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THE GAZETTE IS “THE VOICE OF REASON”!

Tuberville declares, "I will be the future governor of Alabama."

May 27, 2025 – AUBURN, AL – U.S. Senator Tommy Tuberville (R-Alabama) announced to a room full of friends and supporters that he is running for the Republican Party nomination for Governor of Alabama. “I will be the future governor of the State of Alabama,” said Sen. Tuberville. Tuberville made the announcement, surrounded by supporters, many of them wearing COACH hats, at Byron’s Barbecue in Auburn. “I started my Senate run seven years ago in this same building,” said Tuberville. “My wife, Suzanne and I moved here 25 years ago. We educated our two boys here. It’s home. It is another day in the life of Suzanne and me,” said Sen. Tuberville of the announcement. “I have got a lot of good friends here. I really hate giving up the Senate job with President Trump, but I have still got 18 months with President Trump to ‘Make America Great Again.’”



Tuberville stressed the importance of passing the President’s budget out of the Senate next week. “Our country is in bad trouble,” said Tuberville. “We have got to cut spending and we have got to grow the economy in order to do that without hurting people.” Tuberville said that “if Congress does not pass Trump’s “Big Beautiful Bill” which extends the Trump tax cuts from 2017 then, “taxes will go up \$2000 or \$3000 a month.” “It is going to be double duty for 18 months, but I want to do what is best for the state of Alabama,” said Tuberville. “I am a builder.” “We have got to grow the economy to put people back to work,” said Tuberville.

Reporters asked Tuberville why he is running for Governor. “I want to do what is best for the state of Alabama,” said Tuberville. “I want to give back.” Even though Tuberville is following three consecutive Republican governors (Bob Riley, Robert Bentley, and Kay Ivey) he promised that his governance will bring change to the state of Alabama. “We are going to make Alabama Great Again,” said Tuberville. “We are going to do things differently. We are going to have a great staff and hit the ground running.” “I have got another 18 months,” said Tuberville who said that he has discussed this with President Trump. “He was very supportive.” “We talked about it. I think he knew it before I did. Whatever you want to do I support you. He is loved in the state of Alabama,” said Tuberville of President Trump. “He is supported by a large majority of the people of Alabama.”

Tuberville promised to work hard both as a candidate and as a future governor. “I am going to run hard,” Tuberville promised. “We worked hard every day for a day and a half. We are going to do the same thing here.”

Tuberville told the crowd that he is “Coach” not “Senator” and that he will remain “Coach” when he is Governor. “I will be Coach to everybody even my granddaughter Rosie Grace is going to call me Coach,” said Tuberville. “I am not doing this to be a Governor.” “We are going to grow Alabama,” Tuberville promised. “We are going to bring back manufacturing. We are going to stop

illegal immigration.”

Reporters brought up the issue of Tuberville’s second home in Florida. “I have a house in Florida,” said Tuberville. “Everybody knows that. A lot of people do that.” “We have been here for 25 years.”

Tuberville was elected to the Senate in 2020 over incumbent Senator Doug Jones (D-Alabama) in a landslide win. He has been an outspoken supporter of President Donald J. Trump (R) during his time in the Senate.

Tuberville is a native of Arkansas. He is a career teacher, coach, and sports broadcaster. He is a former head coach at Auburn University. Tuberville also coached at Texas Tech, Ole Miss, and Cincinnati. He was the defensive coordinator at Miami (where he won a national championship) and at Texas A&M.

Birmingham area insurance Ken McFeeters is the only other declared Republican candidate for Governor. Chad “Chig” Martin is running as a Democrat. Marin, who describes himself as a ‘Wallace Democrat,’ is the first Democrat to announce. He ran for the Democratic primary in 2022; but failed to make the Democratic primary runoff. Sources expect that there will be a crowded Democratic Primary field.

Tuesday’s announcement means that Tuberville’s U.S Senate seat will be open in 2026. Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall (R) is expected to qualify to run for the Senate



From L to R: State Rep. Arnold Mooney, former State Rep. Perry O Hooper Jr., Sen. Tommy Tuberville, and Corky Hawthorne

Article Contributed by: Brandon Moseley

The Republican Primary will be on May 19, 2026.



Flag Day is a holiday celebrated on June 14 in the United States. It commemorates the adoption of the flag of the United States on June 14, 1777 by resolution of the Second Continental Congress. The Flag Resolution stated "That the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation."



Father's Day was inaugurated in the United States in the early 20th century to complement Mother's Day in celebrating fathers, fathering, and fatherhood. Father's Day was founded in Spokane, Washington, at the YMCA in 1910 by Sonora Smart Dodd, who was born in Arkansas. Its first celebration was in the Spokane YMCA on June 19, 1910.



Juneteenth, officially Juneteenth National Independence Day, is a federal holiday in the United States. It is celebrated annually on **June 19** to commemorate the ending of slavery in the United States. The holiday's name, first used in the 1890s, is a portmanteau of the words "June" and "nineteenth", referring to June 19, 1865, the day when Major General Gordon Granger ordered the final enforcement of the Emancipation Proclamation in Texas at the end of the American Civil War. In the Civil War period, slavery came to an end in various areas of the United States at different times. Many enslaved Southerners escaped, demanded wages, stopped work, or took up arms against the Confederacy of slave states. In January 1865, Congress finally proposed the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution for national abolition of slavery. By June 1865, almost all enslaved were freed by the victorious Union Army, or abolition laws in some of the remaining U.S. states. When the national abolition amendment was ratified in December, the remaining enslaved in Delaware and in Kentucky were freed.





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/>

Addressing Metro Crime Problem Priority for Alabama Legislative Session

You would have to be living under a rock to not be aware that two of our state's metropolitan areas have a serious problem with violent crime. Montgomery and Birmingham have become crime-ridden war zones that resemble third world countries like Mexico, run by drug cartels.

The rampant, open-ended violence and cavalier murders in Montgomery and Birmingham leapt so high in 2024, that people who still lived there were scared to come out of their homes for fear of being shot. Even their homes were not safe places, a good many small children were reported murdered from stray bullets in Birmingham, while asleep in their beds.

Montgomery had become so bad that legislators were and still are afraid to come to the Capitol. Most of the Supreme Court Judges do not come to the Capital City until necessary. The town of Pike Road and City of Auburn have become the residences of a good many people who must come to Montgomery to work.

When the time comes for BRAC to decide whether to keep the Maxwell/Gunter Complex/War College in Montgomery, it will be a tough sell for the U.S. Defense Department to keep their base in a war zone. The only argument they can make is that, if a foreign country sends their officers to the War College for training, they will get a true simulated war experience. Their odds of getting shot while staying in Montgomery is greater than a true war at home. If they could survive a year in Montgomery, they could survive a year in any war. These young officers are still not going to be able to bring their wives or children with them to Montgomery.

Inner city Birmingham and Montgomery are probably never going to be growth centers for our state but something has to be done because the unbridled crime and rampant murder rates affects the image of the entire state.

Therefore, our super majority Republican Legislature has made solving the Birmingham and Montgomery crime problem a priority. They have come forth with a package of bills and made it the foremost issue of the Session. Governor Kay Ivey advocated for this anti-crime in her State of the State address to legislators at the beginning of the Session. The legislation advanced are common sense and should make a difference.

In June of 2024, Montgomery leaders got serious about their crime problem and

yielded to a special Metro Crime Suppression Unit. This Unit has been extremely successful. It has been led by ALEA Director Hal Taylor and Montgomery Sheriff Derek Cunningham. These two brilliant, top-notch law enforcement leaders have taken the bull by the horns in Montgomery.

During the past 10 months, this Special Unit led by ALEA has served 508 arrest warrants, made 202 arrests, seized 157 firearms and 100 machine gun conversion devices, recovered 35 stolen vehicles, initiated 56 vehicle pursuits, and conducted 44 drug seizures – including a fentanyl bust potent enough to kill over 5,000 people.

Seeing the success of this Unit, Rep. Reed Ingram (R-Pike Road) passed legislation to appropriate additional funds to further enhance the Montgomery project. Hopefully, Birmingham will take advantage of these revenues and relinquish jurisdiction for Taylor's elite Unit to help them. In passage of these Special Unit ALEA appropriations, Rep. Ingram said, ***"This Unit has been incredibly effective in Alabama's Capital City and has, without a doubt, led to a decrease in violent crimes across the River Region. The bottom line is that the best way to protect communities is to have a strong law enforcement presence in areas where violent crime is occurring, and I believe making the Alabama Metro Crime Suppression Unit a statewide, full-time task force does just that."*** State Senator Will Barfoot (R-Pike Road) spearheaded important legislation, which criminalizes glock switch gun possession a Class C felony under Alabama Law.

One of the most important Legislative Acts of this momentous anti-crime package was the Back the Blue Protection Act sponsored by Rep. Rex Reynolds (R-Huntsville), who is the former Police Chief of Huntsville. Under this new protection, a law enforcement officer would be shielded from a lawsuit unless he or she was acting recklessly without law enforcement justification, or he or she was violating a person's clearly established rights.

Rep. Allen Treadway (R-Morris), a 31-year veteran police officer, sponsored and passed legislation that establishes the Alabama Law Enforcement Officer's Family Scholarship Program designed to boost recruitment and retention of law enforcement by providing financial assistance for college tuition, and associated expenses to eligible dependents of long-serving law enforcement officers.

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

Steve Marshall Declares Candidacy for U.S. Senate

May 29, 2025 – MONTGOMERY, AL – Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall (R) officially announced his candidacy for the U. S. Senate. The GOP primary is May 19, 2026. "I believe that Alabama deserves a strong voice in Washington, D.C., someone who will stand up for our values and fight for our rights," said Marshall. Marshall's campaign emphasizes national security and defense. "Our nation's security is paramount," Marshall stated. "We must ensure that our armed forces are well-equipped and ready to respond to any threat." Marshall's economic agenda focuses on creating a favorable business climate. "We need to create opportunities for businesses to grow and succeed, which in turn will create jobs and improve the quality of life for all Alabamians," said Marshall. Healthcare and education are also critical issues for Marshall. "Healthcare should be a right, not a privilege," Marshall stated. "We need to find solutions that reduce costs while ensuring that everyone has access to quality care." "We need to invest in our schools, support our teachers, and ensure that every child has the opportunity to succeed," Marshall added.



The Big Beautiful Bill is a Beautiful Start Let's Get it Passed

The "big beautiful bill," a bold legislative package championed by President Donald Trump and his allies, has sparked intense debate. Structured as a budget reconciliation bill to bypass the Senate's 60-vote filibuster threshold, it represents a strategic effort to advance transformative fiscal policies. Critics, particularly on the right, have leveled charges of fiscal irresponsibility and insufficient ambition, but these critiques stem from misunderstandings of reconciliation's scope and distortions of the bill's impact. By clarifying the bill's provisions, addressing false claims, and recognizing the Senate's structural hurdles, it becomes evident that this legislation is a disciplined, pro-growth achievement that deserves conservative support.

Budget reconciliation allows Congress to pass fiscal legislation with a simple majority, sidestepping the Senate's 60-vote requirement. However, its potential is hamstrung by arcane rules that reflect procedural rigidity rather than practical governance. Governed by the Byrd Amendment, a relic of Senate procedure that continues to dictate reconciliation's scope as if Robert Byrd himself—gone since 2010, a full 15 years—were still personally guarding the fiscal gates, reconciliation is limited to provisions directly affecting the federal budget, specifically mandatory spending (e.g., Medicaid, Food Stamps) and revenue. One might think a rule named for a man long departed could use a modern refresh, but Capitol Hill prefers to legislate in memoriam. Compounding this, reconciliation bills are subject to the ridiculous requirement of adhering to 10-year budget projections—economic forecasts so speculative that no one, not even the most seasoned analysts, can claim to know their accuracy. These projections force lawmakers to craft policy based on guesses about future economic conditions, a constraint that distorts priorities and fuels misleading critiques.

These rules explain why the bill cannot address discretionary spending, such as the Department of Education or federal grants, which constitute the bulk of proposed "DOGE cuts" (reductions championed by the Department of Government Efficiency). Critics who misconstrue this limitation as a flaw ignore the procedural reality that Senate rules prohibit reconciliation from cutting discretionary programs. Despite these constraints, the bill achieves a remarkable feat: a staggering \$1.6 trillion in mandatory spending reductions, including the largest-ever welfare reform. These cuts target inefficiencies in programs like Medicaid and Food Stamps, aligning with conservative principles of fiscal discipline and personal responsibility. Critics who demand discretionary cuts overlook the fact that such reforms require separate legislation subject to the 60-vote threshold—a far greater obstacle than the bill's design.

Another pervasive falsehood is that the bill increases the federal deficit. This claim relies on a misleading Congressional Budget Office (CBO) accounting gimmick tied to the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which temporarily reduced income tax rates set to expire in September 2025. The Trump administration always intended these cuts to be permanent, and maintaining current tax rates does not add a single penny to the deficit, as it reflects the status quo. The CBO's projection that extending these rates "increases" the deficit is an artifact of an outdated baseline, not a reflection of economic reality. Against the correct current-law baseline, the bill's \$1.6 trillion in spending cuts unequivocally reduces the deficit, delivering a fiscal win for conservatives. The reliance on speculative 10-year projections only exacerbates these distortions, as critics exploit uncertain forecasts to inflate the bill's perceived costs.

Equally baseless is the assertion that the bill "spends trillions of dollars." This claim is wholly fabricated. Unlike annual budget bills that fund government



Perry O. Hooper Jr.

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



operations, this reconciliation bill is not a comprehensive ten-year budget. It does not "fund" most government activities; if it passed without an annual budget bill, government funding would cease. Critics' math—attributing trillions in projected federal spending to this legislation—is preposterous, akin to claiming a one-paragraph bill cutting \$50 billion in Food Stamps "adds" trillions by counting unrelated expenditures. The bill's only spending commitments are targeted investments in the President's border security and defense priorities, offset by a net spending cut of over \$1.6 trillion. Its fiscal components are clear: a massive tax cut to spur economic growth and a massive spending cut to restore budgetary discipline.

Despite its constraints, the bill leverages reconciliation's flexibility to advance conservative priorities often ignored by skeptics. Tax relief for families and small businesses, a hallmark of the 2017 tax cuts, can be extended and expanded, boosting economic competitiveness. Regulatory reform, achievable by adjusting agency budgets, can foster entrepreneurship and innovation. Energy independence, a Trump priority, could be bolstered through investments in domestic production, such as clean coal or expanded drilling, funded within reconciliation's fiscal framework. Infrastructure modernization—roads, bridges, and broadband—could drive job creation and long-term savings, aligning with conservative goals of efficiency and growth.

These opportunities counter the narrative that the bill is insufficiently ambitious. By focusing on mandatory spending and revenue, it lays a foundation for broader reforms, such as entitlement restructuring or devolving authority to states via block grants. Such measures, achievable through reconciliation, reflect conservative values of limited government and local control, yet they are often overshadowed by critics' fixation on discretionary cuts.

While critics scrutinize the bill's scope, the Senate's 60-vote requirement for non-reconciliation legislation remains the primary barrier to the Trump America First agenda. Priorities like border security, immigration reform, or healthcare restructuring routinely falter when subjected to the filibuster, which empowers a minority to block even popular measures. Reconciliation offers a rare workaround, enabling Republicans to act without relying on bipartisan support, which is increasingly scarce in a polarized Senate. Dismissing the bill as inadequate ignores this reality: without reconciliation, much of the Trump agenda risks stagnation.

The DOGE cuts, while critical, require separate legislation to address discretionary spending. Achieving these reforms demands either bipartisan cooperation—an unlikely prospect—or filibuster reform, a contentious step. Reconciliation, by contrast, is a proven tool, as evidenced by the 2017 tax cuts. Critics must recognize that the big beautiful bill is not a betrayal of the Trump agenda but a pragmatic step toward its realization.

The big beautiful bill is not without flaws, but its critics on the right must engage with its substance rather than perpetuate myths. It does not ignore the DOGE cuts; it achieves unprecedented mandatory spending reductions within Senate rules. It does not increase the deficit; it delivers a net spending cut against the correct baseline. It does not spend trillions; it funds only targeted priorities while slashing \$1.6 trillion. These are not liberal concessions but conservative victories.

As the nation faces economic challenges and global uncertainties, conservatives must unite behind pragmatic solutions. The big beautiful bill, realized through reconciliation, is a strategic necessity to deliver tax relief, welfare reform, and fiscal discipline. By confronting the Senate's 60-vote barrier and navigating the absurdities of rules like 10-year projections, Republicans can ensure that the Trump agenda moves from rhetoric to reality. The path forward demands clarity, resolve, and a commitment to governing effectively.



Ronald A. Holtsford

I UNDERSTAND THERE ARE ABOUT A QUARTER MILLION
BIRTHRIGHT BABIES BORN PER YEAR
TO ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS.
THAT IS BEING CONSIDERED IN
THE UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT.
WHAT IS THE STATUS OF THAT LEGAL CASE?



There are from what I currently see, three cases collectively brought together that for the purposes of this article we will call *DONALD J. TRUMP, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, ET AL. v. CASA, INC., ET AL.* President Trump issued an Executive Order on the first day of his current Presidential term ending birthright citizenship to those in which both parents are illegal immigrants. There may well be a clarified case name and maybe an opinion by the time you read this article so we will see how my comments and thoughts may differ or be in line with the ultimate opinion of the United States Supreme Court.

Solicitor General D. John Sauer, Esq. argued for President Trump, et al. that the Executive Order issued supports the 14th amendment as one of the two issues before the Court. The 14th Amendment supported the citizenship of former slaves as read in the first section of that Amendment; *All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.*

The second issue has to do with the power of the lower courts in their effect since there have already been forty or more nationwide injunctions issued involving Federal policies since the beginning of President Trump’s second term in January. Thirty-five of those injunctions have come from just five jurisdictions. For purposes of this question and article I will not include lower court weight on nationwide policy in my discussion points since there is less similarity with the question at hand.

Looking at that first issue, the fourteenth amendment was passed in 1868 as a part of the Reconstruction Amendments. There was considerable rejection of the Amendment by the former slave states and readmission requirements of duly elected Southern representatives were illegal in that ratification of the Amendment was required for the admission of those representatives to Congress. It would be similar to a majority Congress restricting the participation of minority members who disagree with certain issues. For purposes of this article we will not discuss any other sections of this Amendment except for the first. The first section however, has been a part of some of the most litigated and contentious legal cases. Those cases include *Brown v Board of Education* regarding school integration, *Roe v Wade* regarding the later overturned Federal right to abortion, and *Bush v. Gore* regarding the 2000 Presidential election.

The equal protection part of Section I says, *No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.* The Texas case, *Plyler v Doe*, protected children brought to the United States illegally in that it was ruled that they too had rights including the right to an education. Though challenged many times, it has not been overturned and has more to do with equal protection under the law. The 1898, United States Supreme Court case of *United States v. Wong Kim Ark* involved a young man born in the United States in 1873 to Chinese parents. Though domiciled in California, they were not United States citizens and instead owed their allegiance to China. Ark left the United States at age 21 to visit his parents who had returned to China and was readmitted when he returned the same calendar year. He left again in 1894 to visit his parents in China and returned in 1895, this time being told he was not a citizen and was denied admission. Congress had in 1882 passed the Chinese Exclusion Act. That Act excluded mainly Chinese laborers, later going through several iterations either allowing only a small number of Chinese in per year and at one point only men to prevent expanding Chinese families. The Chinese had come as laborers from about 1848-1855 and were pretty

much welcomed as labor, but as time went by were tolerated and finally were not desired in certain labor markets such as gold mining.

Preceding the 14th Amendment, the *1866 Civil Rights Act* had been passed saying, *“That all persons born in the United States and not subject to any foreign power, excluding Indians not taxed, are hereby declared to be citizens of the United States; and such citizens, of every race and color, without regard to any previous condition of slavery or involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall have the same right, in every State and Territory in the United States, to make and enforce contracts, to sue, be parties, and give evidence, to inherit, purchase, lease, sell, hold, and convey real and personal property, and to full and equal benefit of all laws and proceedings for the security of person and property, as is enjoyed by white citizens, and shall be subject to like punishment, pains, and penalties, and to none other, any law, statute, ordinance, regulation, or custom, to the contrary notwithstanding.”* The Act was vetoed by President Andrew Johnson, but a later vote meeting Constitutional requirement then over-rode President Johnson’s veto. The 1960 Civil Rights Act added to civil rights statutes in saying *“that every individual regardless of his race, religion, or national origin is entitled to the equal protection of the laws.”*

The difference here is the 1866 Civil Rights law and the 14th Amendment addressed a race of people legally and notoriously brought into the United States though unfortunately against the desires of those then enslaved. In the case of Ark, his parents had entered the United States legally and notoriously. The domicile of those enslaved was intended as one of permanence. Those that are illegal aliens are subjects of their nation in which they resided. They have entered the United States illegally and under cover of a certain amount of secrecy because they would otherwise be turned away into the country from whose border they breached. While many commentators believe it is a slam dunk to overturn President Trump’s Executive Order, I don’t believe that it really is. The problem is as brought up by opposing individuals, what happens the day after maybe millions of people are deported and what happens with newborns as posed by one of the Justices during oral arguments of this case? They are sent to a country that they have probably never known and certain segments of employment in the United States will possibly be decimated. Obviously, many of these are minors and would require parental, familial or adult sponsored return to the land of citizenship of a parent or of their parents. A lot of questions and if held in favor of President Trump’s Order how is it logistically enforced and if the holding is in favor of those opposing how does this country continue with illegal immigration and an ever expanding social system to handle a more rapid growing population more dependent at least for a time on social and governmental related services?

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.
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Mailing address:
Ronald A. Holtsford, Esq. ~ Ronald A. Holtsford, LLC
7956 Vaughn Road, Box #124, Montgomery, AL 36116
(334) 220-3700
EMAIL: raholtsford@aol.com

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Chad Martin Makes Official Announcement For Governors Race



May 29, 2025 – ENTERPRISE, AL - Democrat **Chad “Chig” Martin** announced that he is running for Governor in the 2026 election.

Martin describes himself as a guitar toting, fedora wearing and hemp selling entrepreneur from the Wiregrass region of Alabama. He is also involved in the mobile home, hat and aerospace maintenance supply industry with his businesses based out of Dothan.

Martin previously ran for Governor in 2022. Martin says that he learned valuable lessons from that experience.

“The knowledge I gained is paying off in big ways early in this campaign cycle,” Martin said.

“It is an amazing thing to see Alabamians from all parties coming together and working with each other,” added Martin.

Martin says that he wants to be a leader and be at the forefront of bringing high-tech industry to Alabama with good pay and health and retirement benefits. Martin also wants to make sure every child in a public-school grades K-12 has healthcare services regardless of their socioeconomic status. Martin favors decriminalizing all natural products such as Cannabis.

“It is a shame that our citizens are being pushed to an unsafe black market with fentanyl so prevalent,” Martin said.

Martin supports a lottery and believes that it can help grow the economy in the state.

“46 out of 50 states already have the lottery,” Martin said. *“We are building schools in every state around us while many of our children sit in worn and dilapidated buildings.”*

Martin also emphasized that he believes in free medical choices. *“I believe that the privacy of our citizens and their relationship with their doctors is sacred ground and that the state should not have any business in the matter,”* Martin added.

“I am very excited about toning down the temperature of our political climate across the state by working bi-partisanly and in good-faith on behalf of the people of Alabama,” said Martin.

Martin grew up in Enterprise AL. He graduated from Enterprise High School in 1986 where he excelled in athletics. He was awarded a football scholarship to the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, where he earned his bachelor’s degree in 1991 in Criminal Justice.

Martin is an avid outdoorsman and, on most weekends, you can find him fishing in the Gulf or hunting in Barbour County.

“This will be my second and final attempt for office in Alabama and I want to know that I have given it everything that I have on behalf of the people that support me,” said Martin.

The Democratic primary will be on May 19, 2026.

Staff Writer

Brantley Bank

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Rob Tate

Robservations...

WHERE DO WE FIND SUCH MEN?

With all the post-election negativity swamping the news daily, I started to write a Robservation concentrating on some of the buffoonery taking place in Washington. “Trump this” or “Musk that.” “Doge this” or “illegal immigrants that.” I think we can all agree that at times it is too much to bear. I for the most part have stopped watching most news programs because so many fall into disinformation trap of spouting that which is simply not true. Remember, a half truth is a full lie. Failing to report information is also a lie. A sin of omission vs. a sin of commission. Over the next several years, I will certainly have the opportunity to write on much of what is going on.

So, while I sit here pondering reality, I decided to take off one hat and put my military history hat on. Why? Because I like it. With the study of history, we often think of the past as places where our heroes have risen above all obstacles by the very nature of their superior moral, physical and/ or spiritual qualities. We have a high regard for the hero while we somehow ignore or forgive them for their faults and shortcomings; no matter how glaring. We put them on pedestals and think of them, or wish for them, attributes and characteristics that may not exist. In turn, it becomes increasingly easy to give them credit where no credit is due. This is human nature and our study of history is replete with this idea of the “Great Man” doing things above and beyond the call of duty, somehow standing far above other men faced with similar situations and conditions.

In Sidney Hook’s, *The Hero in History*, the author examines two different historical personalities. One is described as the “Eventful Man” and the other as the “Event Making Man.” The eventful man, also called the determinist view, can be described as the person who is simply in the right place at the right time. He is merely part of much larger events dominating his era and is born to forces far beyond his control. This man’s conduct is influenced, determined and controlled by the outside pressures he is merely reacting to. This character needs a crises, social forces, social machinery and/ or certain ideas, not necessarily his own, in order to fulfill his “destiny.” Although he may indeed be coping with outside stressors better than his counterpart and peers, in no way is he in control of them.

There must be some catalyst or series of events that alone propels the eventful man forward. In effect, the eventful man is merely a prisoner of his environment and will only become successful if he can navigate the myriad of situations presented to him. The eventful man in reality doesn’t cause his situation he merely rides it.

The event making man or the historical “Great Man,” on the other hand, is the character to which we ascribe almost supernatural powers. Not a mere pawn of his surroundings, the Great Man finds the courage and intestinal fortitude to control his own destiny and to successfully manipulate his surroundings to his advantage. Because of this ability to shape and control the events around him, the Great Man becomes a significant part of those larger events by driving them in one direction or the other. The Great Man, through his outstanding character, intelligence, will and/or abilities has the capacity to accomplish his specific goals or purposes rather than allowing himself to be manipulated by his surroundings.

In his book *Preface to History*, Carl Gustavson discusses four “maxims” concerning the historical great man. First, long term trends are far less likely to be controlled or determined by an individual hero. In other words, there appears to be a limit to just how much an individual can do by himself to shape the outcome of any historical event. Secondly, most cases of great influence throughout history are simply the right man at the right time. Third, “the occasional genius by extremely dexterous and willful actions, may achieve ‘historical mutation.’” In other words, can a person actually achieve world-changing greatness through his or her physical actions? Lastly, and perhaps most important maxim is that every historical situation is unique and must therefore be judged on its own merit. No universal formula exists for the determination of the characters that will help shape and define a historical event. We must look at how the alleged “Great Man” affected or controlled his situation.

This brings me to my Robservation. My wife and I recently rewatched the movie, *The Imitation Game*, the other night and to be quite honest, I was still as blown away as I was the first time I watched it. When it first came out, the

talk of the town was the movie, *American Sniper*, which I also loved, but *The Imitation Game* is a movie on a different level. The story is about British mathematician Alan Turing who was responsible for breaking the German Enigma code. As a military historian, I have been fascinated by Enigma and the British Ultra Intercepts for years but until I saw the movie, I had really done no research into what it took. I highly, HIGHLY recommend watching this movie.

But as I watched the movie, there was the question of the historical “Great Man” that entered my head. A lot of the writing above comes from my book on German super ace Hans-Joachim Marseille where I asked the question whether he could be considered the historical Great Man or just the Eventful Man. As I watched this movie, I was awestruck at what makes a man like Alan Turing work. What planet did this guy immigrate from and with what eyes did he see the world? What we have here is a man who in the 1930s envisioned machines that could think. What? Thinking machines, preposterous! He was mocked, accused of spying, taunted and laughed at. Then in the early days of WWII, the Germans came up with a code that was considered to be unbreakable. They ran their messages through an ingenious machine called Enigma that consisted of a series of keys and rotors that gave the Germans the possibility of 59,000,000,000,000,000,000 combinations that was reset every 24 hours. The movie claimed with the British code breakers and their methods they were using at that time, it would take close to 20 million years to break just one day’s worth of code.

Enter Alan Turing. A man, very much like Sheldon Cooper on *Big Bang Theory*, Turing envisioned making a machine that could crack that German code within minutes every day. To make a long story short, despite a lot of interference and derision from higher ups and his peers, Turing and his team did just that and broke the code. It is estimated that his breaking the German Enigma shortened the war by over two years and saved over 14,000,000 lives.

Again, where do we find such men? Aside from some of his personal issues and the travesty of how he was treated for being a homosexual (forced estrogen injections for chemical castration leading to his suicide in June 1954) here was a man who fits the bill as the historical Great Man in every way. I am not saying he was a great person. That is irrelevant. But from a historical perspective, Alan Turing, in my opinion is one of just a few Great Men from that era.

This socially awkward man from London, out of some kind of master vision in his mind, from scratch, built the first real problem-solving computer. He didn’t just improve on somebody else’s idea; his creation was birthed in his mind. Wow!! Not only that, he did it in a time when thousands were dying daily in the war, victory was in doubt and he and his team knew that they held the key for the defeat of Nazi aggression. Turing was no mere pawn of his surroundings. He manipulated his surroundings to his advantage and controlled the events around him. Turing clearly became a significant part of those larger events caused by WWII and he drove them in the direction they needed to go. He did what was considered impossible by imposing his will on others.

But after I watched the movie, I also thought a lot about other potential historic “Great Men” from that generation who also had such a significant impact on the world. German physicist Werner von Braun; considered one of the Fathers of rocket science. Yes, he built the dreaded V-2 rocket but he was also responsible for putting our first man on the moon. Physicist Robert Oppenheimer of the Manhattan Project; he led the team responsible for creating the first atomic bombs. Whether these men were Eventful or Event Making, I stand in awe in their contributions to the world. They each had visions beyond their peers and turned those visions into reality.

And one last thing. When I think about what these and others of their generation did to become so special, I have to look at their educational background and then ask myself are we today doing what it takes to create more visionaries like them? Remember, all these accomplishments were completed in the day before computers and they used nothing but pencils and slide rules. Impressive stuff. To Alan Turing, though, the reason for this Robservation, hats off and thanks for all you gave the world, your vision of thinking machines and for ending the war years earlier than it otherwise would have ended. Historical “Great Man?” You better believe it.

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



John Martin

capable of drastically reducing the toxic emissions that the radical leftists and “environmental wackos” have been whining about in recent decades. Although other companies are following suit, Elon’s company, Tesla, is the clear leader in producing electric cars, trucks, and even semi trucks and autonomous taxicabs. Tesla also produces solar collection systems and massive battery packs that can level out consumption spikes in electric power grids. In California, they have already prevented several power blackouts. Once full production ramps up during the next decade or so, Tesla vehicles and other products will not only clean our air, but will also conserve our limited petroleum and other fossil fuels for plastics and other needed products.

In short, Elon is one of the major saviors of our environment.

He is also a savior of our country.

Elon has sacrificed substantial portions of his wealth and time to protect the nation that he cherishes—the greatest bastion of freedom in the world—the United States of America. For many decades, bureaucratic greed, mismanagement, excesses, corruption, and debt have poisoned our government to the threshold of economic collapse. He has teamed up with President Donald Trump to perform a massive housecleaning for the first time in history. Out of necessity, many thousands of bureaucrats and counter-productive personnel must sacrifice their government careers to eliminate corruption and waste. Of course, they don’t like it, but the salvation of our nation—to preserve freedom and individual liberty—requires a serious minimization of our government to keep it honest and functional.

Meanwhile, the unemployed road-blockers become free to apply for the many new productive job openings that will become available as soon as the

The Hypocritical Musk Haters

There is no doubt that Elon Musk is the world’s wealthiest man. He is also the smartest and the greatest entrepreneur. And unlike his rivals who have a bent toward proprietary monopolization, he is willing to share his technology with others for the benefit of mankind and civilized society.

One of his biggest successes is the development of efficient electric vehicles that are capable of drastically reducing the toxic emissions that the radical leftists and “environmental wackos” have been whining about in recent decades. Although other companies are following suit, Elon’s company, Tesla, is the clear leader in producing electric cars, trucks, and even semi trucks and autonomous taxicabs. Tesla also produces solar collection systems and massive battery packs that can level out consumption spikes in electric power grids. In California, they have already prevented several power blackouts. Once full production ramps up during the next decade or so, Tesla vehicles and other products will not only clean our air, but will also conserve our limited petroleum and other fossil fuels for plastics and other needed products.



bureaucratic slave chains have been cast off.

We would expect the American people to gladly accept Musk’s sacrifices and the opportunities he has opened for everybody. It should seem like the second coming of Jesus Christ.

So what happened? We could never expect this: Instead of accepting their salvation, huge mobs of rabid protesters rose up and committed unspeakable violence against Musk and Tesla.

Individual owners and dealerships were attacked and torched. Hundreds of Tesla cars and Cybertrucks were vandalized and set afire. Vicious riots, vandalism, arson, shootings, and mayhem exploded in cities all over the nation, and even in other parts of the world. It became one of the most massive organized acts of terrorism since the 9/11 tragedy. It was a reminder of the mob in Jerusalem screaming, “Crucify him.”

Many of these perpetrators had been hired by an agency called Act Blue, an arm of the Democratic Party. Individual contributors included George Soros, Reid Hoffman, Herbert Sandler, Patricia Bauman, and Leah Hunt Hendrix. Groups included The Troublemakers, The Destruction Project, Rise and Resist, The Indivisible Project, and The Democratic Socialists of America. Some followers of The Indivisible Project admitted they had proof that Act Blue contributed \$7.6 million in February just before the attacks began.

President Donald Trump announced that this type of violence will not be tolerated, and that the people involved should spend 20 years herded like cattle inside of El Salvador’s brutal maximum security CECOT megaprison with no time outside and deprived of any communication or other contact with their families, friends, or associates.

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HISTORY BITS AND PIECES

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY



Justice Will Sellers

Even before the war was over, there was optimism in the West that with the catastrophe of the conflict and its devastating destruction, civilization could give the world a new start. This idealism was first reflected in the Atlantic Charter, which provided a framework for the United Nations. While the terms of the Charter were aspirational and a gentlemen’s agreement between Churchill and Roosevelt, it nevertheless advocated for self-determination, for people to elect their government and for territory taken during the war to be restored.

Occurring at almost the same time as Germany was surrendering, a meeting was held to charter a post-war, international body codifying the name given to the Allied forces — the United Nations. This precursory meeting was happening in San Francisco 80 years ago and would include representatives from all the countries allied against the Axis powers. There was one noticeable exception.

Poland.

To a rational or otherwise casual observer, Poland’s omission seems hard to believe. Six years had not yet passed since Britain and France guaranteed Polish freedom with a military alliance. Even when Germany invaded there was a sliver of hope that war might be averted, but once Hitler refused to halt the invasion and withdraw his troops, World War II was effectively underway.

Polish troops fought bravely to defend their country, and news stories abound with acts of bravery and heroism within the Polish armed forces. But the reality was that Poland was unprepared; its antiquated weapons and were no match for the technological proficiencies of the Nazi forces.

Poland did not go down without a fight and never surrendered. Its leaders left Warsaw and eventually established an in-exile government in London. Unlike other nations conquered by the Nazis, Poland would never have a collaborationist government. No Pole allied themselves with the Nazi regime. Rather, Poland would pay the price for resisting Nazi occupation.

Its armed forces, while defeated, escaped to continue the fight.

Poland would field the fourth largest army in Europe, and its troops, once provided modern weapons, would punch far above their weight as some of the best fighter pilots and soldiers for the Allied cause. The Polish government in-exile was recognized by other nations, and for its part, was an initial participant in meetings to discuss post-war Europe.

It is not a stretch to say that the initial phases of World War II were primarily focused on Poland. The Poles did all the fighting. The promises from Britain and France of reinforcements, support and intervention were hollow as nothing of any

Measuring Victory at the End of the War

World War II ended in Europe 80 years ago, but without obtaining its stated objective. The cause of the war — the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Poland — went unrealized.

Poland had merely traded Nazi occupation for Russian domination.

For all the high-minded conjecture about a safer, more secure world, the fate of Poland was completely lost in the shuffle. The future peace and stability of a new world order sacrificed Poland to the Soviet sphere of influence.

consequence ever materialized. Poland was left on its own to endure the Blitzkrieg from the highly mechanized and well-trained Nazis. Poland resisted longer than expected, but reluctantly ceded territory to the invaders.

Had Poland fought only Germany, that would be one thing, but shortly after the Nazis invaded, Russia joined in, creating a two-front war against two armies — one armed with modern weapons and the other with overwhelming numbers of soldiers. Russia was a part of Poland’s defeat and had, in fact, negotiated and co-ordinated with Hitler on the joint invasion.

Six years later, Russia would end World War II with Poland in its hip pocket. Germany might not have any Polish territory to show for its efforts, but not so the Russians. Stalin accomplished his objectives and more.

And he did it in the most calculated and deceitful way possible.

First, he created his own Polish government in-exile that was comprised of Polish communists who would do his bidding. Secondly, at both the Tehran and Yalta conferences, he wore down Churchill and Roosevelt to cede Polish territory. Finally, Stalin agreed that once the war ended, he would support a unity government formed from a national election. The only promise Stalin kept was dismembering Polish territory. His commitments to free elections were illusory, and he broke every agreement that would give Poles a chance for liberty.

Stalin’s conniving was breath-taking in its deception and brutality. He had his puppet “unity government” call a meeting of influential Polish military, political, and intellectual leaders only to have them all arrested and jailed. Stalin rigged the elections so that only his loyal communists won.

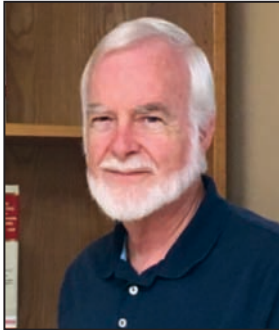
This created two governments. The London government was recognized by most countries, except Russia. The communist government was recognized by Russia alone. So, 80 years ago, when the war in Europe ended and delegates met to consider the UN Charter, no one could agree on the proper Polish delegation.

In reality, no one wanted to challenge Stalin and upset the fragile peace and future stability of the world. Even though there was an empty seat for Poland in recognition of its sacrifice during the WWII, Poland had no delegates to discuss the end of a conflict started in its backyard.

As the delegates assembled in San Francisco for their opening conclave, the Polish pianist, Arthur Rubinstein, played a concert for the delegates. His subtle protest still resonates: **“In this hall, where the great nations gather to make a better world, I miss the flag of Poland for which this cruel war was fought. I shall play my national anthem—please stand!”** As unauthorized as it was poignant, he played the Polish national anthem.

For the Poles, the end of the war in Europe meant little. It would take almost 45 years for the final objective of World War II to be accomplished — self-determination for Poland. No explanation is needed to explain why Poland’s military budget is the third largest in NATO.

Will Sellers is a graduate of Hillsdale College and was appointed by Gov. Kay Ivey as an Associate Justice on the Supreme Court of Alabama. He is best reached at jws@willsellers.com.



John Taylor

remain in the Union or leave it. Although commonly accepted in both North and South in the early days of the Republic, this view is foreign to many modern Americans. To amplify the present situation, fellow *Alabama Gazette* columnist John Sophocleus has stated that individuals have told him with a straight face the federal government created the States. How did the agent created by the States miraculously turn the tables and create the States? Is George Orwell in the room? How do you converse with anyone with such an ahistorical belief?

A learned man steeped in the agrarian tradition, Davis stated his view of the voluntary nature of the Union in his January 21, 1861, Farewell Address to the U.S. Senate: **“It is known to Senators who have served with me here, that I have for many years advocated, as an essential attribute of State sovereignty, the right of a State to secede from the Union.”** Davis understood nullification is a tactic to remain in the Union. Relative to secession, he explained: **“Secession belongs to a different class of remedies. It is to be justified upon the basis that the States are sovereign. There was a time when none denied it. I hope the time may come again, when a better comprehension of the theory of our Government, and the inalienable rights of the people of the States, will prevent any one from denying that each State is a sovereign, and thus may reclaim the grants which it has made to any agent whomsoever.”**

Davis went on to say: **“Then, Senators, we recur to the compact which binds us together; we recur to the principles upon which our Government was founded; and when you deny them, and when you deny to us the right to withdraw from a Government which thus perverted threatens to be destructive of our rights, we but tread in the path of our fathers when we proclaim our independence, and take the hazard. This is done not in hostility to others, not to injure any section of the country, not even for our own pecuniary benefit; but from the high and solemn motive of defending and protecting the rights we inherited, and which it is our sacred duty to transmit unshorn to our children.”**

Irish-born Confederate General Patrick Ronayne Cleburne knew, if independence failed, it was only a matter of time before the South would be demonized by the victors. Cleburne stated: **“Surrender means that the history of this heroic struggle will be written by the enemy; that our youth will be trained by Northern school teachers; will learn from Northern school books their version of the War; will be impressed by all the influences of history and education to regard our gallant dead as traitors, and our maimed veterans as fit subjects for derision.”** Cleburne recognized the North’s immediate goal in denying the South’s right to self-government, stating: **“It is merely the pretense to establish sectional superiority and a more centralized form of government, and to deprive us of**

The Original Republic: Gone With The Wind

June 3rd marks the birthday of Jefferson Finis Davis, the only President of the Confederate States of America. *Righteous Cause* propagandists demonize Davis and others who understand the U.S. Constitution to be a compact between the ratifying States, meaning it is up to the citizens of the respective States to

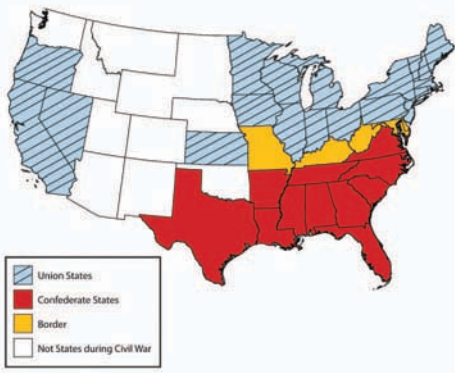


Jefferson Finis Davis

our rights and liberties.” [Survival of the Republican Party was one of Lincoln’s primary goals.]

Although Lincoln’s “cause” was keeping the geographical union together he expressed his immediate concern -- the *only* reason he would go to war -- in his First Inaugural Address (March 4, 1861). This sentiment was echoed in the Blockade Proclamation (April 19, 1861), and in three separate interviews (April 4, 1861, April 12-13, 1861, and April 22, 1861) with Southerners trying to talk him out of war. That reason was to regain the forts to “collect duties and imposts” (import tariffs). Had the South agreed to pay these exorbitant taxes, could war have been avoided?

When the Southern States were coerced back into the Union, the Original Voluntary Federal Republic was “Gone With The Wind” – this is perhaps Abraham Lincoln’s greatest legacy. Raphael Semmes and many other Confederates understood the ultimate goal was empire. In the 1866 correspondence between Robert E. Lee and Lord Acton, both men lamented the denial of Southern Independence. Lee predicted **“the consolidation of the states into one vast republic, sure to be aggressive abroad and despotic at home”** would lead to ruin like previous empires. Acton saw **“in State Rights the only availing check upon the sovereign will...and secession, not as the destruction but as the redemption of Democracy.”**



Voltaire noted: **“History is the propaganda of the victorious.”** The War to Prevent Southern Independence is a classic example.

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Col John Eidsmoe

MOZART CONFRONTS THE MODERN WORLD

Sometimes it takes a good requiem to bring us back to reality – the harsh reality that we all must face death, but the comforting reality that death is not the end for those who trust in Christ.

On May 4 of this year, I sang with the Montgomery Chorale as we performed Mozart’s Requiem. Often part of the High Mass in Roman Catholic churches, a requiem is a solemn commemoration of the deceased person, imploring God’s mercy based upon the person’s faith in Christ, and giving the bereaved a space for grief, remembrance, and comfort. Over the years, at least 2,000 requiems have been composed, some by great composers such as Johannes Brahms, Giuseppe Verdi, Gabriel Faure, Hector Berlioz, and of course, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

Each requiem is different. From the gentle comforting tone of Brahms to the grandeur of Verdi and the restfulness of Faure, we come to Mozart and are struck with his drama and intensity, contrasting with moments of solemnity and beauty.

Three years ago, the Chorale performed Brahms’ German Requiem. For weeks afterward, his figures reverberated through my mind, and I found myself thinking I would never again experience this beauty in music this side of heaven. Mozart’s Requiem in Latin left me with a different feeling: I was impressed, not so much by its beauty (although it was indeed beautiful), but by the thought that Mozart had led me through the grieving process of those who are dying and their loved ones: shock, disbelief, horror, anger, pain, resignation and finally hope.

That may seem surprising, because for many of us, the 1984 movie *Amadeus* portrayed Mozart as an irreverent, impertinent, young smart aleck. While not totally false, that portrayal is misleading. Mozart (1756-1791) was something of a freethinker, but he was a practicing Roman Catholic throughout his life, and so far as I can tell, nothing he ever said or wrote contradicted any fundamental doctrine of the Church. Especially in his last years, as his health worsened, he became more serious about the redemption God calls us to through death.

Which brings us to his *Requiem*. In July 1791, an unknown messenger appeared at Mozart’s door with a request that he compose a requiem for an anonymous patron (yes, Amadeus got that basically right). Mozart worked obsessively on the Requiem, and as his health declined he may have become increasingly convinced that he was really writing it for his own funeral. He died December 5, 1791, with the composition incomplete, and his student Franz Xaver Sussmayr completed it early in 1792.

But the *Requiem* speaks for itself as it leads us through death and the grieving process. The first movement, Requiem, begins with *Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis* (Grant them eternal rest, Lord, and let perpetual light shine on them. It closes with the traditional *Kyrie eleison* (Lord, have mercy on us.).

As Movement I is stately and reverent, Movement II, Dies Irae, is stirring and intense, warning of the *Dies iae, dies illa* (Day of wrath, day of anger, that will dissolve the world in ashes) when judex est venturus (the Judge descends from heaven).

And Movement III Tuba Mirum continues that theme, announcing that *Tuba mirum spargens sonum* (The trumpet will send its wondrous sound throughout earth’s sepulchers and gather all before the throne.) And then, *Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?* (What shall a wretch like me say? Who shall intercede for me, when the just ones need mercy?)

This eternal rest and perpetual light, Mozart says, is not promised to all, because there will be judgment, and all of us as sinners need mercy. And so, he pleads in Movement IV Rex tremendae, *Rex tremendae majistatis, qui salvandos savas gratis, salve me, fons pietatis* (King of tremendous majesty, who freely saves those worthy ones, save me, source of mercy.)

Now comes the high point, as I see it. Movement V, Recordare, gives us the basis for our salvation. *Recordare* (Remember), *Jesu pie, quot sum cusa tuae viae; ne me perdas illa die* (kind Jesus, my salvation caused your suffering; do not forsake me on that day.) *Quaerens me, sedisti lassus, redemisti crucem passus; tantus labor non sit cassus* (Faint and weary you have sought me, redeemed me, suffering on the cross; may such great effort not be in vain. There is the basis for our salvation, there is the basis for our hope: although we are lost sinners unable to save ourselves, thoroughly deserving of eternal death, Christ died on the cross in our place. Therefore, *Preces meae non sunt dignae, sed tu, bonus, fac benigne, ne perennie cremer igne* (My prayers are unworthy, but, good Lord, have mercy, and rescue me from eternal fire).

Movement 6 is forceful! Following Recordare which recounts Christ’s atoning death for the sins of the world, Confutatis asks Christ to remember us in the day of judgment: *Confutatis maledictis, flammis acribus addictis, voca me cum benedictus* (When the accused are confounded, and doomed to flames of woe, call me among the blessed).

The message continues, but the mood shifts. in Movement VII Lacrimosa, a favorite of many because of its calm rhythm and deep feeling, Mozart prays that in the day of weeping God will be merciful to us: *Lacrimosa dies illa, qua resurget ex favilla judicandus hoo reus.* (That day of tears and mourning, when from the ashes shall arise, all humanity to be judged.) In that day, Mozart pleads, *Huic ergo parce, Deus, pie Jesu Domine, dona eis requiem. Amen.* (Spare us by your mercy, Lord, gentle Lord Jesus, grant them eternal rest. Amen.)

Domine Jesu is the theme of Movement VIII. It calls upon *Domine Jesu* (Lord Jesus) to *libera animas omnium fidelium defunctorum de poenis inferni et de profundo lacu* (liberate the souls of the faithful, departed from the pains of hell and from the bottomless pit.)

That theme continues in Movement IX, Hostias, in which Mozart calls upon the Lord to receive the souls we commemorate in this requiem, and *Fac eas, Domine, de morete transire ad vitam, Quam olim Abrahae proisisti et semini ejus* (And let them, Lord, pass from death to life, which was promised to Abraham and his descendants.) Some understand this as questioning why God has not (apparently) kept the promise He made to Abraham and his descendants in the Abrahamic Covenant (You promised!). Others, including me, see it as a calm assurance that God will keep His promise, because He is a faithful God.

The last three movements are beautiful and powerful. Movement X, Sanctus, is solemn, then exuberant praise to God: *Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth!* (Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Hosts!).

Movement XI Benedictus continues the praise of God: *Benedictus, qui venit in nomine Domini. Osanna in excelsis.* (Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest).

And as we come to Movement XII Agnus Dei, the storm of God’s judgment and condemnation is past, and we return to the more tranquil themes of Movement I: *Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona eis requiem.* (Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant them eternal rest.) And finally, *Requiem aeternum dona eis, Domine, et Lux perpetua luceat eis, cum Sanctus tuis in aeternum, quia pius es* (Grant them eternal rest, Lord, and let perpetual light shine on them, as with Your saints in eternity, because you are merciful.)

God gave Mozart a rare gift of music; he composed his first music at age four. Whatever his failings, God used this flawed person to produce one of the most Christ-honoring requiems of all time. By listening to it (and I left so much out as I summarized it), one can understand and appreciate God’s plan for redemption, and it can help us work through the process of grief. Many performances are available on youtube, for example, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dp2SJN4UiE4> And if you’d like to sing with the Montgomery Chorale, check us out at <https://www.montgomerychorale.org/> My thanks to my wife Marlene, musician MaryHuffman, and attorney and fellow Chorale singer Chris Sasser for their helpful contributions to this article.

As I reflect upon the great composers of that era – Catholics like Mozart and Haydn, Lutherans like Bach and Handel – I think of that complex issue, Christianity and culture. As Christians we want to influence our culture, and that’s a good thing. But men like Bach and Mozart did not influence the culture; they were the culture. They didn’t imitate the culture; they set the standard, and the culture imitated them.

If we want to set the standard for our culture, what do we need?

Let’s start with the fear of God, mix in a thorough Biblical worldview, and add a dose of excellence.

Colonel Eidsmoe serves as Professor of Constitutional Law for the Oak Brook College of Law & Government Policy (obcl.edu), Senior Counsel for the Foundation for Moral Law (morallaw.org), and pastor of Woodland Presbyterian Church of Notasulga, AL (woodlandpca.org). He may be contacted for speaking engagements at eidsmoeja@juno.com.

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John Sophocleus

Souter’s Just Desserts?

A hotel could’ve been built on Supreme Court Justice David H. Souter’s farm in Weare, NH upon a developer’s request to acquire it via ‘*eminent domain*’ - yet another term (e.g., democracy, 435, etc.) **not** in the US Constitution. The “Kelo vs. City of New London” decision supported by Justice Souter proffered this travesty. A private developer evoked Kelo (contrary to the letter and Spirit of our 5th Amendment Civil Right to limit government takings) to build a hotel on Souter’s land. It was the first widespread (just or unjust?)

retaliation against one of the more soviet-style, authoritarian Justices I could recall in my lifetime. Little wonder why judges are increasingly more fearful of retaliation as their cancerous [dare I type ‘living document’ babble] decisions metastasize into more virulent results.

Appointed by Comrade George H. W. Bush in 1990, Justice Souter’s marginal vote enabled government takings from one private owner, redistributing their property to another **private** entity/owner. In the Kelo case, all a government(s) has to assert is the taking will generate greater tax revenue/economic benefits. Of course, contrary to our 5th Amendment Civil Right, tax revenue is NOT a stated **purpose**. Revenue for what... more subsidized big pharmaceutical parasites like Pfizer? Little wonder Comrade Trump adored accomplished parasites like Dr. Pfizer - I mean, Fauci and Dr. Gottlieb in the **FDA** revolving door.

In response to this pro-soviet ruling, Logan Clements requested the Weare code enforcement officer begin the application process to build a hotel on 34 Cilley Hill Road where Souter’s home was located. Clements, CEO of Freestar Media, LLC asserted the City of Weare will certainly gain greater tax revenue/economic benefit with a hotel on 34 Cilley Hill than allowing Mr. Souter to continue owning his land. The proposed development, dubbed “The Lost Liberty Hotel” would feature the “Just Desserts Cafe” and include a public museum featuring a permanent exhibit on our loss of freedom. Clements further asserted the hotel must be built on this particular piece of land because it is a unique site being the home of someone largely responsible for destroying US property rights.

Clements made clear his effort was not a prank. If the Towne of Weare voted to (mis)use the power of eminent domain to take Souter’s farm he planned to begin Lost Liberty Hotel development with capital from wealthy pro-liberty investors and architects. Clements hoped regular hotel customers be IJ [Institute for Justice] supporters and other libertarian, small government enthusiasts who champion the Constitution. Sadly, the **IJ** didn’t argue the case correctly - **i.e.**, the stated ‘public purpose’ must be met or possession returns to the owner. It was clear this taking for Pfizer did **NOT** raise revenue. A case in Alabama to stop this sort of misuse of eminent domain was blocked for over a decade by soviet jurists like Anderson, Dubina, Thompson, **et al** along with politburo members like Lowell Barron, Jimmy Butts, Ted Little, Bob Riley, Jeff Sessions, Don Siegleman, Richard Shelby, Terri Sewell, **et al** public servants who’ve shown such great disregard for our civil rights.

Defeated by voters 3 to 1, Justice Souter’s property was not condemned/confiscated displaying voters (when allowed) can be more educated and righteous than

crony, parasitic developers and highly degreed/under educated soviet justices installed by our duopoly parties. A 2019 column explaining corrupt politburo members who seem to enjoy taking ‘other peoples’ property’ (from Butts to Sewell) can be found at: <https://www.alabamagazette.com/story/2019/11/01/opinion/a-cow-ard-dies-a-thousand-deaths-i-wish-it-were-so-few/1770.html>.

Hard to name a bigger champion of Kelo style eminent domain abuse than big government democrat (yes, I know he’s currently ‘donning’ the Red soviet jersey) than DJT. Not to say one can’t observe similar parasites from their county probate judge, corrupt developers on their city council and county commission to Montgomery all the way up to Moscow on the Potomac. In this arena, Trump has proven his ‘*lawfare*’ skills. Can’t imagine anyone denying Comrade Trump’s effectiveness as a parasite - esp. after closing his first 100 days ‘productivity’ on par with FDR. This does **not** make Trump a world class businessman. It does explain ‘parasite envy’ of Musk, **et al** types... hard to come up with a more prolific eminent domain abuser across the States than Wal-Mart.

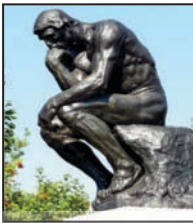
Souter died at 85. He left SCotUS when 69 to be replaced by another over degreed/under educated soviet jurist, Sotomayor who’s shown no problem trampling upon our civil rights. Souter has shown his flawed ‘*living document*’ babble in contrast to Scalia’s ‘*originalist intent*’ on other decisions, most notable Planned Parenthood and Bush v. Gore highlighting Souter’s poor understanding of the design, letter and Spirit of our Constitution. Of course this was another time Comrade Trump (when in the Clinton Kabuki Theatre troupe) displayed his over-degreed/under educated understanding of the Constitution shoulder to shoulder with Hillary calling for abolishing the Electoral College instead of restoring a representative House.

As for just desserts, I’m reminded of **Psalm 109:8**’s plea for God’s justice, “**Let his days be few; and let another take his office,**” referenced in **Acts 1:20** by Peter to replace the corrupt apostle Judas. A jurist like Souter who enabled the corrupt to skim from the people must face the Ultimate Justice as did Judas for his corruption described in **John 12:6**. Indeed reassuring all must go through Jesus in their final judgment before God - a task I wouldn’t want put upon any person of this world.

In closing, I also remember (however poorly I may translate his Greek) my paternal grandfather and my namesake saying, “I know vengeance is His and I pray He doesn’t mind my cheering while He’s taking it!” Souter’s personal papers will be made public 50 years after his death... perhaps they will justify his decisions.

Postscript: typing on another Memorial Day weekend, I’d like to applaud the Auburn University event on Cater Lawn (I taught many years for the Honours College) in remembrance of the 50th Anniversary of ending US military deployment in the Vietnam conflict. Two native sons of East Alabama from my church were honoured with a picture and short narrative on the walkway at Cater Hall; Sgt. James Hughley: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jVO6b_Cl2l4 and Staff Sgt. Wilbert D. Payne, Jr. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f_-fyfvL5Lo. These link to their oral history and are indeed worthy of remembrance along with 1,208 flags for the Alabamians who sacrificed their lives in Vietnam... I pray we may one day live up to such sacrifice. Perhaps after 80 years, a good start would be for Congress to do their job and declare war with a defined goal before yet another long-term deployment/military conflict. I’m haunted by Congressman Ron Paul’s observation, “**Once we stopped declaring ‘em; we stopped winning ‘em...**”

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



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Alexander Palomaria



Major
Thomas Leon Harrell



Dr. Martha P. Simmons



Senior Master Sergeant
Sharon Kay Walters



Master Sergeant
Borris Tucker



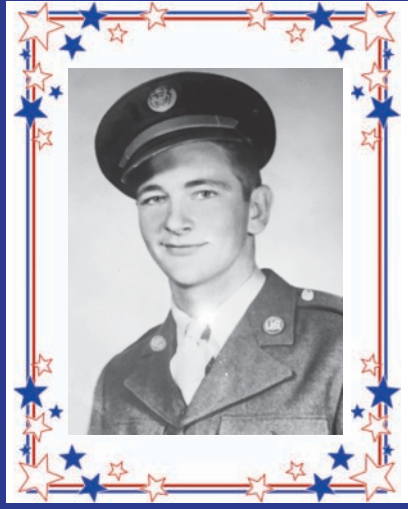
Major General
James everett Livingston

VETERAN NEWS

God
Bless
the
USA!

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

Special Veterans Celebrating Centenarian Birthdays



Brigadier General Marvin Kent Speigner
Served 35 years in the U.S. Army including service in the
Pacific Theater during WWII.
He will celebrate his **102nd** birthday June 10, 2025.
His article was published in the April 2020 issue of the AL Gazette.



Sergeant First Class James Owen Dozier
Served four years in the U.S. Army and four years in
the U.S. Army Reserve including combat during
the liberation of Europe during WWII.
He will celebrate his **100th** birthday on June 2, 2025.
His article was published in the July 2022 issue of the AL Gazette.



When Duty Calls: Art Exhibition



A visual art exhibition celebrating National Armed Forces Day was held at Montgomery's Court Square Performance Park on Saturday, May 17th. Anthony Thomas, an artist who is the founder and operator of Urban Dream Fine Arts Center at 3680 S. Court Street, Montgomery, AL 36105, set up the exhibition. Art was exhibited by the artists, Anthony Thomas, Aneshia Turner, Michael Reilly and Shawanda C. STAR Peaces. Thomas states, "The military community is a major component to Montgomery's social structure. As a citizen and a member of the local fine arts community and as a businessman, my goal is to simply make a kind gesture to express the phrase, 'Thank you.'"

The National Armed Forces Day was established in 1949, and yet today few people celebrate this day. Many recognize Veterans Day and Memorial Day for the heroes of America's armed forces, but what about the ones who currently serve, the ones that answer when duty calls everyday? Hopefully, more people will celebrate this day in the future.

The artist, Anthony, has been interested in art since the age of five. He states, "Dreams come true when one puts forth the effort to follow one's heart." Since 2018, he has led operations at Urban Dream

Fine Arts Center featuring the art of local artists in a deprived neighborhood. It is a place that recognizes, embraces and cultivates fine art (visual, musical, performance, digital and culinary). One of the higher prioritized goals of the Arts Center is to seamlessly provide efficient and affordable studio space, some marketing services and access to a one of kind event space, and this is what sets the operation apart. The Center's commitment to providing access to urban fine art is what truly makes the operation unique. During each week, Monday through Friday, 9:00-5:00, there is an opportunity for artists to display, promote their work and often sell them to the public. On Mondays, there are art talks. On Tuesdays, artists can create art with supplies provided by a small fee of \$15.00, and on Wednesdays there is a free youth art class.



FELLOW ARTISTS: (left to right) Kevin King, Michael Reilly, Anthony Thomas, Shawanda C. STAR Peaces, Robert Turner with PEERS and DeVantee Snell

VETERANS
JUNE BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| James Dozier..... | June 2nd |
| Julie M. Harris..... | June 3rd |
| Jeffrey Mathews..... | June 3rd |
| Pete "Jiggs" Bowdoin..... | June 7th |
| Travis Parker..... | June 8th |
| Maxine Mullins..... | June 10th |
| Doris Cobb Norris..... | June 10th |
| Marvin Kent Speigner..... | June 10th |
| Lamont D. Pack..... | June 16th |
| Seth Edward Maggard..... | June 18th |
| Stefan Eisen..... | June 19th |
| Ronald Urquhart..... | June 23rd |
| Willam E. DePoorter..... | June 24th |
| John M. Vickery..... | June 24th |
| James L. Berdeaux..... | June 26th |
| John William Schmidt..... | June 26th |
| Edwin Lloyd Faulkner..... | June 29th |
| William Josephy Heath..... | June 30th |

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Gunnery Sergeant Michael Martin Vicente: Age 48



Gunnery Sergeant (GySgt) Michael Martin Vicente served 20 years in the U.S. Marine Corps. His Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) was Helicopter Crew Chief. He received the following medals, decorations, ribbons and citations: Air Medal-Strike/Flight (7), Joint Service Achievement Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (3), Presidential Unit Citation-Navy, Navy Unit Commendation, Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation, Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal (6), National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal (With 2 stars), Iraq Campaign Medal (With 1 star), Global War On Terrorism Expeditionary Medal (Operation Iraqi Freedom), Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Sea Service Deployment Ribbon (3), Marine Corps Drill Instructor Ribbon, NATO Medal-ISAF Afghanistan, Certificate of Commendation (Unit Award), Certificate of Commendation (Individual Award), Letter of Appreciation (9), Expert Rifle Qualification Badge (2), Sharpshooter Pistol Qualification Badge, and Naval Aircrew Insignia.

GySgt Vicente was born October 17, 1976 to his parents, Michael and Elizabeth Vicente in Tampa, FL. He was reared in Tampa and in Orlando, FL, and he graduated from Oakridge High School in Orlando in 1995. He then attended a tech school for nine months to become an electrician. He enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps on December 29, 1996.

GySgt Vicente's service as a Marine began with his completion of Marine Boot Camp at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot at Parris Island, South Carolina. Because of his high test scores and his physical fitness, he was selected to train as a helicopter crew chief. He trained to become a helicopter crew chief at the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, FL, where he attended the Naval Air Crew Candidate School and learned survival swimming and at the Marine Air Station New River, North Carolina, where he learned the mechanics of flying a helicopter.

After his training was completed, GySgt Vicente's first duty station was at Marine Corps Base Quantico, VA, with the Presidential Helicopter Squadron where he flew and did maintenance on the helicopters used by the Secret Service and staff for one year. This assignment was followed by serving at the Marine Aircraft Support Detachment (MASD) at the Naval Air Facility (NAF) at Washington, D.C. with operational support flying members of Congress and generals in the U.S. Military for three years. Next, he served as a drill instructor

at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot at Parris Island, S.C., for three years during 2003-2006. He was a leader and believes in leading by example.

GySgt Vicente then was sent to serve four years at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot at Parris Island, N.C. working with Heavy Marine Helicopter Squadron (HMH. 464), and while there during 2006-2010, he had three deployments on board the USS Iwo Jima to Djibouti at the Horn of Africa in 2007, to Al Asad, Iraq, during Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2008-2009 and to Afghanistan in 2010 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom serving in a leadership role where he flew helicopters and was in charge of other Marines. These assignments were followed by serving at the Helicopter Mechanics School House at New River Marine Air Station, North Carolina, at the Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training (CNATT) where he was the chief instructor for helicopter mechanics for 3.5 years. GySgt Vicente's last assignment was as an instructor with the Naval R.O.T.C. at Jacksonville University, FL, for four years. He retired there from military service February 1, 2017. His military career included serving as a drill instructor, a water safety instructor, a martial arts instructor, a (6012) What is this?, a helicopter crew chief and a helicopter mechanic. During his service as a Marine, he chose assignments as a drill instructor, a helicopter mechanic instructor and as a R.O.T.C. instructor because he loves to teach.

GySgt Vicente and his wife, Kimberly, have been married 10 years, and they have five children and one grandchild. After discharge from the Marines, using the G.I. Bill, he received a B.A. Degree in Psychology from the University of North Florida in 2019 and a post bachelorette certificate in instructional design from Jacksonville University. He worked for six months in a foster home with at risk youth in Orlando, FL. Since June 2024, he has served as the Dean of Students at the Ivy Classical Academy at Prattville, AL. He has served as a volunteer for 10 years in a non-profit youth leadership organization, Young Marines. In his leisure time, he enjoys exercise, reading and travel.

GySgt Vicente's conclusions about what serving in the U.S. Marine Corps means to him are: ***"It taught me to live an intentional honorable life, to have a positive impact to those around me and to live a good life. I would not be the man that I am today if it were not for the Marine Corps."*** He would like people to remember him as always being a teacher and a leader who cared about the people around him.



Col Olen "Francis" Scott Key: Age 71



Col Olen "Francis" Scott Key served 30 years in the U.S. Air Force. His Air Force Service Code (AFSC) was Pilot, and he retired as a Command Pilot with over 4,000 hours in the T-37, T-38, C-141, KC-135 and T-1. His service medals and citations include the Legion of Merit, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with six Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Medal, Aerial Achievement Medal and numerous campaign medals.

Col Key was born May 29, 1954 to Bill and Billie Key, in Memphis, TN, and he was reared there. His father served in the U.S. Navy during WWII. His wife's father served in the Pacific Theater under General McArthur. His wife's mother served as a Navy nurse at San Diego where wounded military were brought during WWII. He graduated from Wooddale High School in May 1972, and while a student at Wooddale High School, he served as the Student Council President, Brigade Commander of the Army JROTC and was selected as "Mr. Wooddale Most Likely to Succeed" in 1972.

He earned a four-year Air Force ROTC scholarship attending Memphis State University. He married his high school sweetheart, Jean Ellen McCarley, in 1973 after their freshman year in college. In May 1976, he graduated with a Bachelor of Business Administration. While at college, he served as the Wing Commander of Detachment 785 AFROTC Flying Tigers.

Due to the number of pilots returning from duty in the Vietnam War drawdown, he was involved in a Delayed Accession Program for eight months. His active-duty military service in the U.S. Air Force began in March 1977 with Undergraduate Pilot Training flying the T-37 and the T-38 at Vance Air Force Base at Enid, OK. Following UPT graduation in March 1978, he remained at Vance AFB for four years to serve as an instructor teaching the fundamentals of jet aircraft operation, instruments procedures, formation and night procedures in the T-37. In 1982, he was assigned to Charleston AFB, SC, and he trained at Altus AFB, OK, to fly the C-141 cargo aircraft. After training, he served for two years at Charleston AFB, S.C., where he flew the C-141 on international flights to Africa, South America and Europe. While at Charleston, he flew to Granada during Operation Urgent Fury in 1983 taking equipment and members of the U.S. Army 82d Airborne.

Col Key then served at the Pentagon for one year with the Air Staff Training Program in the Air Force budget office. Next, he served at the Headquarters Military Airlift Command at Scott AFB, IL, as the Legislative Affairs Officer for HQ MAC and the U.S. Transportation Command making frequent trips to the U.S. Capitol in support of congressional visits and testimony by the Commander, General Duane Cassidy. While at Scott AFB, he received a

Master's Degree in Human Resources Development from Webster University, and he was promoted to Major. In 1989, he attended the Air Command and Staff College at Maxwell AFB, AL.

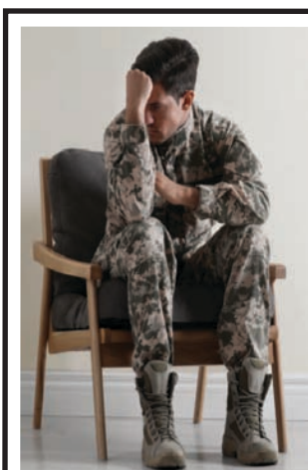
Col Key returned to flying the C-141 at Charleston AFB, S.C., in 1990 where he was an instructor pilot, served as 17th Airlift Squadron Chief Pilot, and the 20th Airlift Squadron Operations Officer. During this tour in the C-141, Colonel Key participated in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Next, he served two years as the Commander, 310th Air Refueling Squadron, Plattsburg AFB, NY, flying the KC-135 whose primary duty was refueling and airlift. He ended his tour there as the Wing Transition Officer responsible for overseeing the closure of Plattsburg AFB due to a Base Closure decision. He then attended the U.S. Naval War College, Newport RI, and received a Master's Degree in National Security and Strategic Studies. He remained there for 2.5 years as an instructor in the Rational Decision Making Department.

Col Key then served at Columbus AFB, MS, for two years as the 14th Operations Group Commander overseeing all flight operations for five squadrons responsible for undergraduate flight training. Next, he served 1.5 years at Randolph AFB, TX, at the Headquarters, Air Education and Training Command as the Deputy Inspector General. His last assignment was a return to Maxwell AFB, AL, where he taught at the Air War College in the War Fighting Department running the war games. During this tour, he deployed to Ali Al Saleem Air Base in Kuwait for 90 days as the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing Vice Commander. Col Key retired at Maxwell AFB March, 2007.

Since his military retirement, Col Key has worked as a financial advisor with New York Life Insurance Company dealing with life insurance, long-term care and retirement planning. He worked as an agent until 2016, and then he became a Development Manager training other agents. In 2021, he returned to the field as an agent in the New York Life Office in Montgomery, AL.

Col Key and his wife, Jean Ellen, have been married 51 years, and they have two children and two grandchildren. In Montgomery, AL, they are members of Wesley Church, a Global Methodist Church. He is currently serving as the President of the Air & Space Forces Association and is a member of the City of Montgomery Veterans and Military Coalition. He enjoys playing with his grandchildren and doing yard work.

Col Key's conclusions about what serving in the U.S. Air Force has meant to him are: ***"It was a chance to make a difference in people's lives."*** He would like people to remember him as a giver and a good friend.



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Chief Master Sergeant Lanny Donald McAndrew: Age: 82



Chief Master Sergeant (CMSGT) Lanny Donald McAndrew served 27.5 years in the U.S. Air Force. His Air Force Service Code (AFSC) included Personnel Technician, Personnel Superintendent, First Sergeant and Senior Enlisted Advisor. He received the following decorations, medals, badges, and campaign ribbons: Meritorious Service Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Force Achievement Medal, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with one Oak Leaf Cluster, Air Force Good Conduct Medal with seven Oak Leaf Clusters, National Defense Service Medal, Air Force Overseas Short Tour

Ribbon with one Oak Leaf Cluster, Air Force Overseas Long Tour with two Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Force Longevity Service Award Ribbon with five Oak Leaf Clusters, NCO Professional Military Education Graduate Ribbon with one Oak Leaf Cluster, Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon and Air Force Training Ribbon.

CMSGT McAndrew was born January 25, 1943 to his parents, William and Hilda McAndrew in Charlotte, North Carolina. His father served in the Army in Europe during WWII. He and his family lived in a rural area about 15 miles south of Charlotte while his grandparents lived nearby on a separate farm. Although they had their own home on a different property, he spent much of his youth working on his grandparents' farm.

Beyond farm work, he held numerous jobs as a young boy. He cleaned and ran errands at a local movie theater, assisted the projectionist, and worked at a service station washing cars, changing oil, and pumping gas. One of his toughest jobs was at a sawmill where he helped cut down trees, trim branches and load logs onto trucks for transport and processing into lumber. He also worked on a milk truck delivering dairy products, stocked shelves at a grocery store and delivered newspapers. Starting at age 16, he even drove a school bus.

He graduated from Holbrook High School at Lowell, N.C. in June 1961. He also holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Professional Aeronautics from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University. After graduating from high school, CMSGT McAndrew enlisted in the U.S. Air Force at Gastonia, N.C. His military career began when he completed nine weeks of Basic Training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, TX. This was followed by service in personnel positions at eight other Air Force duty stations. After Basic Training, he completed On Job Training in personnel work at Amarillo Air Force Base, TX, remaining there to serve four years. After completing four years of service in the Air Force, he briefly returned to civilian life, but he reenlisted in the Air Force. He then served with the 22th Bomb Wing at March Air Force Base, CA, for one year. Next, he served at Wheeler Air Force Base, Hawaii, on an accompanied tour for his wife and son for three years. Next, he served 18 months at Headquarters Air Force Military Personnel, AFMPC, Randolph Air Force Base, TX, where he worked as a manning Technician for helicopters and C-130 aircraft filling the requirements of units around the world. He then served in personnel with the R.O.T.C. at the University of North Carolina for 1.5 years. In 1972, he was transferred to the Allied Forces Central Europe Headquarters or AFCENT at Brunssum, Netherlands, with a joint national force of six nations. This accompanied tour was for three years. In August 1975, he was transferred to another joint service operation in Saudi Arabia with the US Military training Mission, USMTM on an unaccompanied tour for one year. Returning to the U.S.A., he then served at Pope Air Force Base, N.C., for two years followed by service at Lowry Air Force Base, CO. This was his first assignment as a First Sergeant, and he remained in that job title for the next nine years.

As a First Sergeant, he worked with personnel in a school squadron training a student population of 500-750 students in bomb and missile Tech Schools.

During the next three years at Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii, he continued serving as a First Sergeant, dedicating much of his time to operations on the flight line and traveling throughout the Pacific theater. His responsibilities took him far beyond U.S. territory, working alongside unit personnel stationed across the region with deployments to Australia and New Zealand. Additionally, he participated in resupply missions to Antarctica ensuring critical provisions were delivered and transporting personnel to support operations there. He recalled that landing on the ice runway was quite a thrill, an experience unlike no other. "He remarked, 'You can see endlessly, yet all you see is white.'"

Further showcasing his commitment to military readiness, he was deployed for two weeks to South Korea for "Team Spirit," a joint military training exercise between U.S. and South Korean forces. This multinational operation strengthened cooperation and preparedness reinforcing the bond between allied forces in the region.

Continuing his duty as First Sergeant, his next assignment was at Gunter Air Base, AL, for 1.5 years. He was then selected as the Senior Enlisted Advisor at Florennes Air Base, Belgium, a Ground Launched Cruise Missile (GLCM) installation. This base housed nuclear weapons prepared for strategic operations. Established during President Reagan's administration, the GLCM units were intended to prompt diplomatic negotiations with Russia by reinforcing NATO's defense posture. Serving at Florennes was an immense responsibility as the mission required precision, vigilance, and unwavering dedication. He had the privilege of working alongside an exceptional group of personnel whose commitment to safeguarding and executing such a critical mission was truly inspiring.

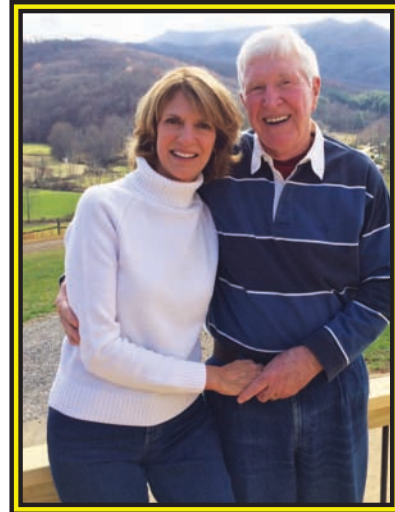
His last assignment was at Maxwell Air Force Base, AL, with the Communications Squadron where he retired December 31, 1988.

After retiring from the military, he pursued a second career as a pilot. While serving in the Air Force, he had privately funded his civilian pilot training. After earning his commercial pilot rating, he focused on building flight hours aiming to qualify for an airline position. He began flying charters transporting people for 1.5 years. In 1990, he became employed by Continental Airlines based out of Houston Intercontinental Airport, TX, as a First Officer flying the Embraer EMB120 two-engine turboprop engine plane flying 30 passengers on commuter routes for three years. Then he worked at Flight Safety International at its training facility in Houston as an instructor. He trained many Chinese students for China Southwest Airlines with an interpreter on the Boeing 737 for 2.5 years. Next, he worked with Ryan International Airlines as Assistant Director of Flight Operations for two years in Wichita, KS. He returned to Line Flying as a First Officer and Captain on the B-737-400/500 aircraft for four years. Next, he was off to Turkey. During his time there on a foreign contract, he served as a Captain for Pegasus Airlines in Turkey, flying the Boeing 737-400 and transporting thousands of passengers seeking warm beach vacations from as far away as Tromsø, Norway.

While flying in Turkey, Delta Airlines reached out with an opportunity to work as a Non-Seniority List Instructor, NSLI for the Boeing 737, training line pilots on the aircraft for eight months. Unfortunately, a delay in Delta's aircraft deliveries led to the furlough of all NSLI instructors. Despite this setback, he was fortunate to find a new opportunity with Atlas Air which was transitioning from older Boeing 747 models to the newer glass cockpit B747-400. With extensive experience in this cockpit arrangement, he was offered a position as a First Officer flying factory-fresh B747-400 aircraft. This was the start of an exhilarating journey flying across the globe from the U.S. to London, Hong Kong, Santiago, Amsterdam, Seoul, Tokyo, and countless other international destinations. This was living the dream aboard one of the most advanced aircraft of its era.

In 1999, while temporarily based in London, he received a call from "NewAir," a budding airline seeking experienced pilots to captain its soon-to-arrive factory-new Airbus A320s. At the time, the company was still so new that it had yet to settle on the name JetBlue Airways or even to acquire its first aircraft. Taking a leap of faith, he left one of the greatest airplanes ever built to join the ambitious startup. Soon he embarked on a new chapter flying the Airbus A-320 for the newly branded JetBlue Airways, based in Manhattan, NY.

As part of JetBlue's first class of pilots, he trained in Miami preparing for the airline's official launch. He was selected to perform the FAA certification checks, a crucial step toward securing regulatory approval. The process included a simulator check ride and a two-hour oral exam conducted by FAA personnel. Both assessments were successfully completed paving the way for the airline to move forward toward operation. Upon completing training, he was offered the role of Chief Pilot. After much discussion and prayer with his wife, Laura, he accepted the position, becoming part of the launch team. Alongside the VP of Operations, he worked tirelessly to prepare essential documents, manuals and regulatory materials for submission to the FAA. Their efforts culminated in the approval of JetBlue's Air Carrier Certificate on February 3, 2000. JetBlue quickly became a pioneer in aviation, achieving several industry firsts including being the first airline approved for electronic flight bags and the first to introduce Live TV on board. He was honored to be part of this groundbreaking startup even flying all the FAA certification flights for Live TV, helping to shape the airline's future.

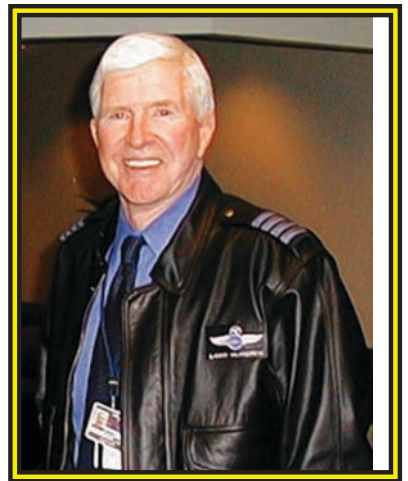


He retired from Jet Blue and all other airline companies flying his last commercial flight in 2008. He is the first enlisted military member who later became a chief pilot of a major airline. He states, "Transitioning from a military enlisted man to the Chief Pilot of a major airline was a dream that surpassed even my wildest imagination."

CMSGT McAndrew and his wife, Laura, have been married 35 years, and he has one child, two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Devoted members of Frazer Methodist Church in Montgomery, AL, they actively participate in Meals on Wheels serving their community with kindness.

CMSGT McAndrew also facilitates a men's Bible study, guiding others in faith and fellowship. Beyond their commitments, they share a passion for traveling the world often embarking on memorable cruises.

Reflecting on his military service, CMSGT McAndrew describes it as a lifelong calling: "It was something that I always wanted to do. I had a lot of respect for my dad, who served during WWII, and I wanted to follow in his footsteps. I loved my military time. I was surrounded by great people to work for and with." Above all, he hopes to be remembered as a solid Christian man who led a blessed life, guided by faith, service and gratitude. He has written his autobiography, "From Dreams to Wings" The Inspiring Journey From Imagination to Aviation which is published by Amazon.



Vietnam Veterans of American Central AL Chapter 607 Memorial Day Ceremony 2025

A Memorial Day Ceremony was held at Greenwood Cemetery in Montgomery on Memorial Day by members of the Vietnam Veterans of America Central Chapter 607 on May 26, 2025. Col John Eidsmoe served as Master of Ceremonies, and members of Chapter 607 posted the Colors, recognized 50 Vietnam veterans from central AL, presented the 13 Folds of Honor with the American flag, described the meaning of the Missing Man Table and three volleys of salute were fired. A new Vietnam War Monument bearing the names of 50 Vietnam War veterans from Montgomery County who lost their lives in Vietnam was dedicated.



Game Day for Heroes Mike McKeen Veterans Memorial Golf Tournament

The Game Day for Heroes Mike McKeen Veterans Memorial Golf Tournament was held May 26, 2025 at the Emerald Mountain Golf Club in Elmore County. Eighteen teams of four players each participated. Twenty-five volunteers were led by the organizer, Jay Bybee. Funds totaling \$8500.00 were raised to assist veterans as they transition into successful civilian lives and to assist Boy Scout No. 8 with its Eagle Scout project to buy a new trailer for Game Day for Veteran Heroes events. American Legion Post #2019 donated prizes, provided volunteers and fielded two golf teams.



Townsend Detachment #920 Marine Corps League Places American Flags on Graves of Marine Veterans



The United States flag is one of the most significant symbols of Memorial Day representing freedom, sacrifice and remembrance. Twenty-two members of the Townsend Detachment #920 Marine Corps League, family members and friends placed over 400 flags on the graves of Marine Corps veterans at the Heritage, Greenwood, Eastwood Memorial. Montgomery Memorial and Gilmer Cemeteries in Montgomery on May 24, 2025 honoring deceased Marines. In addition, on Memorial Day, May 26, 2025, flags were also placed on 200 graves in Prattville, Millbrook, Tallassee and Hope Hull by Marine Corps League members who live in those towns.



Remembering our Veterans who gave their all on Memorial Day

Central AL Veterans Health Care System’s Memorial Day Inter-Faith Service

Inter-Faith Memorial Day Service was held May 23, 2025 at the site of the Central AL Veterans Health Care ServIce (CAVHCS) in Montgomery. Fourteen veterans from the central AL area were memorialized. The following veterans’ names were called, and a member of each veterans’ family was presented with a certificate by Mr. Amir Farooqi, FACHE, CAVHCS Director: 1. Ronald Archie, Sr. 2. Jesse Barnes 3. Hanry Brooks, Jr. 4. Eric Patrick Bell 5. Edna R. Cureton 6. Romay Catherine Davis 7. Carl Williams Edwards 8. Horace Fanning, Sr. 9. Keeshawan Vernell Gavine 10. Glen Wilson Long 11. Ridhard Burton Myers 12. Julius Singleton 13. Marcus Latrell Webb and Walter Williams Jr.

Members of Chapter 607 Vietnam Veterans of America presented the colors. Testimonies were given by reading of the Holy Koran by Imam Mikal Sabree from the Muslim Center of Montgomery, Father Christoher Sialo from the Holy Spirit Catholic Parish and Rabbi Scott Looper from the Temple Beth Or Synagogue. Reflections were given by a deceased veteran’s family member, Shirley Barnes. Taps were played by the bugler, Babs Couch. The benediction was presented by CAVHCS Chaplain John Bailey.



COACH TOMMY TUBERVILLE U.S. SENATOR FOR ALABAMA



WASHINGTON – This week, U.S. Senator Tommy Tuberville (R-AL) honored two of Alabama’s fallen soldiers and their families in advance of Memorial Day. On the Senate floor, Senator Tuberville shared the stories of U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Michael Wesley Hosey of Clay and U.S. Marine Corps Lance Corporal Jason Barfield of Ashford.

Earlier this month, Senator Tuberville also introduced a resolution that would designate May 2025 as “Fallen Heroes Memorial Month.”

Excerpts from Senator Tuberville’s remarks can be found below and his full remarks can be found on Rumble or YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LxU1ro4wNMg>

MICHAEL WESLEY HOSEY

“For U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Michael Wesley Hosey, there was never a question in anyone’s mind as to what he wanted to do when he grew up. Every Career Day, he would always dress up as a soldier. Michael loved reading about history —and he loved our country. So much so, that his friends and family gave him the nickname, “Merican...”

“Because Michael was only 17 when he graduated from Clay-Chalkville High School, his dad, also named Michael, had to sign his permission for him to enlist in the Army. As a Vietnam veteran, the elder Michael knew all too well what his son was signing up for. Yet, the Hosey family supported Michael’s decision to serve his country. There’s no question that this courageous young man also came from a courageous family.”



“Michael had a giving heart and continued to earn the trust of the locals—especially all the kids. His sister Laurie recalls him always asking his family to send candy when they sent him a package. At first, she found this odd because Michael wasn’t a big candy eater, but they’d

always send Skittles or gum. She later realized Michael wasn’t asking for candy [for] himself—but to share with all the kids in the country. Sadly, Michael lost his life on September 17, 2011, during Operation Enduring Freedom—one week before his 28th birthday. When sharing his story, Laurie wants us to remember that ‘Freedom is not free.’ It’s a reality that her and Michael’s parents—Condi and the older Michael—still carry with them every single day.”



JASON BARFIELD

“Jason lived his life with the goal of making a difference. His mom Kelli says that Jason believed that there was good in everyone—even if you couldn’t find it at first, that just meant just to dig a little bit deeper. Jason lived by the motto that ‘Every Day is A Good Day.’ He also had a gift for music and was in the band at Ashford, Alabama, High school. He enjoyed singing in church, playing the saxophone, and was teaching himself to play the piano. Jason’s hard work and talents earned him a four-year band scholarship to Huntingdon College—but he chose to forego the scholarship to enlist in the Marines, because he wanted to be part of the best.”

“Jason surprised his family for Christmas in 2010 and spoke about his new goal to re-enlist in the military and become a chaplain. The Barfield’s didn’t know this would be their last holiday that they would spend together. Jason was killed in action on October 24, 2011, at the young age of 22. Sensing the danger that was ahead, Jason pushed eight of his fellow Marines, a native translator, and a K-9 out of the way from the booby trap explosion that would claim his own life. Jason’s platoon Sergeant Gunney Thrash, said, ‘His name and his actions for his fellow Marines will outlive all of us.’”

ON IMPORTANCE OF MEMORIAL DAY

“Michael Wesley Hosey and Jason Barfield are two young men who never got to start a family or fully pursue their dreams. We are forever grateful and indebted to them for their sacrifice that gives us the assurance to continue to sing the national anthem, not with a question mark—but with a declaration that we are the ‘land of the free and the home of the brave.’ I’m reminded of the words in **John 15:13—‘Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.’** We may never have met Michael or Jason, yet they courageously were willing to give their lives for their fellow Americans.

We will continue to share their stories to ensure their sacrifices are never forgotten. I hope we take the time to honor America’s fallen, along with the brave families who have been left behind.

May we never forget that freedom is not free.”

Montgomery Ballet Finds Its Forever Home A Historic First Since 1958



MONTGOMERY, AL — May 13, 2025 — After nearly seven decades of resilience, growth, and unwavering community support, Montgomery Ballet proudly announces a transformative milestone: for the first time since its founding in 1958, the company will own a home of its own.

Thanks to a generous gift, the Ballet will move into the former Dixie Cleaners building on Coliseum Boulevard — a permanent, purpose-driven space that marks a new era for the organization and the arts in the River Region.

“This isn’t just a gift to Montgomery Ballet. It’s a gift to the entire community,” said Artistic-Executive Director Dionysios “Danny” Mitsios. “Owning our space gives us the ability to dream bigger, serve more people, and create a sustainable future for ballet in Central Alabama.”

Dance Lives Here

Montgomery Ballet is proud to say: Dance Lives Here. This guiding principle reflects more than a commitment to performance excellence — it reflects a way of life.

Unlike many local performance organizations that hire talent for just a show, Montgomery Ballet’s artists live in the River Region. They rent homes, buy groceries, attend local events, support small businesses, and attend churches. Some have even bought homes and planted roots in Montgomery — becoming part of the city’s vibrant cultural quilt.

Montgomery Ballet attracts dancers from across the United States and around the world, enriching the region’s diversity and contributing to its creative vitality. These artists don’t just bring ballet to Montgomery — they bring life to it.

A Journey of Perseverance

The road to this historic moment has been shaped by persistence.

In 2020, the company left its longtime home in the Courtyard Building on Eastern Boulevard and relocated temporarily to Cloverdale. In 2022, with the support of the late Mike Watson, the Ballet secured a new space on East Fairview Avenue and began planning for long-term development.

When Mr. Watson passed, the building was sold, once again displacing the company. Yet, the Ballet pressed forward — rehearsing and conducting classes at the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church in Capitol Heights and never losing sight of its mission.

In 2024, a vital transitional space in the Eastbrook Shopping Center was made possible by Lee Wilcoxon and financial support by Julie Byrd and the Junior League. Now, thanks to the extraordinary generosity of Bubba Dean — and with the architectural guidance of Andy Bozeman — the Ballet will finally step into a space it can call home.

A Vision for the Future

Renovations on the new Coliseum Boulevard facility will begin this summer. The updated space will include:

- **Two fully equipped studios** for daily classes and rehearsals
 - **A dedicated costume shop** to support productions and education programs
 - **A black box theater** — housed within the larger studio — offering flexible, intimate performance space and affordable rentals for fellow arts organizations
- This is Phase One of a larger vision: to establish a vibrant arts hub that supports both Montgomery Ballet and the broader creative community across Central Alabama.

Montgomery Ballet doesn’t just serve Montgomery. It tours to Selma, Greenville, Pike Road, and currently provides dance education to students at Tuskegee Public School. The company’s presence and impact ripple through the region, and this new facility will ensure that work continues and grows.

Help Us Build This Dream

To realize this vision, Montgomery Ballet is launching a fundraising campaign and calling on the community for support. The Ballet welcomes:

- **Financial donations**
- **Material contributions** (flooring, mirrors, lighting, HVAC systems, etc.)
- **Skilled volunteer services**
- **Community ideas and feedback**

“We want the people of Montgomery to feel this is their building,” said Mitsios. “Whether you’re an artist, a parent, a local business, or someone who simply believes in the power of the arts — we invite you to be part of this journey.” To contribute or get involved, contact Artistic-Executive Director Danny Mitsios at info@montgomeryballet.org or 334.409.0522. Together, let’s build a home for the arts — **where Dance Lives Here**, and stays.

City of Montgomery Blesses 17th Baby Box in Alabama

MONTGOMERY, Ala. -- Saving lives just got a little easier in Montgomery, Alabama, as the newest baby box was introduced by Safe Haven and Montgomery Fire/Rescue at Fire Station 10. The newest addition represents a significant step forward in our mission to provide a safe and anonymous alternative to surrendering an infant. Situated at 1920 S. Court Street, the location offers a secure and compassionate option for parents in crisis and help ensure every infant has a chance for a safe and loving future.

“I would like to thank Caitlin Kelly from Safe Haven Baby Boxes, Chief Jordan of Montgomery Fire/Rescue, and our City Council members for their cooperation in helping this project come to life,” said Mayor Steven L. Reed. *“The introduction of the box at Fire Station 10 offers a way forward for someone that is overwhelmed and protects the life of a newborn who deserves love, care, and a future.”*

Across the country, there are 342 Safe Haven Baby Box locations with 17 in Alabama.

Today’s Woman Trisston’s Tidbits:

By: **Trisston Wright Burrows**

Ms. Wheelchair America/Alabama 2005

site.trisstonwrightburrows.com

“Forgive & Release”

Sometimes, the most godly thing you can do after forgiving someone is to leave the relationship....to no longer allow that person to be in your life or let them influence or impact you.

You do know that this is biblical, right? Jesus left people. The rich young ruler came to Him. Jesus told the rich young ruler to sell everything he had and give it to the poor. The rich young ruler couldn’t do it. So Jesus said He looked at him and loved him and let him go on his way.

As a result, it’s not unbiblical for you to let relationships sail off into the sunset.



Remember what many of us were told growing up by a pastor, a teacher or a parent, “You show me your 5 closest friends, I’ll show you your future”. It’s true!

The Bible says **“Bad company ruins good morals.” 1 Corinthians 15:33**

Think about it....If a rattlesnake keeps biting me, I don’t need to keep forgiving the rattlesnake and then kicking it in this cage. No! I leave the rattlesnake. You hear what I’m saying? Forgiveness doesn’t mean relationship or close friendship. Forgiveness is saying I’m relinquishing my right to take vengeance against you and turning you over to the Lord who says vengeance is mine. You are relinquishing the weight off of your shoulders and you’re giving them to Jesus. You’re saying they’re toxic for me. I released them of the debt. I release them of the weight. You are not this just for them, but for yourself because the weight of unforgiveness is too much for a soul to bear.

Remember, you are not called to forgive and then hang out with that person continually over and over again. In fact, the Bible advises against it. **Proverbs 13:20** says, **“He that walks with wise men will be wise, but a companion of fools will be destroyed.”**

My friend, when you make the choice to forgive and release, you will notice a difference. You will start walking with people that point you to the Kingdom of God and you can breathe again. It’s freedom!

Many blessings!



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Judge Peggy Givhan

In June, does everyone know that we have 2 State holidays: Monday, June 2-Jefferson Davis' birthday and Thursday, June 19-Juneteenth. I always say that the more holidays there are, the more time for getting out in our gardens. June is a busy month for the gardener. We need to pull out the spent pansies and dianthus, cut back the spring bulb leaves that you have allowed to die back, weed, purchase the new annuals or perennials to fill in the vacant areas and add more soil to the beds. If you did not plant caladiums last month it is not too late. Caladiums need the soil to be at about 65 degrees before they come up, so now is the time.

This month is also a great time to repair or put in a sprinkler system. Just think, no more wrestling with hoses to move them around the yard, and trying to untwist the kinks that suddenly occur. Even the newest rendition of hoses are not trouble free. A Plus is that you can determine which areas of the yard need more watering and which do not by adjusting automatically. Believe me, your flower garden will say thank you many times over for this addition. Also going out of town in the summer months for more than a day means no one has to help with the watering chores. Several times before I had a sprinkling system, I forgot to manually turn off the hose and woke up the next morning with a flood in the yard, plus a big water bill. As you can tell, I am a big fan of automatic systems.



Southern Gardening Potpourri for June



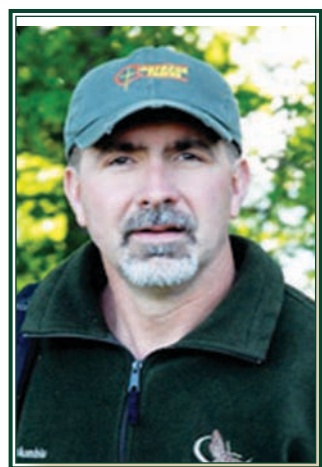
One tip about Knock-Out Roses that perhaps you all know, but I did not, is that they really love fertilizer about twice per year. I tried an experiment where I fertilized one area of Knock-Outs for the year, and left the other unfertilized. The difference was like night and day with the fertilized ones with lush deep green leaves and more blooms than the others.

PLANT OF THE MONTH--TORENIA

The genus of this plant has changed classification from the Figwort family (Scrophulariaceae) to the Linderniaceae family. Torenia, an annual, is also called the wishbone flower or Bluewings with their blooms resembling snapdragons. I love this flower and use it in flower beds that have part sun and part shade but can also tolerate full sun. It reseeds and can be propagated through cuttings. It does spread, but not aggressively and makes a great filler for the garden. The fact that it drops its dead heads is another attribute I love about this plant. Most common colors are deep purple, dark blue with a yellow center, and all shades of pink. It is a long blooming flower from spring until frost. For those who want to attract butterflies and hummingbirds, this is a must have addition to your flower garden. And needless to say, these plants are great for pots, too.



Good Gardening



Gary Miller

gary@outdoortruths.org

I've never been much for hiking even though some of my friends love it. And I feel the same way about camping. I've often said if I'm camping, there needs to be a hunting or fishing trip involved somewhere. Otherwise, I would prefer a weekend getaway in a condo and breakfast at Cracker Barrel. That idea goes for hiking as well. When I walk through the woods, I can't help but continually scout for signs of animals I may want to hunt. I can't imagine just walking through the woods to get to a place that has no hunting or fishing value. But this is just me. I have, however, even had to change how I view more adventurous hunting and fishing trips. At my age, I'm not too fond of rock pillows and sleeping bags. I like to sleep and wake up without unnecessary aches and pains. So, a week in the wilderness, even when the fishing is great, does not have the same appeal it used to. My mind is still in it. My heart is still in it. My spirit of adventure is still hot. And I'm in pretty good shape for my age. But I guess I've really gotten used to security and comfort. This also scares me.

The last thing I want to do in my Christian life is default to security and comfort. I've seen it too many times over the years. It seems the older people get they are less likely to allow God to challenge their walk of faith. They are no longer eager to hike to the top of an uncomfortable mountain and camp at the cliff of insecurity. I want to be like Caleb. He was only one of two men who stood

with Moses in encouraging his people to enter the Promised Land despite the presence of difficulties. But it isn't the young Caleb I want to be like; it's the old one. It's the one who, after forty years of wandering through the desert, finally crossed into that land and asked for his portion of the property to be a mountain. But it was not just any mountain; it was the one that was inhabited by the ancestors of the giant Goliath. Here's the request that Caleb made to Joshua. ***"Now, as you can see, the LORD has kept me alive and well as he promised for all these forty-five years since Moses made this promise - even while Israel wandered in the wilderness. Today I am eighty-five years old. I am as strong now as I was when Moses sent me on that journey, and I can still travel and fight as well as I could then. So, I'm asking you to give me the hill country that the LORD promised me. You will remember that as scouts we found the Anakites living there in great, walled cities. But if the LORD is with me, I will drive them out of the land, just as the LORD said."*** (Joshua 14:10-12 NLT)

My friend, ask God for a hill. No matter what your age. Ask Him to never allow you to be satisfied with faithless security and comfort. You may have to leave the safe confines of what you know, but if the Lord is with you...

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



Dr. Lester Spencer

President Pro Tem

Alabama Emerald Coast Conference

9001 Vaughn Road, Montgomery, Alabama, 36117

Email: Lester@aecgmc.org

Tel: (334) 245-0260 -

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How To Master Your Mouth

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

"Self-control means controlling the tongue!" -Proverbs 13:3

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

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

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

Three Wise Ways To Master Your Mouth:

One - Think Before You Speak

"Intelligent people think before they speak; what they say is then more persuasive." - Proverbs 16:23

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

Is it true?

Is it kind?

Is it necessary?

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

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

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

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

Two- Always Speak The Truth

"Someone who holds back the truth causes trouble." -Proverbs 10:10

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

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

Have you ever known someone who just as soon lie as tell the truth? Or Have

you had dealings with someone who practices the art of deception? We don't tend to enjoy being around them or want to have anything to do with them.

I love the story of the little boy who was always lying. His Mother was so worried about him and his lying that she called her Pastor and asked him to meet with the boy to try to help him with his constant lying. The next day the Pastor met with the six year old boy and told him a story. He said, "Son, yesterday morning I went out to the mail box to get my mail. As I walked down my driveway, a huge Grizzly Bear came out of nowhere and was running right towards me. I just knew he would kill me and eat me on the spot. But then a little Chihuahua dog came running to my rescue and grabbed that bear by the neck and shook it till it died. Then that little dog dug a whole in my front yard, buried that bear and walked away. Now, son, do you believe that story?" The little boy said, Yes sir, I sure do. That was my dog!"

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

Three - Speak The Truth In Love

"Gentle words cause life and health." - Proverbs 15:4

"Thoughtless words can wound as deeply as any sword, but wisely spoken words can heal." - Proverbs 12:18

There are perhaps two ways we can speak the truth in love into other peoples lives. The hard way and the gentle way.

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

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

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

To review:

Think before you speak.

Always speak the truth.

Speak the truth in love.

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