue the Republicans' 1929 extreme protectionist policy. Tariff revenues declined - no surprise to anyone familiar with the Laffer Curve. The recently [1913] re-established federal income tax is already in place (no delay/effort required to

impose it as did Lincoln in our first federal income tax) to continue financing this tariff policy contracting the economy. The fiscal discipline designed in the Constitution to limit duration policies of this sort could be sustained was circumvented. The Federal Reserve was also already in place so no need to impose another Lincoln/Republican fiat currency. Some understand why Comrade Trump wants the Fed to steal from producers/savers as he did his first term. We now observe results of high tariffs **AND** the ability to increase a federal income tax/money supply when tariff revenue drops from protectionism. Indeed as the federal income tax was raised, unemployment climbed to an even higher new record providing short-run revenue for the federal government to continue operating in the 1930s.

Unemployment in fact spiked down in anticipation of electing a Democrat executive, but when president elect FDR is silent on reversing Hoover's excessive taxation, unemployment returns to the record high level around 27%. Roosevelt takes office, still no promise of tariff reduction, as the bitter reality of no relief in sight for years sets in... Comrade FDR declares a Bank Holiday as marginal banks (about 6,000 already closed their doors 1929-32) hanging on will not survive a "New Deal" instead of relief from Republican protectionism. More unconstitutional policies/programs (y'all know the 'alphabet soup' many of us had to memorize in soviet schools - AAA, CCC, CWA, EBA, FCA, FDIC, FERA, FHA, FSRC, HOLC, NRA, NIRA, PWA, REA, SSA, TVA, et al) along with the revered Glass-Steagall Act, did nothing to address the source of the problem. Unemployment hovers around 25% from 1932 to late 1934 until MFN (Most Favoured Nation trading status) provides some tariff relief. MFN was also unconstitutional, but did reduce some specific tariffs (up to 50%) with other nations for reductions in kind at the pleasure of the executive (FDR was the first president to enjoy this empowerment) so finally unemployment slowly declined. This picking favorites sets in motion the problem for Japan dependent upon trade that takes the predictable path of acquiring inputs militarily. Imagine how long ago China would imploded if Nixon (and his over-degreed/poorly educated mouth-piece Kissinger) hadn't opened China - treason if we'd declared war in Vietnam in the 1960s.

To those who've fought and died for our Constitution they took an oath to uphold and defend, it is despicable to think giving unconstitutional MFN power to Comrade FDR would be any different or less deleterious under Comrade Trump listening to his similarly over-degreed/under-educated soviet advisors. The downward trend-line in Depression era unemployment ends in 1938 as many State and local governments imposed minimum wage laws and the NLRB (soon after the Wagner-Connelly Act was deemed OK by SCotUS) imposed our first federal minimum wage. Unemployment again spikes up, hovering around 20% until the storm clouds of war in Europe overshadow the ills of protectionism where once again demand for exports from America increase. WWII is what brings unemployment down and keeps it down for the duration. I pray younger readers learn and understand this economic history to come up with more sane ways to get out of failed unconstitutional policies we appear to be headed toward yet again.

In closing, those who genuinely seek common sense may stop listening to Biden, Trump, et al soviets and look to the Constitution for guidance instead of chainsaw wielding parasites who suck up to oligarchs like AOC, Bernie, MTG, et al who enable them. A jealous parasite and failed businessman (who couldn't succeed with tax breaks, eminent domain abuse, etc.) in the executive to broker these unconstitutional tariffs seems to be headed toward another Comrade FDR result.

Postscript:

Kudos to Goat Hill chilling the devastating effect of the ACCA, BCBS, et al Felon Hubbard type corruption destroying independent competitive pharmacies in our State not in the BCA crony network aided and abetted by our prostitute oligarchs in Congress. No Alabama journalist can compare to John Brice getting lightly shown on this despicable saga largely driven by our 'Moscow on the Potomac' legislators [<https://www.alabamaexaminer.com/post/aipa-press-release-governor-ivey-has-signed-sb252-into-law>] destroying our quality of life. Much like being the only reporter with the courage to break the story on the Martha Menefield garbage debacle arrests in East Alabama, Mr. Brice was the first to sound the alarm with his article about my local pharmacy in Beaufort, AL. With more John Brice caliber investigative reporters we may be able to reverse more harm of this sort in our command economy.



Judge Peggy Givhan

Southern Gardening Potpourri for May



Memorial Day be commemorated on the last Monday of May of each year. And the **red poppy** is the flower associated with this holiday. After Flanders Field in Belgium was ruttet for years with the tracks of heavy armored tanks and vehicles, red poppies started sprouting up and blooming after the war was over. Just fields and fields of poppies grew and bloomed as far as the eye could see. So we can do our part by flying the flag and feeling patriotic on May 26 of this year.



COMPOSTING

The definition of composting to the act of combining organic plant material for managed aerobic biological decomposition. Many farmers and gardeners call compost "black gold". To recycle food and other organic waste provides a range of environmental benefits, to include boosting soil health, to reduce greenhouse emissions, to recycle nutrients, and to mitigate the impact of droughts. It is no surprise that everything that grows will eventually decompose. Composting just speeds up the process. Food waste and garden waste wind up being 28% of what we discard. If you think about it, the annual cost of landfill municipal solid waste costs the United States \$55.00 per ton, so we spend billions of dollars on waste management per year. So composting allows the average homeowner to divert some of this waste from the landfill and turn it into a wonderful addition to our gardens.

What not to add to the compost "heap". **1. Avoid meat and bones**--rotting meat accumulates bacteria, smells especially bad while composting; and bones take years to decompose. **2. Dairy**--also puts of a rotten smell and attracts pests.

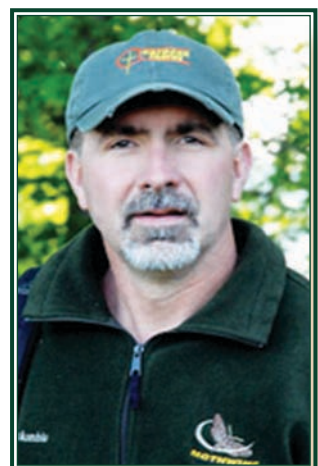
- 3. **Animal fats or oils.** 4. **Processed grains, bread, pasta**--these lead to mold.
- 5. Paper can be good, but avoid what is called "**receipt paper**" or shipping labels, also referred to thermal paper.
- 6. **Colored cardboard**--this contains heavy metals
- 7. **Diseased plant material.**

PLANT OF THE MONTH--GERANIUM (GERANIACEAE)

These plants are also called "**Cranesbill**" because the seed pods are elongated and rigid with a tapered "beak". Long lived in our area if we bring them inside when temperatures drop below freezing. I have had the same geraniums for years, which I cut back within a few inches from the top of the soil. Most of my geraniums are in pots within larger pots which makes it easier to transport. Those not in smaller pots are still cut back, heavily mulched, and the pot covered with a tarp to insulate from the cold. Geraniums have a wide range of colors from white, pink, red, orange, fuschia, and tones of light to dark. They need full sun to partial shade, love to be fertilized once a week during bloom times, and need to be watered weekly. However in the heat of the summer, they may need water more often. The downside of growing geraniums is having to deadhead the blooms and in the heat of the summer, to rid the plants of bud worms. One solution for the bud worm is Dipel dust, but one has to reapply after a rain, so when watering, keep the water toward the roots and not the foliage.



HAPPY MEMORIAL DAY and GOOD GARDENING



Gary Miller

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determine if these men and women are current in their pursuits or if they are living on past experiences. And it is really embarrassing when someone tries to tell you how to go about hunting when it is evident they have not been in the woods in years. In these cases, it is always better to keep our opinions close to our chest and to disclaim any idea that we are beyond learning.

This time of year I try to spend as much time in the turkey woods as possible. Since I speak and write to a lot of hunters, I really do need to be able to tell some stories that are not too far from the past. So, I just think of April and November as the two months that I have to go back to school to do continuing education - to keep my accreditation current- to keep abreast on any new tools and techniques. (That sounds really good. I wonder if I can use that on my wife?) But in all reality, I do try to hunt hard during the peak days of turkey and deer season. And my fishing is usually only in the later spring and summer months. But no matter when or how I sort out these periods, the truth is, if I am going to be relevant to today's hunters and fishermen, I have to participate in this activity and not just draw on my knowledge and my experiences of the past. When talking to other hunters and fishermen, it doesn't take long to

This also reminds me of many folks who are quick and loud to spout their ideas about God, Christianity, and Christians. Most of the time their discourse will start with the words; "Well, I believe....." When this happens, just hold on because they are going to give you a rant for the ages. The problem, however, is most of their information comes from ancient experiences and very limited and stale knowledge. And while they are convinced, anyone who has enjoyed new experiences and has gained more knowledge will recognize quickly that their enthusiastic friend has a lot of thunder and lightning, but no rain. I think we all need to ask ourselves if what we believe about our faith is based upon present or past experiences. We may say that absolutely our faith is based upon a salvation experience that took place years ago. But if that is the limit of our experiences with God, we are very poor indeed. And what about our knowledge of Him? Again, is it based on only what we learned in the past or is it fresh and added to often. Only we know. No, I am wrong. A lot of people will know..... as soon as you open our mouth. A wise man once said, "Better to keep your mouth closed and be thought a fool than to open it and remove all doubt"? I couldn't have said it better.



Gary Miller has written *Outdoor Truths* articles for 21 years. He has also written five books which include compilations of his articles and a father/son devotional. He also speaks at wild-game dinners and men's events for churches and associations. gary@outdoortruths.org

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The Gospel According To You

I was going through one of my Dad's old notebooks the other day and saw where he had saved old articles and poems from the past. There were also some poems and articles that he wrote. Like me, my Dad was a Methodist Pastor in Alabama and the panhandle of Florida as was my grandfather and my great-grandfather too. My Dad died in 1988 at the age of 57, but while he was alive he taught me to regularly reflect on my life and my witness for Christ. I miss him everyday and wish I could hear his voice once again.

Feeling nostalgic and missing my Dad, I started reading through some of the old poems in his notebook that he had collected and written. I found this one that really caught my eye and jumped off the page at me. I don't believe I had ever seen it before, and I am not sure who wrote it many years ago.

It had a catchy title "The Gospel According to You". As I read it I could hear my Dad's voice challenging me in this old poem to live a life that becomes the gospel. I invite you to read it too and ask yourself like I did, "What is the Gospel According to Me?"

The Gospel According To You

*"There's a sweet old story translated for women and men,
 But writ in the long, long ago,
 The Gospel according to Mark, Luke and John - -
 Of Christ and His mission below.*

*You are writing a gospel, a chapter each day,
 By deeds that you do, by words that you say,
 People read what you write, whether faithless or true.
 Say, what is the gospel according to you?*

*People read and admire the Gospel of Christ,
 With it's love so unfailing and true,
 But what do they say, and what do they think
 Of the gospel according to you?*

*'Tis a wonderful story, that Gospel of love,
 As it shines in Christ-like Divine,
 But O that it's truth might be told again
 In the story of your life and mine.*

*Unselfishness mirrors in every scene,
 Love blossoms on every sod,
 And back from it's vision the heart comes to tell
 The wonderful goodness of God.*

*You are writing each day a letter to women and men.
 Take care that your writing is true.
 'Tis the only gospel some people will ever read,
 That gospel according to you!"*

I invite you to join me in meditating and reflecting on this gripping old poem. May we let it sink in as we honestly ask ourselves each day what kind of gospel am I writing with my life? As the author says, we are writing each day a letter to all those we encounter. And that letter is the only gospel some folks will ever read.

So, what is the gospel according to you And me?

Prayer for our Graduates:

Lord, thank you for the plans that you have for the lives of the graduates of this year. You have plans to prosper them and not to harm them. You have a bright future for each of their lives. May you make known to them the great plans you have for their lives. Help them to seek your face and gain wisdom and understanding for the direction they should take in their lives. Amen.

**"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."
 Jeremiah 29:11**



Today's Woman Trisston's Tidbits:

By: Trisston Wright Burrows
 Ms. Wheelchair America/Alabama 2005
site.trisstonwrightburrows.com

"Peace, Be Still"



People often say that God won't give you more than you can handle. Are you kidding me?!?! God will give you abundantly more than you can handle so that you will learn to hand it off to the one who can ... which is God.

"Be still, and know that I am God" Psalm 46:10

As long as you think that you got this in your own power and your own ability, with your own strength, As long as you think that you can do it. You are the master of your own ship. You are the captain of your life. You can battle the wind and the waves on your own. If that's you, you are going to find out very soon that the weight of the world is going to crush upon you.

But (and this is big, so listen up!) when you say Jesus, I can't do it on my own. I'm trusting you with this situation, this storm. I'm giving it over to you. I recognize that I have limitations and that you are limitless. I give it over to you, God. I trust you with it and I know that you can speak peace to the storm. You can speak peace into my heart and into my life.

"He calms the storm, so that its waves are still. Then they are glad because they are quiet; So, He guides them to their desired haven. Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men!" Psalms 107:29-31

The peace of God is available to you, my friend. It's an invitation. He won't take what you don't give. As long as you have Jesus in the boat, as long as He is with you in your life, He can speak to the wind and the waves...saying **"Peace, be still"** (Mark 4:39) and all will be still.

Many Blessings!

P.S. Happy 17th Wedding Anniversary to my husband, Brian! I love you!!
"You are my sun, my moon, and all my stars." E.E. Cummings



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